

BRIEFING TOOL ON INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS FOR NEW  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE EXECUTIVE LEADERS

by

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## ABSTRACT

Community college executive leaders, presidents, and vice presidents enter their executive leadership roles with a variety of experiences and understandings. Community college athletics, a large, highly visible, and very public component of more than half of the community colleges in the country, is likely not to be a well-developed component of the experience and understanding that many new community college executive leaders bring with them into their new roles. This product dissertation is intended to guide a new executive leader in addressing any experiential or understanding gaps they might have regarding their new oversight role for a community college athletics program. This product will provide a brief discussion of a variety of topics within the realm of community college athletics that are important for community college executive leaders to understand, an account of why they are important to leaders at this level of the community college, and suggestions for additional exploration of the topics.

**KEY WORDS:** community college, athletics, leadership development

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the three people who sacrificed to make it a reality, my wife, Michelle, and my daughters, Stephanie and Mackenzie. Without their understanding, support, encouragement, and strength, this project would not have been completed. Michelle, thank you for your love and selflessness throughout this journey. You will always bring life to my mind and my soul. Stephanie and Mackenzie, you are intelligent, strong, and beautiful young ladies. Please use education to open your world of possibilities. I hope you never think you are done learning, as your continuous education throughout your lives is the key to your happiness and your freedom.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### INTRODUCTION

The number of presidential and vice-presidential transitions in community colleges has skyrocketed recently and is predicted to continue rising drastically for the foreseeable future. This trend means that more and more executive leaders in community colleges will be leading institutions with athletic programs for the first time. These new leaders will likely have developed experience over their careers in managing the academic, enrollment, student success, or other similar segments of a community college operation. They will draw on this background when leading the entire college. Athletic department experience, however, especially community college athletic experience, is very often not going to be within their portfolio of experiences. Athletic department experience is one of the largest and most public components of a community college operation in which many new executive leaders are least prepared to lead. It is the goal of this dissertation to provide a tool that a new community college executive leader can use to begin to close the leadership and experience gaps they may have regarding community college athletics.

For the purposes of this research project and subsequent product, the term *executive leader* will include the chancellor, president, or vice president levels. A few small community colleges may even have a dean in this role with no vice president between them and the president. These levels have institution-wide responsibilities. Much of the literature in this area

focuses specifically on the campus/college president level, but most of the data and conclusions are equally applicable to the vice president level.

## **INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS' ENTRY INTO COMMUNITY COLLEGES**

Intercollegiate athletics is one of the most recognizable and popular components of many higher education institutions in the United States. Large land grant institutions are the epicenter of intercollegiate athletics today with their multimillion-dollar athletic budgets, large revenue infusions from donors and alumni, massive stadiums, premier athletic talent, lucrative television and endorsement contracts, and fan bases that spread from sea to sea and abroad. Although the United States has certainly embraced intercollegiate athletics and transformed it into an unrecognizable differentiation from its early American roots, the origins of intercollegiate athletics are not American. The first intercollegiate athletic contest was a cricket match in England in 1827 (Smith, 1988). The participants were the premier educational institutions in the world at the time, Oxford and Cambridge. Instrumental in the organization of this contest was Charles Wordsworth, nephew of the British Poet Laureate, William Wordsworth. Two years later, these same two universities, with the organizational help of Wordsworth again, competed in a rowing race on the River Thames in front of crowds thought to exceed 20,000 spectators, and with betting stakes between the teams rumored to have exceeded 500 British pounds (Smith, 1988).

During colonial times, American institutions of higher education were very resistant to their students engaging in athletic activities for recreation. Following the American Revolution, students on American campuses continued to press for more freedom and additions to the

strict educational curriculum on their campuses. Initially, literary societies and then fraternities and college class-based (freshman, sophomore, etc.) activities were at the forefront of a push by college students to add non-academic experiences to their college (Smith, 1988). At the beginning of the 19th century, many of the fraternities had class traditions that contained some athletic contests, including wrestling, cricket, or an early version of football (soccer) that created a sense of community and were an expression of freedom for those students longing for an extracurricular outlet to the stresses of their studies (Smith, 1988). These co-curricular endeavors were contained within the confines of the students on a single university campus through the mid 1800s.

The premier American higher education institutions of the early 1800s were influenced by their British predecessors in many, many ways. News of the beginnings of intercollegiate athletic endeavors between Oxford and Cambridge would be noticed by the students on the campuses of their American counterparts very soon. Crew would also serve as the initial and pre-eminent intercollegiate sport in the United States, as Harvard and Yale held their first intercollegiate rowing race in 1852. The first intercollegiate baseball game occurred in 1859 between Williams College and Amherst and was joined after the Civil War by football (1869—Rutgers and Princeton), track and field (1873—Amherst, Cornell, and McGill [Canada]), and tennis (1883) (Smith, 1988; Thelin & Edwards, 2015). The American version of intercollegiate athletics would continue to expand geographically, gain sport additions, and become more entrenched in college campuses as the 20th century began. Men such as William Rainey Harper and Amos Alonso Stagg played crucial roles in the institutionalization of intercollegiate athletics on college and university campuses in the early 1900s (Thelin & Edwards, 2015).

As the 20th century progressed, a newcomer joined 4-year colleges and universities on the landscape of higher education, the American community college. Although scholars debate if there were private community colleges before 1901, Joliet Junior College is widely regarded as the first public community college in the United States, founded by Stanley Brown and William Rainey Harper in Joliet, Illinois (Beach, 2011). The American community college developed quickly in the United States, growing from 20 institutions in 1909 to 170 in 1919 and spreading to 37 of the 48 states by 1922 (Cohen et al., 2013). As the community college model quickly expanded and developed its niche in the higher education landscape, it emulated many aspects of its 4-year residential campus counterparts. Intercollegiate athletics quickly made its way into the community college model.

Track and field teams started developing in the young California community colleges in the 1920s (NJCAA, 2019c). In 1937, 13 community colleges in California petitioned the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) for membership so they could participate in the NCAA track-and-field championships. Rejected, however, by the 4-year colleges, these community colleges regrouped and founded the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) a year later. From this point on, community college athletics grew and changed as much as the institutions that house these athletic departments. The 1930s and 1940s saw great growth in the sports that were offered in the NJCAA and included basketball, swimming and diving, golf, tennis, boxing, and gymnastics (NJCAA, 2018). The institutions participating in the NJCAA quickly expanded eastward across the United States during these decades to include community colleges in 38 states (Teague, 2012a).

The California community college leaders began to resent the rapidly growing NJCAA, as they had lost control of the organization, and their counterparts were pushing to move some of the NJCAA championships outside the state of California. In 1950, the 43 NJCAA members from California pulled out of the NJCAA and formed their own statewide association (Teague, 2012a). The California community colleges remain outside of the NJCAA as part of the California Community College Athletic Association (CCCAA) to this day. Community colleges in Washington began to organize athletic programs in their state in the 1940s and 1950s as well, forming a conference of 10 colleges by the mid 1950s. In the 1960s, a similar organization developed within the Oregon community colleges (Northwest Athletic Conference, 2020). In 1983, these statewide athletic organizations in Washington and Oregon merged to form the Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges (NWAACC), joining the CCCAA as an alternative athletic association to the NJCAA. In 2014, the NWAACC changed its name to the Northwest Athletic Conference (NWAC) (Northwest Athletic Conference, 2020). The community colleges in the NWAC participate in all sports offered by the conference. Additionally, a few NWAC member schools also participate in the NJCAA for sports the NWAC does not offer, such as wrestling and swimming/diving.

Member expansion and championship additions have continued in all three of these community college organizations since the 1950s. As of 2018, 649 of the 1,103 U.S. community colleges, or 58.8%, have an intercollegiate athletic program. Only seven states in the United States do not have any community college intercollegiate athletic programs: Hawaii, Alaska, South Dakota, New Hampshire, Vermont, Kentucky, and Maine (*2018–2019 California Community College Athletic Directory*, 2018; American Association of Community Colleges,

2018b; NJCAA, 2019a; Northwest Athletic Conference, 2019). Thus, any aspiring community college president or vice president would have an almost 60% chance of ascending to a new position in a community college with an athletic program.

Athletics and exercise have held an important place in the construction of society, and subsequently education, for much of man's recorded history. Reid (2012) described the connectivity between education and athletics in ancient Greece:

Perhaps the greatest legacy of the social changes inspired by sport in ancient Greece was the focus that even diehard aristocrats like Plato placed on education. Since *areté* traditionally associated with athletic success was revealed to be something cultivated through training rather than an entitlement of birth or capricious divine favor, the idea emerged that the *areté* associated with citizenship could be gained through effort. . . . So, intentional movement of the body originates in the *psyché*, and *gymnastiké*, the kind of training and exercises associated with the gymnasium, were understood as education of the whole person and not just the body. (pp. 9-10)

It is this philosophy that leads many scholars to credit ancient Greece as the origin of physical education and athletics within modern Western educational systems. While the cynic may choose to focus on the excesses of big-time, money-focused college athletics, the development of athletic programs in colleges, especially smaller institutions like community colleges that are devoid of large television contracts and other excessive notoriety, has the potential for development of life skills for the athletes as well. Providing opportunities to acquire and develop life skills such as work ethic, persistence, and overcoming adversity are certainly part of the overall mission of community colleges for all students. It is a natural extension of this mission for community colleges to provide the laboratory of intercollegiate sport for its student athletes to work on developing these characteristics. With all of these

interconnected historical roots, it is no surprise that intercollegiate athletics has grown strong within the community college construct.

## **EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TRANSITION IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES**

Several factors combine to cause this rapid growth in executive leadership transition at community colleges. The largest contributing factor for executive leadership transition within community colleges is that the colleges have reached a golden age during which many of their longstanding leaders are reaching the age of retirement. The average age of community college presidents is over the age of 61 (American Council on Education, 2012). According to Phillippe (2016) and McNaughtan (2018), between 35% and 54% of all community college presidents are likely to have retired by 2022, and 80% by 2026. It remains to be seen, but recent political realities at the federal and state levels, such as unfunded mandates, increased reporting and compliance mandates, and legislative overregulation, may be exacerbating the speed with which current presidents are considering retirement, as well.

Another contributing factor to the increasing community college executive leadership transition is the decreasing length of tenure of community college presidents. Not only are many executive leaders reaching the age of retirement, thus leaving community colleges with a growing void of executive leaders who have community college athletic experience and understanding, but their replacements are serving much shorter tenures than their predecessors. Phillippe (2016) indicated that the average tenure of a president in 2016 was only 5.5 years. This is down from an average of 8.6 years a decade before (McNaughtan, 2018). The combination of executive leader mass retirements and the shorter tenures of their



replacements translates to an increasingly frequent churn in these executive leadership positions. Subsequently, there will be a continuing increase in community college executive leaders who need to have a functional working knowledge of their institution's athletic situation. The new community college leaders must possess the information and contextual knowledge to understand and manage their own athletic programs, or be able to competently evaluate if their community college without an intercollegiate athletic program should continue to refrain from having one.

Most new community college executive leaders do not have experience in the administration of a college athletic department to draw from as they take over their new institution-wide executive leadership positions. Of community college presidency openings, 41% are filled by individuals coming out of chief academic officer (CAO) positions or other higher-ranking academic services positions, such as dean (American Council on Education, 2012). In most community colleges, the academic division does not have managerial responsibility over the athletic department. The American Council on Education (2012) report also indicates that 11% of new community college presidents come from outside higher education, where they presumably have little or no experience administering a community college athletic program. Most often in community colleges, the athletic department is situated in the student services division of the college. Previous chief student service officers (CSSOs) make up only a small percentage of new presidents. Given these data trends, there is a need to assist new executive leaders in their transitions by providing a framework to understand their institutions' intercollegiate athletic situations.

The above data establish a high likelihood that a new community college executive leader will not have athletic department experience in their portfolio, but why is that important? Why does a new executive leader need to know about community college athletics? What do they need to know about community college athletics?

### **IMPORTANCE OF ATHLETIC UNDERSTANDING FOR A NEW EXECUTIVE LEADER**

Only 30% of candidates accepting a new community college president position are coming to the position from another community college presidency (American Council on Education, 2012, 2017). Most new community college executive leaders are rising to a level of leadership that is new to them. With this rise in position and responsibility comes a need to continue their personal leadership development. Cloud (2010) indicated that there are three components to the preparation of a new community college president. The first is the individual's academic degrees and formal education. The second includes training programs run by organizations or higher education institutions. The third component is

informal and lifelong learning strategies that enable leaders at all levels to increase their knowledge of management and leadership processes and improve performance. These informal strategies may include professional reading, personal reflection, travel, writing for publication, and active involvement in professional organizations. (p. 75)

That is where this dissertation comes into play, to provide a concise and practical tool for new and aspiring executive leaders on the topic of community college athletics.

For new executive leaders, there will be components of the organization that they know very well, and others with which they have had very little familiarity or experience. Achieving at least a basic level of understanding of these areas through professional reading, as Cloud (2010)

encouraged, will help new executive leaders better lead their institutions. Zeiss (2003) echoed this advice:

Know your business. Successful presidents are people of substance, and they know their business. More important, they recognize their weak areas and take action to eliminate them. New presidents should assess their strengths and weaknesses in each area of the college operations and strategize to learn what they need to be able to lead effectively. Having good people supporting leaders is essential for success, but having the knowledge base to lead and operate the organization is equally important. (p. 123)

As Zeiss indicated, having good athletic directors and deans running the day-to-day operation of the athletic department is important, but it is not a substitute for executive leaders having a good foundation in understanding community college athletics themselves. A new executive leader needs a sufficient understanding of the workings of the athletic department: the context of the athletic department within the institution; the institution's culture as it relates to athletics; and what role community college athletics plays in their community college district, their conference, their NJCAA region, and the NJCAA as a whole. These will be explained momentarily.

For new executive leaders in colleges that have athletic programs, there is a need for, and an expectation of, substantial oversight of athletics at the highest levels of the organization. The successful administration of a community college athletic department can be extremely beneficial to the college and the community when the college's executive leaders provide diligent and attentive support and oversight. While not running the day-to-day operations of the athletic department, executive leaders of community colleges must take responsibility for the successful and ethical administration of the community college athletic department (Brown, 1989). Conversely, lack of executive leadership oversight can lead to

dramatically negative consequences (Brown, 1989). The athletic department at community colleges is too public for the executive leadership not to make vigilance of the program a priority.

The very public nature of the athletic program at a community college can mean that any issues or lapses involving the administration of the athletic department and its activities, personnel, and students will be highly visible and damaging to the reputation of the institution. Nazarian (2007) called college athletic programs the “front porch” (p. 1) of their institutions. According to Lawrence et al. (2009), “Coaches, athletic teams, student athletes, and athletic department staff serve as a ‘link between the immediate campus family and the larger community’” (p. 39). When a student in the nursing program is accused of academic dishonesty, typically there will not be a front page article in the local newspaper. The same may not be true when a star athlete is accused of a major conduct code violation or a coach is accused of major recruiting violations.

Slaughter (1989) confirmed the potential for dire consequences when there is a lack of executive leadership oversight of athletics, as he writes,

Presidential leadership or, more accurately, the lack of presidential leadership is certainly one of the major issues associated with the perception that big-time college athletic programs [and community college athletic programs] are in trouble. While far more of these programs are conducted with integrity than are not, the ones that get press and media attention are those with avarice, dishonesty, and the exploitation of athletes. (p. 180)

Given the public and visible nature that a community college athletic program can have, the executive leaders must take an active leadership role and maintain vigilance of the college’s athletic department instead of adopting an out-of-sight/out-of-mind philosophy. The executive

leaders have a responsibility to know what is going on in the athletic department and not be kept “in the dark,” either intentionally or unintentionally (Brown, 1989, p. 173).

To be able to be effective in their responsibility of monitoring their athletic program, new executive leaders must understand the athletic department the same way they understand the more familiar components of the college, such as student success, faculty tenure, or community relations. New executive leaders need more than a cursory understanding of community college athletics to speak intelligently on the topic with their many constituent groups. Whether it be the local media request, local Rotary club meeting, a faculty senate conversation, or a hallway conversation, an executive leader may find a community member or constituent whose grandchild is on one of the teams or who is a loyal follower of a program and wants to have a conversation about a coach or last night’s game.

Above, the question was asked: What does a new or aspiring community college executive leader need to know about community college athletics? The answer to this question is the crux of this dissertation. The goal of this dissertation is to add a practical tool to the literature that can be drawn upon to create a basic understanding of community college athletics for these new community college executive leaders.

Besides merely having a working understanding of their athletic department, a new executive leader is trying to understand the culture of an institution and in what ways intercollegiate athletics are part of that culture. New executive leaders will need to learn and understand this contextual relationship of the athletic department to the institution, its people, and the community/district. The new executive leader will need this contextual understanding

in order to formulate and refine their personal philosophies regarding intercollegiate athletics as it relates to the college.

A new executive leader may be asked directly about their philosophy on intercollegiate athletics in general or on the athletic department specifically. They will be asked to make decisions about budget, travel policies, or personnel that certainly impact the athletic department. If they have athletics at their college, a new executive leader must be able to answer two questions related to athletics: Why should the college invest the funding in athletic programs instead of other programs such as academic success or workforce training? Should we make any changes to it (budget, sports offered, divisions, scholarships, etc.)? New executive leaders are guaranteed to be asked about the athletic budget the first time the college experiences financial uncertainty under their leadership. The new executive leaders should also be creating or redefining the institutions' vision and value statements on athletics within their philosophies on intercollegiate athletics.

If a new executive leader is joining a college that currently does not have intercollegiate athletics, there are two questions related to athletics they should be able to answer. Why don't we have community college athletics? Should we start a community college athletics program? The new executive leader needs to speak with confidence on the subject of community college athletics, supported by a well-informed personal philosophy on community college athletics that is contextually rooted in that particular institution's culture. If they have an athletic program already, they need to be able to speak knowledgeably about it and provide necessary oversight of it.

As discussed above, many of these new community college executive leaders will enter their new positions without the requisite athletic knowledge. Where does a new community college president turn for a crash course in community college athletics? Unfortunately, not much literature exists for tomorrow's community college executive leaders to draw on.

According to Horton (2009),

Knowledge of the value or benefit of athletic programs and student participation at the community college is a topic that has yet to be fully explored. Issues pertaining to community college athletes and athletics have received far less attention in both research-based and practitioner-based literatures (Umbach, Palmer, Kuh, and Hannah, 2006), compared to their four-year counterparts. Furthermore, much of the literature that is available on this topic is presented in a deficit model: student athletes don't graduate, bigtime athletic programs are bad for institutions, athletic programs' obsession with state-of-the-art stadiums and bigger programs conflicts with development of improved academic buildings and programs (for example, Shulman and Bowen, 2001; Bowen and Levin, 2003; Sperber, 2000). Minimal attention has been given to sports' positive achievements, especially the academic and personal impact on athletes at the community college (Mangold, Bean, and Adams, 2003). (pp. 16-17)

In the last 10 years, this research gap has not been closed. As of 2015, Horton (2015) had found that in the last 35 years no more than two dozen scholarly articles on community college athletics had been written.

The product developed in this dissertation provides new executive leaders with an efficient and concise tool to acquire what they need to know about community college athletics as they transition into their new positions. Specifically, three research questions will be addressed by this product:

1. What information does a new community college executive leader need to know about the structure of community college athletics nationally, regionally, and institutionally?
2. What information does a new community college executive leader need to know to be able to conduct or evaluate an analysis of the athletic situation at their current institution?

3. What information does a new community college executive leader need to know when making future decisions regarding community college athletics at their institution?

## **CONCLUSION**

The responses to these three questions form the sections of the product. Because athletics is just one of the topics a new executive leader needs to get up to speed on at the beginning of their tenure, the product is intended to provide a short, easily digested introduction to the information needed. It is intended to be the beginning of their journey into the world of community college athletics. The product will provide a functional and introductory understanding of the issues. Also provided for each topic will be a rationale as to why this information is needed, to assist leaders in forming the contextual understanding from which their mastery of this subtopic within community college athletics can grow. A short additional reading list will be provided on each subtopic to provide a convenient mechanism for the new executive leader to cultivate their continued learning about community college athletics.

It may be of value to note here that this product also might be a valuable tool for continuing community college executive leaders who can use refreshers on these concepts in their leadership of community college athletic programs. While this is not the intent of this product at this time, practitioners might utilize the product in unintended ways. This points to additional research needs in the area of community college athletics, a theme in the forthcoming literature review.



## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### INTRODUCTION

A review of the literature surrounding community college athletics reveals the minimal amount of literature that exists on the topic. This literature review seeks to highlight some of the areas where literature has been generated and to discuss gaps in this literature relevant to community college executive leadership of a community college athletic program. This literature review will demonstrate a potential gap in the preparation of current and aspiring executive leaders regarding community college athletic administration, the need for community college executive leadership involvement in the administration of community college athletic programs, the need for a tool to address this potential gap, and the requisite components of such a tool.

### NEED FOR THIS BRIEFING TOOL

#### GAP IN KNOWLEDGE/EXPERIENCE OF NEW/ASPIRING COMMUNITY COLLEGE EXECUTIVE LEADERS

Shults' (2001) research is representative of a growing body of work in the first two decades of this millennium that focuses on presidential and other leadership turnover in community colleges. The American Association of Community Colleges has been monitoring the leadership turnover over the last two decades and releasing regular data on its quantity and impact on its membership (Phillippe, 2016; Phillippe & Tekle, 2013). Part of Schults' work describes the narrowing pipeline from which pending leadership voids could be filled and the

diminishing amount of community college leadership experience that candidates may have before they get selected for an executive leadership position.

Significant work on presidential pipeline reductions has been published on all institution types within higher education. Birnbaum and Umbach (2001) and Eckel et al. (2009) described the shrinking of the most common pipeline to a college presidency, chief academic officers (CAOs), in colleges and universities. According to Amey et al. (2002), 42% of presidents come from the chief academic officers track and less than 12% come from the chief student services officer track. These authors' data mean that only around half of the community college presidents come from the two arms of the institution that were likely to have had administrative oversight of their athletic program, since the predominance of community college athletic programs fall under one of these two arms of their institutions.

Compounding the leadership challenges for community colleges presented by a narrowing pipeline is that once in office, community college presidents' tenure is getting shorter over time. Current data show that average community college presidency tenure has shrunk to below 6.5 years for the first time in the history of community colleges (McNaughtan, 2018). An extrapolation of presidential tenure decreasing is that vice presidents are promoted more rapidly, which means they potentially will have had less time in their subordinate positions and thus less opportunity to gain experience with community college athletics.

The literature constructs a good picture of the community college executive leadership turnover that is growing in volume and speed. It further confirms the existence of a sizable executive leadership group, and subsequently a pool of future executive leaders, with much less experience in executive community college leadership. The *AACC Competencies for*

*Community College Leaders* (AACC, 2018a) describes overarching competencies an executive leader needs in order to do the job, as well as weaknesses they are likely to have when they first take over the job, but, according to Eddy and Garza Mitchell (2017),

While the AACC competencies provide a baseline for learning about the duties of leadership in a community college that are easily taught in leadership programs, they do not adequately address the concepts of what it means to be a leader or what it means to lead a community college. (p. 130)

There is little academic research on the experiences and knowledge these more neophyte executive leaders bring to the job or the weaknesses in experience they may have when ascending to new executive leadership positions. For that matter, there is little academic research on community college athletics of any type that community college executive leaders can use to fill this gap of knowledge. Horton (2015) indicated that, as of 2015, there were fewer than 25 peer-reviewed pieces including material about community college athletic programs. Therefore, this review of the literature points to a likely gap in the knowledge that new or aspiring community college executive leaders have regarding community college athletic administration and leadership.

#### KNOWLEDGE OF ATHLETICS NEEDED BY COMMUNITY COLLEGE EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

The research documents that this gap exists; therefore, the next question that must be explored is whether a good foundational knowledge in community college athletics is important for community college executive leaders to have. Early works by such scholars as Raepple, Peery, and Hohman (1982) begin the discussion of presidential responsibility in the athletic department of their community college. The seminal work addressing this question is by R. C. Brown, Jr. (1989). This work is dated, but provides the most significant work in the field

regarding the executive leadership role in community college athletics. Brown listed mission alignment, programmatic oversight, philosophy creation, and governance and organizational representation as some of the most significant duties of a community college executive leader regarding athletics. To Brown's list, Slaughter (1989) added the maintenance of ethical standards that will contribute positively to the public perception of the community college.

The second seminal work relevant to answering this question comes from the scholars Williams, Byrd, and Pennington (2008). They studied the perceptions of community college presidents regarding community college athletics in two different studies that geographically spanned seven states and 221 community colleges. Their impetus in doing this research was the need for community college presidents, presumably with the assistance of their vice presidents and other executive-level leaders, to make difficult and potentially controversial decisions to "initiate, expand, or terminate intercollegiate athletic programs" (p. 453). One of their conclusions discussed the importance of continued and "strong institutional leadership" (p. 460) over athletics.

More recently, Horton (2009) and Jenkins (2006) have strengthened the argument for executive leader involvement in community college athletics on the basis of enrollment management concerns for the institution. Salomon-Fernandez (2018) most recently advocated for executive leadership's need to understand and be involved in intercollegiate athletics.

#### HOW TO ADDRESS THIS GAP

With the literature strongly suggesting that a likely gap exists for new and aspiring community college executive leaders in terms of their knowledge base or experience in

community college athletic administration, and that a need for this knowledge or experience exists, the next question to be explored in the literature is whether opportunities to fill this gap exist currently. Campbell, Syed, and Morris (2010) and Cloud (2010) described three basic ways for community college executive leaders to supplement their professional experience in preparation for their executive leadership positions: formal graduate education programs, informal training programs put forth by national organizations or the institutions themselves, and informal learning obtained through additional professional development experiences and individual study. Significant literature has been written on the need for formal doctoral education programs focused on community college leadership and the competencies that should be taught within them (Eddy & Garza Mitchell, 2017; Luna, 2010; McNair, 2009; McNair et al., 2011). None of these works, however, discuss an inclusion of community college athletics within the subject matter that is or should be covered by these programs.

Additional leadership research has been undertaken on institutional and national leadership development programs for community college executive leaders. Hammons and Miller (2006) indicated a significant benefit of these kinds of executive leadership development programs is the participant's interaction with current community college practitioners, such as the athletic director whom they now supervise, about real topics, including the current issues facing their athletic department that they must help navigate.

Rice and O'Keefe (2014) summarized the benefits of institutional leadership development and succession planning and included topics such as negotiations, process documentation, hiring processes, budgeting, risk management, training, shared governance, legal issues, strategic planning, and servant leadership. However, there is no mention of

athletics in their work. Forthun and Freeman (2017), in their review of the composition of these programs, discussed only the AACC core competencies and never alluded to athletics or other similarly specific topics. A review of this literature points to the need for executive leader preparation through interaction with current practitioners on topics less familiar to the leader, such as athletics, but this literature gives no indications that such structured opportunity currently exists.

There is, however, a significant theme in these pieces of the literature regarding the need for new community college executive leaders to address knowledge gaps. Zeiss (2003) summarized this theme when he contended that successful community college leaders must “recognize their weak areas and take action to eliminate them” (p. 123). If new community college executive leaders need to address weaknesses in their understanding of community college athletics, there are few options in graduate programs or leadership development programs, leaving these leaders on their own to increase their understanding of this area. It is in this conclusion that the need for the product created in this project is clearly demonstrated.

## **PRODUCT SECTION 1 – STRUCTURAL CONTEXT OF ATHLETICS**

### **HISTORY OF THE NJCAA**

Very little literature exists regarding the history of the NJCAA outside of work commissioned by the NJCAA itself. There are a few documents that refer to a historical element or two from the NJCAA 80-plus-year history, but very few that discuss a significant portion of NJCAA history. One of the few is Raeppe et al. (1982), which contains one page of NJCAA history in the course of its comprehensive book chapter on NJCAA athletics. The definitive

works on NJCAA history are pieces written by Michael Teague for the NJCAA. These pieces were written to help the NJCAA celebrate its 75th anniversary (Teague, 2012a, 2012b). The NJCAA website also has considerable content written to educate interested individuals about its storied history (NJCAA, 2016, 2018, 2019c).

#### NJCAA NATIONAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES/GEOGRAPHY

The governance structures of the NJCAA and the leadership positions within the NJCAA national office are sparsely covered by the literature. In their 1980s work, Raeppe et al. (1982) included short discussions of both topics in their work on the NJCAA, and Campion (1990) discussed some NJCAA governance elements in his work on NJCAA rules structure. Both of these materials are significantly dated, as most of the rules and structures they discuss have been changed in the 30-plus years since they were written. Alexander (2009) contributed a dissertation to the field that detailed the governance structure of the Mississippi community college athletic conference, but its narrow geographic scope limits its utility beyond that narrow audience. The only substantial information on NJCAA national and regional governance and geography comes from the NJCAA itself in its handbook and on its website (NJCAA, 2019a, 2019b, 2020, 2021b).

#### COMMUNITY AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT FOR INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

There are important works in the literature about the “town/gown” relationships between institutions of higher education (IHEs) generally and the communities within which they exist. Kemp (2013), in his seminal book, *Town and Gown Relations: A Handbook of Best Practices*, discussed the myriad of ways that IHEs benefit and complicate the communities

around them. Unfortunately, other than an introductory section on IHEs generally, there is little information devoted to community colleges directly, as only two of the 49 case studies are about community colleges.

A small amount of literature highlights the relationship between community college athletic programs and their communities more specifically. Vaughan (2006) described “recreational, social, and cultural” (p. 7) expectations that communities have of their community colleges that sit parallel to their academic expectations. He included sporting events in that list of expectations. M. T. Miller and Kissinger (2007), in their discussion of the connectivity between rural community colleges and their communities, specifically called out leisure education through summer youth sports camps that provide not only a needed athletic outlet in the moment but also a campus acclimation that may lead to future college enrollment for these campers. The authors also discussed the economic importance of the community college to the rural economy. Lawrence et al. (2009) expanded on this concept in their discussion of the impact of a community college athletic department on the local economy, including housing rentals, local shop and restaurant spending, and hotel room rentals for visiting teams and spectators. A significant void exists in the literature in that little quantifiable data have been produced on the impact of community college athletics on their local economy, district’s communities, or college contexts, which will be explained in more detail shortly.

The institutional context of the community college athletic program will be discussed in several sections of this literature review, specifically those relating to enrollment, finances, diversity, and student success. In addition to these topics, the role of community college athletics in the overall institutional culture is significant in the literature. Castañeda (2004)



indicated that two themes in the literature, school spirit and human development, help explain why community college athletics exist. Several scholars have discussed the benefits of community college athletics to school spirit, as well as the positive impact on school spirit of the pep bands and drill teams that exist at the community college because of their affiliation with athletics (Bennion, 1992; Brooks, 1988; Stokes, 1979). Kissinger et al. (2011) and Noonan-Terry and Sanchez (2009) are newer works that also discuss the benefits of community college athletics on school spirit. Ashburn (2007) discussed the impact on school spirit that athletics has in terms of creating stylish college apparel that can be worn by student athletes, staff, and all students, positively enhancing student spirit and pride. The author's premise is that this apparel might not be created if not for the athletic department, and if it were created outside of the athletic department, the apparel likely would not be as pervasive or popular.

#### ROLE OF THE EXECUTIVE LEADER

Most of the literature on the role of the executive leader was reviewed previously in this chapter in the section about the importance of executive leaders playing a role in community college athletics. Thelin and Wiseman (1989) argued there are too many possible negative outcomes if the executive leadership is not involved with their athletic department at some level.

In addition to the material presented previously, the executive leadership very likely will need to be involved in fundraising for athletics. Klingaman (2012) produced seminal work on community college fundraising, and the role of the president and other executive leaders is covered extensively, but there is little mention of athletics in this treatise. In fact, few of the

works that are written about community college fundraising discuss athletics. A few works about community college athletics, however, address fundraising. Lawrence et al. (2009) discussed fundraising at both the department/team/player level and in the larger context of institutional fundraising and alumni relations. It is not specifically discussed in this article, but the latter likely involves an executive leadership component. There is no overt reference in the literature about the fiduciary responsibility of community college executive leaders to make sure the fundraising done by athletic booster clubs, which can be quite substantial in terms of number of dollars, is raised, expended, and accounted for properly.

## **PRODUCT SECTION 2 – INFORMATIONAL CONTEXT FOR ATHLETICS**

### INSTITUTIONAL ROLES

Very few works in the current literature take a comprehensive look at the construct of a college athletic department in terms of roles that need to be filled. Works such as Wong's (2009) book focus on jobs within athletic organizations of all types, from the standpoint of examining possible career choices for individuals interested in athletics, but do not identify the positions a college athletic department needs to have to function properly, nor do they explain how those positions typically are crafted together to function in today's community college context.

Much of the literature on college athletic department roles is singularly focused on particular positions instead of providing a comprehensive construct, and most are focused on the NCAA Division I athletic model, not a community college athletic construct. These works explore individual college athletic roles that are not community college specific, such as athletic

directors (Eason, 2021), sports information staff (Yanity, 2013), athletic counseling and advising (Fletcher et al., 2003), senior women's administrator (Tiell & Dixon, 2008), and social media specialist (Pate & Bosley, 2020). Castañeda (2004), in her community college athletic dissertation, provided a small review of a few community college athletic department roles, but this discussion is by no means a comprehensive look at this topic.

#### ENROLLMENT AND DIVERSITY

With the steady decline in community college enrollment nationally over the past decade, there has been a steady increase in the amount of literature focusing on community college enrollment. Only a small amount of this literature is devoted to the impact that athletics has on a community college's enrollment, or how athletics can or should be factored into a community college's enrollment management strategy in the future. Seminal works on the topic by Bontrager and Clemetsen (2009) give no significant mention of community college athletics, despite what seems to be a slowly growing group of writers who see an increased need for analyzing the current and future place of athletics in community college enrollment strategies. Williams and Pennington (2006) began the current push to examine athletics' role in enrollment management. They surveyed community college presidents from six states, at institutions with and without athletic programs. In this survey, the presidents who responded believed that community college athletic programs have significant enrollment impacts: "promote student diversity," 70%; "lead to higher enrollment," 59%; "encourage local students to attend," 61%; and "increase the college's reputation," 59% (Williams & Pennington, 2006). Jenkins (2006) testified to the enrollment impact of community college athletics, and this

perspective is echoed by Ashburn (2007) and Alexander (2009), who discuss the strategies being employed in several Midwestern, Eastern, and Southern community colleges to build institutional enrollment through the addition of athletic offerings.

Horton (2009) built on the work of these scholars, as well as that of Castañeda et al. (2005) and others who are exploring community college enrollment impacts, when he wrote that “for many community colleges, ‘what counts’ is creating opportunities for access to higher education for students, especially those from underprivileged socioeconomic or underrepresented racial and ethnic backgrounds” (p. 16). In other works, Horton (2015) and Mendoza et al. (2012) discussed community college athletics as a conduit to higher education for “students from low-income and ethnic minority backgrounds” (p. 202).

Several writers have examined the effects on persistence and retention of community college athletes, especially for underserved populations on their campuses. Lawrence et al. (2009) mentioned the retention benefits that community college athletics can have. Mendoza et al. (2012) not only acknowledged the retention benefits of community college athletics on student athletes but also disaggregated retention data to identify which components of an athletic program have the greatest impact on student-athlete retention.

#### STUDENT-ATHLETE SUCCESS

Student-athlete success in community colleges is quite possibly the topic regarding community college athletics that is most well-researched and represented in the literature. The two main themes in the literature on community college student-athlete success are, first, the

impact of athletic participation on student athletes, and, second, the factors within an athletic department context that might be responsible for these impacts.

Horton (2015) explored the first theme in his study examining the impact of athletic participation on grade-point attainment, credit hours taken, credit hours earned, and degree completion for black male student athletes versus the rest of the student-athlete population in Florida community colleges. He then disaggregated the data by race and gender of the student athletes. Harper (2009) discussed additional convergences of race and racial identity constructs and the effects that these have on the success of community college student athletes. Horton (2011) also looked at degree attainment among community college student athletes.

Nichols (2014) looked at this topic differently and explored student-athlete perceptions about their academic successes gained from their community college and which practices by the college they thought contributed to their success. The work of Mendoza et al. (2012) looked at data from Oklahoma community colleges to determine which institutional financial practices might contribute to the success and retention of college student athletes. T. L. Byrd (2017) extended these earlier works in her dissertation by examining the perceptions of successful African-American student athletes regarding which athletic department factors most contributed to their academic success. Storch and Ohlson (2009) discussed the student-service supports needed to help student athletes be academically successful.

#### COMPLIANCE – TITLE IX AND MORE

Significant literature exists regarding the implications of the Title IX legislation for college athletics in general. Bonnette and Von Euler's (2004) work is a treatise that collegiate

and scholastic practitioners use for all aspects of Title IX, including history, information, and compliance strategy. Though it is dated, it remains the most comprehensive and respected work in the field. Unlike many other aspects of community college athletics, Title IX compliance for community college athletics has been addressed often in the literature.

Shortly after the federal laws regarding equity in athletics went into effect, Steiner and Milander (1978), in their early work in the field, described work conducted at Olympic College in Bremerton, Washington, to address Title IX compliance. The strategy promoted ways to shrink and reduce all athletic structures and offerings, most notably all the existing male athletic components, to make equity much easier to achieve. While this was certainly a strategy considered by some colleges early on, it was contrary to the much more pervasive strategy taken over time, which was to enhance female athletic opportunities in order to achieve equity, rather than diminish male athletic opportunities.

Staurowsky (2009a, 2009b) provided the most comprehensive and well-known community college Title IX work in the beginning of this millennium. Her two-part series provides both an accounting of community college Title IX compliance history and a look into the challenges and opportunities for community college administrators, at the time, regarding Title IX compliance. She also made some predictions about the future of community college compliance. Modern authors have built on this work. Pierce (2018) provided an overview of Title IX compliance considerations for community college administrators; however, this work is only an overview without significant depth on any of the more nuanced challenges that community college administrators face.

B. A. Miller (2019) produced work analyzing data on the efforts of community colleges to provide gender equity in their intercollegiate athletic offerings. She presented an argument that gender equity has not been achieved by community college athletic programs, provided an accounting of the disparities that still exist, and argued for increased effort by community colleges to address these inequities. She called for an amendment to the proportionality test that the Office of Civil Rights allows community colleges to use to determine equity within community college athletic programs. She argued that the current test does not provide a true level playing field between male and female athletics. She also argued for a mandate that community colleges have athletic Title IX coordinator or deputy coordinator positions as part of their comprehensive Title IX compliance efforts, because she believes this will provide the requisite focus on the athletic Title IX compliance that she does not believe currently exists in most community colleges.

While significant Title IX gender equity work specifically related to community colleges exists, this is not the case for other community college athletic compliance realms. Compliance literature regarding NJCAA rules, regional or conference rules, the Clery Act, sexual misconduct laws, or alcohol and drug laws specifically written from the community college perspective is almost non-existent. Significant contributions to the literature in these areas are needed.

#### RISK MANAGEMENT

The risk management literature regarding sport management, and more precisely college athletics, generally is plentiful. The seminal works in the field cover a range of legal issues that can be applied to athletics, whether they be scholastic, collegiate, park district, or

club sports, such as the work edited by Appenzeller (2012). This specific work has several chapters relevant to portions of this dissertation's proposed product (Ball, 2012; LaVetter, 2012). These comprehensive works cover legal and risk management issues in a wide variety of topics, including insurance, liability, sports medicine, transportation, and many more. These are useful works but are not specific to the nuances of collegiate sport, much less community college athletics.

Additional works are specific to college athletics that provide additional risk management information (Abraham, 2013; McClellan et al., 2012). These also are useful, but still are not directly focused on community college athletic issues or what might be different for community colleges compared to their 4-year counterparts. There also are many topic-specific articles relevant to the community college athletic environment that discuss such topics as playing surfaces, concussion protocols, and insurance (Conway & Jones, 1993; Krutsch et al., 2020; O'Brien, 2018; Sadler, 2012). One of the few community college athletic topics covered in the literature on risk management is related to transportation. LaVetter and Kim (2010) provided a comprehensive and data-informed treatise on the issues that community colleges need to review regarding transportation of their athletic teams. There are significant and important discussions on the dangers of using vans with lay drivers as a transportation strategy, a practice common to community college athletic programs.



## PRODUCT SECTION 3 – DECISIONAL CONTEXT FOR ATHLETICS

### DIVISIONS AND DECLARATIONS

Outside of a few discussions of scholarship versus non-scholarship athletics within the NJCAA, there is almost no mention of NJCAA divisions in the literature (Bryan, 2019; Bush et al., 2009; Trump, 2018). Castañeda (2004) provided one of the only significant discussions of this topic in the literature, as she provides what is now outdated data on sport participation at different NJCAA divisions. Most information about the divisions themselves and the declaration of those divisions by community college athletic programs comes from the NJCAA itself. The *NJCAA Handbook* provides the most important information on the topic and it is supplemented by the NJCAA website (NJCAA, 2020, 2021a).

### ATHLETIC SCHOLARSHIPS

A significant amount of literature on athletic scholarships at the NJCAA level focuses on the amount of scholarships that student athletes receive and the benefits of those scholarships to the student athlete. Castañeda (2004) provided turn-of-the-century data on the percentage of NJCAA student athletes receiving athletic grants-in-aid, as well as average dollar amounts for those awards disaggregated by gender, sport, and institution type. Bush et al. (2009) expanded on this early work with updated information on the per-sport disaggregation of these data. Mendoza et al. (2012) discussed the impact that athletic scholarships have on student-athlete retention at community colleges. Nichols (2014) and Pflum et al. (2017) built on the earlier work by Kissinger and Miller (2007) by discussing community college athletic scholarship

availability as it correlates to the college choice of student athletes and their happiness and success once enrolled in a community college as a student athlete.

Unfortunately, only a small number of scholarly works exist about decisions community colleges must make regarding their athletic programs' division and the implications of this decision to their scholarship philosophies and structures. Lawrence et al. (2009) provides one of the few discussions of community college athletic scholarship decision metrics, as the authors discussed, in a brief section of their work, the possibility of and benefits of offering partial versus full athletic scholarships. Castañeda et al. (2008) discussed the Title IX gender equity and compliance implications of these decisions for community colleges.

#### BUDGET AND FINANCIAL MODEL

References to community college athletic budgets in the literature are almost exclusively limited to how much athletics cost an institution; these costs are then viewed through lenses of determining the worth of athletics to a community college or whether changes should be made to a college's current athletic offerings. In one of the seminal works on community college budgeting and finance (Mullin et al., 2015), there is no significant discussion of athletic department budgeting. Diede (2005) discussed some revenue components, specifically related to fundraising, of community college athletic budgets, but his work does not give any attention to the expense side of the financial equation and is primarily related to the athletic trainer components of the budget.

There is very little work on existing financial models for community college athletic programs. The work that does exist tends to look at specific components of community college

athletic budgets, such as sport expenditures by college. These studies take large financial data sets, predominantly the federal Equity in Athletic Disclosure Act (EADA) data, and use them to hone in on one component of the financial picture regarding community college athletic expenditures or revenues. Bush et al. (2009), for example, used this federal data to describe the average expenditure by community colleges on scholarships disaggregated by sport and further disaggregated by scholarship athlete per sport. Castañeda et al. (2008) discussed the financial expenditures per sport and gender in the context of Title IX compliance, and Castañeda et al. (2005) discussed scholarship expenditure per student at rural-serving community colleges.

The challenge is the dearth of comprehensive literature exploring how to build and understand possible financial models that would help a specific college understand the financial impact of their intercollegiate athletic program. When there are references in the literature regarding what it costs a college per athlete to have a community college athletic department, there is little detail given that would allow a current community college executive leader to replicate the model for their institution given their fiscal context (Alexander, 2009; Ashburn, 2007; Horton, 2009). The closest study to this type of modeling can be found in the dissertation by Castañeda (2004), but that research does not provide a workable methodology sufficient for a current community college executive leader to replicate the model for their own use.

#### SPORT ADDITION OR DELETION

The community college executive leader with an athletic program is likely to be faced at some point in their career with a question or suggestion about expanding or contracting their athletic program. If they are at an institution that does not currently have an athletic program,

the question about starting a program might arise. There is only a small amount of guidance in the literature on this type of decision that considers the nuances of community college athletics. Certainly, in today's enrollment-focused community college, a significant part of the decision to contract or expand an athletic program will be enrollment-based, as discussed previously, but there are more than enrollment considerations that need to be taken into account in these decisions.

L. A. Byrd and Williams (2007) provided one of the earlier discussions of this topic. They discussed recent trends in community college athletic expansion within the context of what they were observing in the North Carolina community college system. They discussed funding sources, a desire for a focus on local student athletes, and the desire by North Carolina executive leaders for a statewide control over athletic expansion and governance of community college athletics.

Castañeda's work pointed to some considerations for expansion or elimination of community college athletics, especially in rural community colleges (Castañeda, 2004; Castañeda et al., 2005). More recently, the most comprehensive discussion of these decision-making metrics came from Lawrence et al. (2009). In this work, the authors discussed revenue-generation possibilities, some expense categories that might be manipulated to reduce expenses, the relationship of athletics to the community college mission, facilities, and some potential troubles related to athletics. They then provided guidance to keep the athletes and their needs at the forefront of these decision points. Others have built upon these works to add perspectives, such as athletics building a sense of community within the college, traditional

college environment building, and community partnerships, for community college executive leaders to consider when making these decisions (Ashburn, 2007; Horton, 2009; Jenkins, 2006).

## **CONCLUSION**

There is a significant shortage of academic devotion to community college athletics. This leads to a shortage of research in the field, which makes it incredibly difficult for a new community college executive to easily address gaps in knowledge they may have regarding community college athletics. This literature review has analyzed what little work in the field exists and has combined this analysis with relevant publications from 4-year college athletics and other applicable contexts. As community college athletics is experiencing a period of expansion in terms of growth in both institutions and teams offered, academics and practitioners will hopefully devote more time and resources to research on all aspects of athletics within the NJCAA.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

### **INTRODUCTION**

The impetus behind this research topic springs from a combination of two of the author's strongest professional passions, community colleges and athletics, and whose life's work has centered around these two topics. The opportunity to combine them into this dissertation research was a natural fit. Narrowing the research topic and honing the research questions led to an extended journey intertwining elements of the author's professional journey and doctoral studies.

### **IDENTIFICATION AND REFINEMENT OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The development and revision of the research questions that guided the organization of this product were born out of a series of professional and educational contexts. The first was attendance at the 2015 Future Leaders Institute (FLI) sponsored by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC). The purpose of this enrichment conference is to prepare community college deans, directors, and faculty leaders for executive leadership positions as community college vice presidents and presidents of the future. During this conference, the topics covered ranged from navigating the executive leadership search process to understanding the job demands, prerequisite knowledge, and experience required to succeed in these executive leadership positions. Other discussion topics included leveraging an individual's community college leadership pathway and the knowledge coming from that

journey, and, conversely, shoring up voids in one's knowledge base. For example, the majority of the attendees were from the faculty and academic leadership ranks. They had significant experience and knowledge regarding academic issues, but much less experience and knowledge, if any, regarding leading an institution's student services, financial, governmental relations, public relations, human resources, fundraising, intercollegiate athletics, or other divisions. Although presidents would not need to do the financial or student services work personally for their institutions, they must be able to understand and lead these divisions' interconnectedness with the academic enterprise at their college. FLI made it clear that this 2015 cohort was representative of executive leadership transitions all across the country.

As the FLI cohort members discussed their backgrounds and experiences, it was apparent that most of these future leaders had minimal experience with, and knowledge of, community college athletics in the United States. Through informal conversations at the FLI conference sessions, it became clear that a challenge for most aspiring community college executive leaders would be their preparedness to knowledgeably lead institutions or divisions with community college athletic programs at the beginning of their tenure. Further, it was acknowledged that the AACC was putting out very little information, at the time, on athletics that would help aspiring executive leaders speed up their learning curve.

The next step in topic revision was the discussion of the lessons learned at the FLI with another group of aspiring community college executive leaders, the author's doctoral program in community college leadership (DCCL) cohort classmates, faculty, and mentors. Many of the DCCL students had similar backgrounds and experiences to those found in the FLI cohort. They reported minimal understanding of community college athletics, the challenges that athletics

could present to a community college executive leader, or how to augment their knowledge in this area. One pointed example was obtained from a DCCL cohort member who was promoted from an academic position to an executive leadership position that included supervision of the athletic department at that particular community college. This classmate expressed immediate frustration at having to make decisions right away regarding topics for which this individual had no knowledge base nor an easy or quick way to address that lack. She could not find any concise resources in the literature to help her development in this area of community college leadership.

#### **FORMATIVE EVALUATION CONSTRUCT**

One of the foundations of formative evaluation is that the need for the program or process to be developed must be clearly established. The informal process described above had identified the void existing in the preparation of community college executive leaders regarding their knowledge of community college athletics, constituting a formative assessment-type process of establishing the need for this product. Thus, a decision was made to explore creating this product under the guiding principles of formative evaluation/assessment. Within the field of education, formative evaluation is an evaluation model primarily used for program contemplation and development in the field of instructional design.

Walter Dick (1977), a founder within this branch of formative evaluation, offered that “formative evaluation may be more precisely defined as a process of systematically trying instructional materials with learners in order to gather information and data which will be used to revise the materials” (p. 311). Conceptualizing this product certainly was not accomplished



utilizing a strict or full formative assessment process, but this theoretical framework guided how the product was constructed.

A review of the formative evaluation/assessment literature for instructional design indicates that there are three primary agents in a formative assessment situation—the learner, the teacher, and the learner’s peers (Black & Wiliam, 2009). Applying these agent roles to this product assigns the title of learner to the new community college executive leaders, the teacher role to the author of the product, and the peer role to the new leader’s institutional colleagues, such as the athletic director, the chief financial officer, the Title IX coordinator, and many others.

Influenced by earlier works in the literature, such as Wiliam and Thompson (2007), Black and Wiliam (2009) concluded that “formative assessment can be conceptualized as consisting of five key strategies”:

- Clarifying and sharing learning intentions and criteria for success
- Engineering effective classroom discussions and other learning tasks that elicit evidence of student understanding
- Providing feedback that moves learners forward
- Activating students as instructional resources for one another
- Activating students as the owners of their own learning. (p. 8)

Utilizing these strategies, this product was designed to create a formative evaluation cycle for the learner (the new executive leaders) in which they have a structure to evaluate their specific learning needs in a particular area of community college athletic knowledge.

First, the teacher (author) has used the literature and personal background knowledge and expertise to “clarify and share the learning intentions” and criteria for success—

understanding of that aspect of community college athletics. The learner (new executive leader) can then utilize the “why is this important to me” component of each topic in the product to evaluate if they identify this topic as a weakness needing their attention. The main content discussion for each topic within the product is then intended to create “effective classroom discussions and other learning tasks that elicit evidence of student understanding.” The section content is intended to be part of the learning process, but it is also intended to serve as a conversation starter between the new executive leader (learner) and the content experts both within and outside of their institution (peers) in order to activate “students as instructional resources for one another.”

The content and subsequent conversations are intended to provide a formative opportunity for the executive leader to match their need for knowledge on a topic, within the specific context of their institution and leadership situation, with their development in that area. In effect, this provides them with the formative feedback loop that “moves the learner forward.” Finally, the last section under each topic within the product is the “Additional Resources” section, which is intended to activate the “students as the owners of their own learning.” The new executive leaders can continue to evaluate their own learning and additional knowledge until they feel they have the requisite knowledge needed for their specific situation.

Three components were combined to refine the research questions to be answered under this formative evaluation construct and guide the teacher (author) in identifying the initial “learning intentions and criteria for success.” These three components are a review of the

community college athletic literature, conversations with experts in the field, and the personal expertise in community college athletic administration of the author.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW CONTRIBUTION TO METHODOLOGY**

Through the professional and educational experiences described earlier, the need for a product to assist new community college executive leaders in understanding the complex administrative issues of community college athletics became clearer. The author began conducting an extensive review of the literature. The first conclusion drawn from this review was that community college athletic literature was somewhat scarce. The second conclusion was that while much has been written on leadership in community colleges, the impending turnover of community college executive leaders in the coming years, and many of the knowledge and experiential components needed in an aspiring community college executive leader's portfolio, there was almost nothing included in this literature pertaining to community college athletics. The gaps in the literature with regard to community college leadership and athletics were wide and deep.

In the literature related to community college leadership and its role with athletics or knowledge of athletics at that level, there is a scant study or two focused on whether athletics fit within the mission of the community college, and, if so, how current leaders feel about this question (Williams & Pennington, 2006). No matter what the result of a scholarly debate on that topic might be, athletics in community colleges seems to be a reality for the foreseeable future since over half of the community colleges in the country have athletic programs. Rather, the ultimate relevant issue is what aspiring executive leaders who are going to lead community

colleges with athletics need to know to do their job. This question was the focal point for this scholarly project.

### **COMMUNICATIONS WITH EXPERTS IN THE FIELD**

At this point, several more communications occurred that were combined with the existing literature and the author's DCCL coursework to refine the three research questions that frame this product. Two conversations conducted with high-ranking members of the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) were instrumental. The author was fortunate to have a discussion with Dr. Chris Parker, the chief executive officer of the NJCAA (C. Parker, personal communication, 2019). This conversation was held at a time when Dr. Parker was restructuring the organization, and it helped narrow the first research question to its final version: What information does a new community college executive leader need to know about the structure of community college athletics nationally, regionally, and institutionally? Significant discussion occurred about the rationale behind his restructuring plans, much of which involved empowering the leadership within the member colleges to guide the organization in more effective and efficient ways. How vital it is for community college executive leaders to understand the NJCAA so they can participate in future planning for the success of their student athletes at institutional, regional, and national levels was emphasized. Discussions with Rod Lovett, a long-time and award-winning community college athletic director and long-serving NJCAA Region 24 director, now turned director of championship events for the NJCAA, were also instrumental in framing the components of topics to be

covered in order to answer this first research question (R. Lovett, personal communication, 2004-2021).

Conversations with Mr. Lovett also were instrumental in helping to refine the components of the second research question: What information does a new community college executive leader need to know to be able to conduct or evaluate an analysis of the athletic situation at their current institution? Extensive discussions took place about the institutional components important for him, as a former community college athletic director, in educating new executive leaders, as he worked with three different presidents and three different vice presidents during his tenure. Additionally, the author's DCCL practicum class allowed for the interview of three experienced Illinois community college presidents about their athletic programs and what knowledge they had gained over the years about evaluating community college athletics, at their institutions and in general. Important items for new executive leaders to know were extrapolated from these conversations. Much of the author's personal experience in community college athletics, as a coach and an executive leader overseeing a division containing an athletic department, also were utilized to make decisions about which topics to include in the product to answer this research question.

The third research question is: What information does a new community college executive leader need to know when making future decisions regarding community college athletics at their institution? Much of the refinement of this third research question was again based on personal conversations and personal experiences. Fellow chief student services officers have generously and openly shared their experiences in dealing with athletics in both times of expansion and rescission. The enrollment, financial, and structural components of

community college athletics that were important to them and their institutions have been enlightening. Again, conversations with Rod Lovett were essential on this question.

Additionally, Chris Randles, chief financial officer and vice president for administrative services at Parkland College in Champaign, Illinois, helped review the financial modeling section to provide feedback on the model. It should be noted that much of this product was developed and refined during the global COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-21, and research interviews and conversations were conducted virtually via telephone (C. Randles, personal communication, May 26, 2021).

Lastly, many of the refinements made to the research questions and the decisions about what to include in answering those questions comes from the author's personal experiences. These experiences lend credibility to academic decisions made in the course of organizing and creating this product.

#### **AUTHOR'S PERSONAL STATEMENT ABOUT QUALIFICATIONS IN THE FIELD**

I have spent the majority of my life involved in interscholastic or intercollegiate athletics in one capacity or another. My professional career began as a high school mathematics and social studies teacher and athletic coach, where I spent the better part of a decade roaming the sidelines or dugouts of one sport or another. I spent time training athletes who wanted to make it to the next level, to play in college, many of whom would end up going through the community college recruiting process. From there I made the jump to intercollegiate athletics, where I spent five years as a community college head volleyball coach and athletic academic advisor. I then made a career change to the other extreme of intercollegiate athletics, spending

4 years at a Big Ten conference, athletic powerhouse where I would again serve as an athletic academic advisor, working on student-athlete success initiatives and academic progressions for athletes who were NCAA national champions and Olympians.

I decided to return to the community college sector, spent a few years working in the placement and testing side of admissions, and then progressed to the dean of enrollment management role. These two professional endeavors are important to my athletic understanding; they added significant depth to my understanding of community college enrollment theory and practice generally, and specifically as it relates to community college athletics and its relationship to institutional enrollment. For the last 6 years, I have served as a community college vice president for student services with an incredibly robust and successful NJCAA-member athletic department under my portfolio of responsibility. In those 6 years, I have served as an interim athletic director for a year while a permanent athletic director was hired. I have rebuilt an athletic budget and trained the new athletic director and his staff on all aspects of administering that budget. I have also completed 2 years of the annual Equity in Athletics report required by the federal government.

A couple of additional components of my experience over the last 25 years are relevant as the reader assesses my credibility related to community college athletics. I have spent over 20 of those years coaching club volleyball on the nights and weekends, training and helping with recruiting many athletes who would end up receiving community college athletic scholarships. I have spent the last 12 years as a radio announcer for a Big Ten conference volleyball team. My role as vice president for student services also includes the duties as Title IX

coordinator on my campus. These three seemingly unconnected components add significant depth to my community college athletic credibility.

So how does this seemingly disjointed bunch of experiences make me qualified to write this guide for new executive leaders getting their first experiences with community college athletic oversight? The first observation that can be made from my professional trajectory, perhaps, is the breadth of experiences I have had. I have worked with student athletes entering college on both ends of academic preparedness and everywhere in between, from those who were reading at a very low level and whose math skills were below college level when they started, to those who were academically gifted and high achieving in the most rigorous of high school curriculums. I have worked with a similar wide range of athletic talents, from those wanting desperately to be college athletes but being unable to perform at that level, to those athletes destined to be NCAA champions and Olympians. I have worked on both ends of the athletic department spectrum, from the community college athletic department where the coaches drove a 15-passenger van to the games and the coaches' salaries were about \$10,000 for a season, to those where the teams chartered planes for games and the coaches made a higher annual salary than the university president or the governor of the state.

Within community college athletics, I have practiced in the areas of recruiting, admissions, academic advising, student success, budget, compliance, administration, financial aid and scholarships, fundraising, and sports information. I have added experience in interscholastic athletics and club athletics, the feeder pipelines for community college athletics, and NCAA Division I athletics, the transfer pathway for many community college athletes. My experiences are at the coaching, support staff, and administration levels, so I have seen all



aspects of the community college athletic enterprise from the inside out. My community college dean of enrollment management experience makes me intimately familiar with all aspects of community college admissions, placement, and onboarding. The Title IX coordinator duties I currently undertake make me intimately familiar with the gender-equality requirements of community college athletics and give me constant administrative involvement with community college athletic budgeting, facility planning and utilization, and compliance aspects of the program.

Lastly, my 6 years serving as a community college vice president with an athletic department in his portfolio give me the experience to understand the informational needs of a colleague newly in my position or in a new president's position, especially if that new executive leader, be it president or vice president, does not have a strong athletic background to begin with. I have spent the last 6 years helping a president navigate budget challenges where athletics was certainly part of the conversations; supervising a dean of enrollment management where strategic enrollment management conversations certainly contained athletic components; assisting board of trustee members in staying current on information related to our athletic components, including the pros and cons of athletics to our community college mission; assisting the chief academic officer in building good relationships between the athletic department and the faculty; and making sure the athletic department was carefully spending its limited resources and performing its myriad of duties in a manner consistent with all of its regulatory obligations. In the course of these duties, I have undertaken many professional development opportunities that have expanded my knowledge base in the areas covered by this dissertation. For example, I have been to the Association of Title IX Administrators' (ATIXA)

training on Title IX as it relates to athletic compliance, program evaluation sessions at Higher Learning Commission (HLC) conferences, enrollment management sessions on building enrollment through community college athletics at HLC conferences, and more. It is these experiences that make me uniquely qualified to use existing research and best practices to create this guide for community college executive leaders of the future.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The three components discussed in this chapter produced these final research questions to be answered as the starting place in this formative assessment guided product:

1. What information does a new community college executive leader need to know about the structure of community college athletics nationally, regionally, and institutionally?
2. What information does a new community college executive leader need to know to be able to conduct or evaluate an analysis of the athletic situation at their current institution?
3. What information does a new community college executive leader need to know when making future decisions regarding community college athletics at their institution?

## **ADDITIONAL RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The concept of a financial model to look at the return on investment (ROI) for a community college's expenditures on its athletic program is certainly not new. There have been a few references in the literature regarding how a community college could and should scrutinize its athletic program's finances (Alexander, 2009; Bush et al., 2009). The ROI calculations discussed in the literature were largely vague in their methodology, and any details

included did not provide the level of specificity needed by executive leaders in making decisions for their community college.

In 2015 and 2016, the author had conversations with Steve Norton, another community college vice president for student services in Illinois, who also desired an accurate ROI tool in calculating the ROI for his teams (S. Norton, personal communication, 2016). He shared a spreadsheet he had been using to try to get to the ROI for his teams at his particular community college. These conversations were extremely useful in conceptualizing the level of financial specificity and comprehensiveness needed in an ROI calculation model. What also was needed was a flexible model that could be tailored by each community college to fit unique institutional financial constructs regarding athletics and state financial contexts. Informed by these conversations with Steve Norton and other chief student services officer colleagues, and the author's own knowledge in the field, a model was created that is intended to achieve these goals. To test the model and provide some degree of external validation, Rod Lovett, from the NJCAA, and Chris Randles, a community college chief financial officer with over 20 years of experience, reviewed and critiqued its content (R. Lovett, personal communication, 2004-2021; C. Randles, personal communication, April 29, 2021).

## **ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS**

### **AUDIENCE LIMITATION**

The first limitation defines the audience of this product. The term used in the research questions, *executive leader*, is meant to be the chief executive officer, most often called president, and the vice president levels of a community college district. The rationale for this

assumption is that presidents are responsible for everything at their institution and *president* seems to be the most common term for the chief executive officer of a community college district. The guide is intended to be equally applicable to a district chancellor position. Vice presidents are counted in the executive leader category as well. In many cases, the vice president, under whose portfolio athletics at that institution sits, will be the executive-level leader with the most interactions and responsibility regarding athletics. In many cases this will be the vice president for student services (or equivalent title), but in some cases it might be the provost, vice president for academic affairs, or the vice president for administrative affairs. In some cases, especially at smaller community colleges, deans may function as the administrative level below the president, and in these cases, these deans would be counted in the executive leader category as well.

#### ORGANIZATIONAL LIMITATION

There are three governing body organizations for community college athletics. While there may be similarities between the organizations, and the material contained in this product might have some implications for the other two organizations and their members, this product is written regarding the largest community college governing body, the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) only. The NJCAA governs community college athletics in all of the continental United States except for California, Washington, and Oregon. California has its own governing body, the CCCAA, as does the partnership between the community colleges in Washington and Oregon, the NWAC. The distinction is blurred a little by the fact that a few of the Washington and Oregon community colleges send teams in the sports of swimming and

diving and wrestling to the NJCAA to compete since the NWAC does not have those sports. Given the much larger membership in terms of states and community colleges involved, the NJCAA was chosen as the focus of this product.

## **CONCLUSION**

As the need for this product was discerned through professional interactions of the author, a multifaceted approach to defining the research questions was used. The author's experience with community college athletics, and as a community college executive leading a division that contained the athletic department, was leveraged to provide a base for identifying the knowledge a new community executive leader might need to know. A formative evaluation construct was chosen to provide a theoretical structure for the product. Communication with experts in the field, as well as a review of pertinent literature, was then used to refine the research questions that defined the product created.

CHAPTER FOUR: BRIEFING TOOL ON ATHLETICS FOR  
NEW COMMUNITY COLLEGE EXECUTIVE LEADERS



# **BRIEFING TOOL ON ATHLETICS FOR NEW COMMUNITY COLLEGE EXECUTIVE LEADERS**

**DR. MICHAEL TRAME**

**KEVIN KIERMAIER, PARKLAND COLLEGE (L)**

*Keith Allison on Flickr, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons*

# NJCAA LIST OF SPORTS SANCTIONED<sup>1</sup>

Outdoor Track & Field (M) . . . . .	1938-Present	Volleyball (W) . . . . .	1974-Present
Basketball (M) . . . . .	1948-Present	Basketball (W) . . . . .	1975-Present
Swimming & Diving (M) . . . . .	1948-Present	Nordic Skiing (M) . . . . .	1975-1990
Golf (M) . . . . .	1948-Present	Tennis (W) . . . . .	1975-Present
Tennis (M) . . . . .	1948-Present	Field Hockey (W) . . . . .	1975-1997
Boxing (M) . . . . .	1949-1950	Swimming & Diving (W) . . . . .	1976-Present
Gymnastics (M) . . . . .	1949-1984	Gymnastics (W) . . . . .	1976-1986
Football (M) . . . . .	1956-Present	Alpine Skiing (W) . . . . .	1976-1991
Baseball (M) . . . . .	1958-Present	Outdoor Track & Field (W) . . . . .	1976-Present
Cross Country (M) . . . . .	1959-Present	Golf (W) . . . . .	1976-Present
Wrestling (M) . . . . .	1960-Present	Cross Country (W) . . . . .	1976-Present
Rifle (M) . . . . .	1961-1980	Bowling (W) . . . . .	1977-Present
Soccer (M) . . . . .	1961-Present	Softball (W) . . . . .	1977-Present
Alpine Skiing (M) . . . . .	1970-1991	Indoor Track & Field (W) . . . . .	1980-Present
Lacrosse (M) . . . . .	1970-Present	Soccer (W) . . . . .	1982-Present
Bowling (M) . . . . .	1971-Present	Slow-Pitch Softball (W) . . . . .	1983-2000
Ice Hockey (M) . . . . .	1972-2017	Marathon/Half Marathon (W) . . . . .	1986-Present
Judo (M) . . . . .	1972-1979	Lacrosse (W) . . . . .	2004-Present
Indoor Track & Field (M) . . . . .	1973-Present	Beach Volleyball . . . . .	2020-Present
Volleyball (M) . . . . .	1974-1977	Esports . . . . .	2020-Present
Marathon/Half Marathon (M) . . . . .	1974-Present	Nordic Skiing (W) . . . . .	????-1990

<sup>1</sup> Smith, 2016



# PREFACE

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This guide is intended to be a practitioner's resource for two audiences: community college presidents who are taking over leadership of NJCAA-affiliated institutions, and community college vice presidents (or deans in some small community colleges) who are taking over direction of divisions that include their institution's intercollegiate athletic programs. There are three main organizations in the United States that are responsible for administering community college athletics. The NJCAA is by far the largest and administers (or would presumably administer) athletics in all

states but five: Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington. Most of the information in this guide is likely to be applicable to all community colleges that have intercollegiate athletics, but the intention of this guide is to limit its scope to NJCAA-affiliated institutions. This guide also is intended to be an introductory-level look at community college athletics, providing readers with the contextual foundation for a deeper look into the institution-specific structures, operations, community connectivity, and personnel that make up the athletic departments at their colleges.

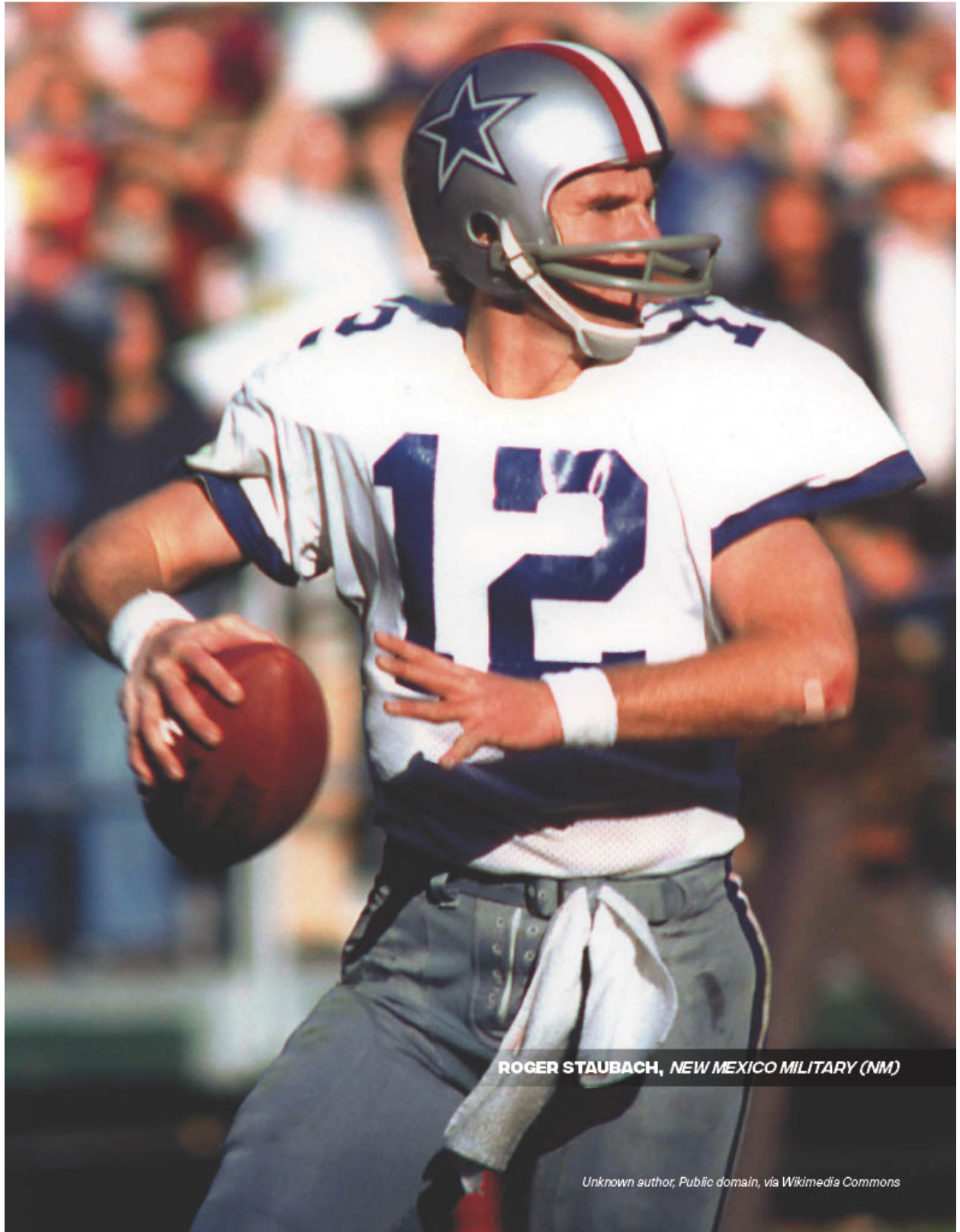
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*This briefing tool created in partial fulfillment for Doctorate in Community College Leadership (Ed.D.) dissertation requirements at Ferris State University.*

*Briefing tool design and layout completed by W Jake Tatar, senior graphic designer at Parkland College.*

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**ROGER STAUBACH, NEW MEXICO MILITARY (NM)**

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# INTRODUCTION

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An argument can be made that intercollegiate athletics at the community college level is the most prevalent community college endeavor that has the smallest research basis, is the least understood, and engenders, perhaps, the widest range of feelings and opinions regarding its purpose and value. Misconceptions run rampant with regard to community college athletics because of its association with its counterpart at NCAA Division I institutions. Very little academic research about community college athletics exists. The emotional response to community college athletics, especially in communities where there are no competing professional or other collegiate athletic enterprises, can be incredibly strong in both the positive and negative directions. Many community and institutional constituent groups are able to get close to community college athletics and the athletes, often much closer than at the NCAA level. Community members may have watched the community college athletes play in their hometowns or have season tickets to the community college athletic events where they can sit right on the floor and interact intimately with the teams and contests. College faculty/staff might have worked closely with the student in the classroom or student service area. Especially in small, rural, or financially struggling community colleges, there might be an intense competition for resources where faculty and staff feel that the community college athletic program is directly negatively impacting the mission of the community college and their personal role within the college. As a result, the intimacy that community members and employees can have with their community college athletic programs can lead to a number of voices advocating passionate and personal perspectives regarding community college

athletics at their institutions. These are some of the reasons why a guide like this is needed in the community college leadership landscape. Presidents and vice presidents will undoubtedly need to interact with these perspectives on numerous occasions.

Many community college leaders at the presidential or vice presidential level move into their positions having very little experience with, or understanding of, community college athletics, and then face a duty to lead institutions with athletic programs. Current or future community college leaders also may have intercollegiate athletic experience at the NCAA level, a drastically different construct from that existing in community college athletics. The turnover of leadership that is expected to continue in the community college sector also drains institutions of leaders that have community college athletic experience and understanding. Between the beginning of the 2011-2012 academic year and March of 2016, the American Association of Community Colleges calculated that 1,026 community college presidencies turned over.<sup>2</sup> As of May 2016, "Seventy-five percent of presidents have announced plans to retire in the next 10 years, as have 75 percent of senior administrators," said [Terry] O'Banion,<sup>3</sup> a prominent scholar on community college leadership.<sup>3</sup> This presidential churn in community colleges has understandably created a similar turnover at the vice presidential level.

According to the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), there are 1,103 community colleges in the United States.<sup>4</sup> The National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) has 511 member colleges or campuses that participate in intercollegiate athletics, which include

colleges from 42 of the 48 continental states.<sup>5</sup> The Northwest Athletic Conference (NWAC), serving predominantly the community colleges in Washington and Oregon, has 31 U.S. member colleges that are not also members of the NJCAA.<sup>6</sup> The California Community College Athletic Association (CCCCAA) has 107 member colleges or campuses and serves the colleges in the state of California.<sup>7</sup> These numbers mean that 649 out of the 1,103 U.S. community colleges, or 58.8%, have an intercollegiate athletic program. Only seven states in the United States do not have any community college intercollegiate athletic programs: Hawaii, Alaska, South Dakota, New Hampshire, Vermont, Kentucky, and Maine.<sup>8</sup>

This prevalence of community college athletic programs, the expansionary trends of community colleges to explore the enrollment implications of expanding or reducing their intercollegiate athletic programs, and the high turnover in community college leadership combine to create a great need for new presidents and vice presidents to increase their understanding of community college athletics. Roscoe C. Brown, Jr., member of the famed Tuskegee Airmen and former president of Bronx Community College, points out the myriad of aspects that a community college president should understand: the philosophy underscoring their athletic program, the ethical and educational standards maintained by the athletic program, the resources devoted to the athletic program, the community connectivity to the college through the athletic program, the impact of the athletic program on a variety of institutional success metrics, and the coaching personnel who become very high-profile members of the employee categories.<sup>9</sup> “Presidents must exercise leadership in order to develop and maintain a ‘clean’ athletic program.

The president’s first responsibility in meeting this obligation is to *know what’s going on*. *In too many instances, the president either does not investigate what is happening in the athletic program or is just kept in the dark.*<sup>10</sup> It is challenging for new presidents and vice presidents to truly know what is going on with their athletic programs without a contextual understanding of community college athletics. Very little scholarly writing has been done on the subject to provide this context for incoming community college leadership. David Horton, Jr., adjunct professor and noted community college athletic researcher, indicated in 2015 that “since 1980, fewer than 25 peer-reviewed articles have been written on the topic of student-athletes or athletics at 2-year or community colleges.”<sup>11</sup> This body of research has grown only minimally since then.

It is for these reasons this guide is being developed. Every community college athletic program looks different, because the local district context produces a different construct of what the athletic program in that district can and should be. If a community college has an athletic department, that college’s executive leaders need to be armed with an understanding of the commonalities that underpin community college athletics along with knowledge and tools to evaluate the construct of the athletic program they have inherited. If a new executive leader is inheriting a community college that does not have an athletic program, these new leaders will be expected either to defend the decision not to have athletics or to change the course of the institution and move toward creating an athletic program. Hopefully, this guide will provide a useful contextual understanding for a new executive leader as they try to efficiently and effectively come up to speed on their new institution and position.

<sup>2</sup> Smith, 2016

<sup>3</sup> Smith, 2016, p. 2

<sup>4</sup> American Association of Community Colleges (AACCC), 2018

<sup>5</sup> National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA), 2019a

<sup>6</sup> Northwest Athletic Conference (NWAC), 2019

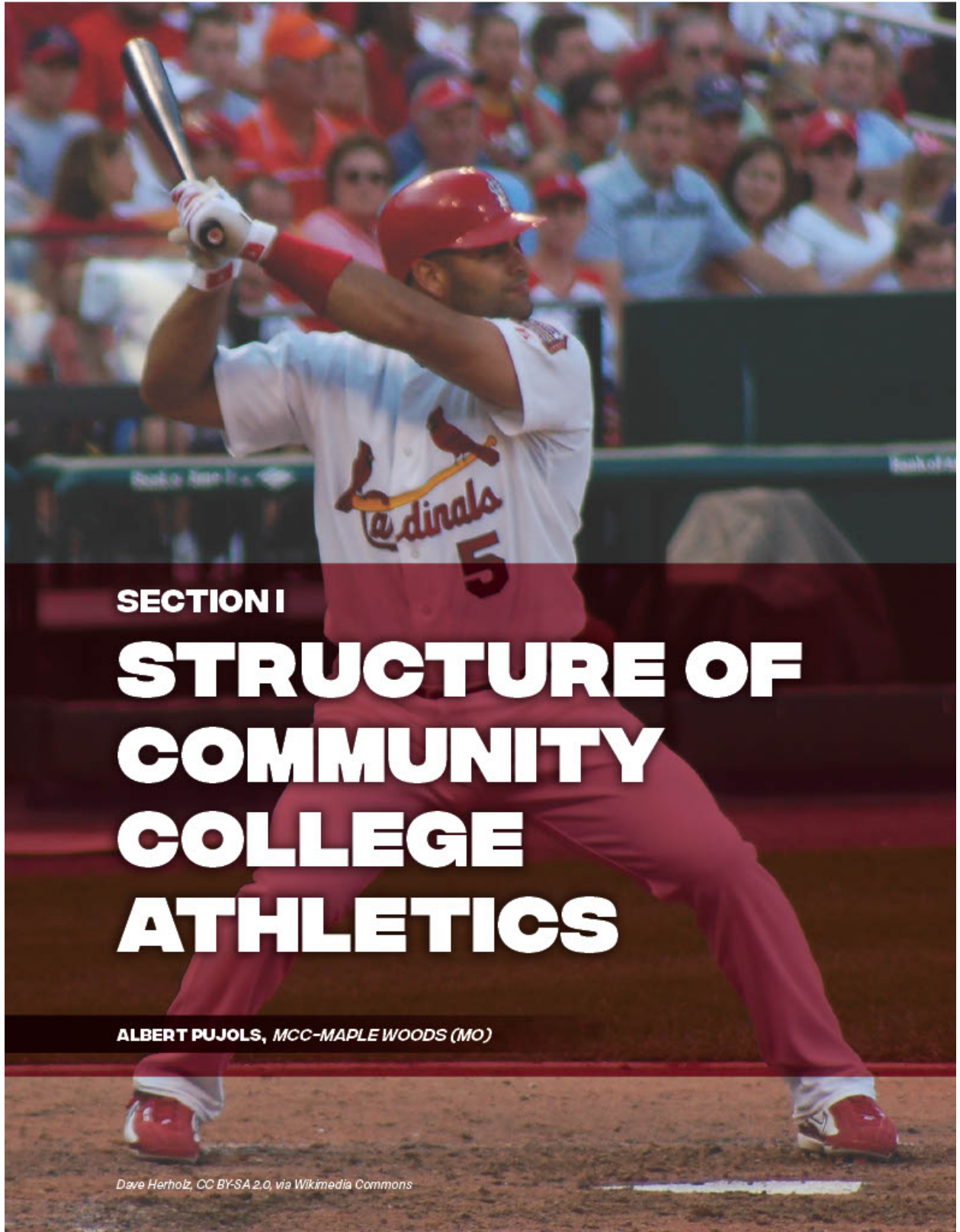
<sup>7</sup> 2018–2019 California Community College Athletic Directory, 2018

<sup>8</sup> NJCAA, 2019a

<sup>9</sup> Brown, 1989

<sup>10</sup> Brown, 1989, p. 173

<sup>11</sup> Horton, 2015, p. 287



**SECTION I**

**STRUCTURE OF  
COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE  
ATHLETICS**

**ALBERT PUJOLS, *MCC-MAPLE WOODS (MO)***

*Dave Herholz, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons*

# HISTORY OF THE NJCAA

## Why is this important to me as a community college executive leader?

1. Presidential leadership by college CEOs has been vital in the development of the NJCAA and community college athletics. Maintaining strong involvement by college presidents and vice presidents in the NJCAA in the future, especially as turnover in these administrative ranks is rapidly increasing, will allow the NJCAA to stay responsive to the needs and changes of its membership.
2. The NJCAA and community college athletics have an important place historically in the social impact that community colleges have played in areas such as gender and racial equality. This impact of the NJCAA can be maintained and strengthened through a strong relationship between the NJCAA and the college presidents.
3. Understanding the history of the NJCAA and community college athletics is vital for presidents and vice presidents as they attempt to steer their institutions and the athletic programs they already have or may want in the future. Undoubtedly, the subject of athletics is important to some members of their constituencies, and a good historical background will let these executive leaders "speak the language" of their constituents.

## The Beginnings (the 1930s and early 1940s)

- The spark that ignited the beginning of the National Junior College Athletic Association was rejection. The 13 community colleges that ultimately created the NJCAA petitioned the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) to participate in their national track and field championships but were rejected, as the NCAA decided their championships would be for four-year institutions only.<sup>12</sup> This single rejection had a drastic impact on the historical course of community college development in the United States.
- The combined efforts of 13 junior colleges from California were drawn upon to found the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA). The first championship event sponsored by the fledgling organization was the 1939 National Junior College Track and Field Meet held in Sacramento, California.<sup>13</sup>
- Expansion of the NJCAA beyond the state of California rapidly picked up steam in the early 1940s. In 1941, the NJCAA Track and Field championships were held outside of California (Denver, Colorado) and "over 30 colleges from Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, Mississippi, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Texas and Utah are documented as having participated."<sup>14</sup>
- As the United States was drawn into World War II and the war effort became the primary national focus, most community colleges were understandably depleted of potential male athletes and the resources needed to compete in NJCAA athletics. The NJCAA suspended all championships from 1943-1945.<sup>15</sup>

### The Defining Decades (the late 1940s and 1950s)

- As the country came out of World War II, the NJCAA rode the momentum of community college growth, propelled forward by the infusion of men seeking higher education, many as a result of the GI Bill. The NJCAA records show that by the end of the 1940s organizational membership had reached 207 colleges representing 38 different states.<sup>16</sup>
- The NJCAA's potential to advance social progressivism was immediately evident as the NJCAA added a National Men's Basketball Championship tournament to its offerings for the first time in 1948. "By participating in the 1948 tournament in Springfield, MO, Bob Crowe of Compton College (Calif) became the first African-American to play in Southwest Missouri State's Field House."<sup>17</sup>
- NJCAA sport expansion was happening as rapidly as membership expansion. Swimming, golf, tennis, gymnastics, and boxing national championships for men were added by the end of 1949.<sup>18</sup>
- Early in the 1950s, "the organization's push

for expansion across the map frustrated Californian administrators who felt that travel costs to national tournaments outside the state would be too high. Following the assumption that the national competitions often pitted California schools against each other anyways, the California State Athletic Committee took action with a recommendation for withdrawal. In November 1950, the California Junior College Association approved a measure banning state colleges from participating in NJCAA sponsored contests beginning Sept. 1, 1951. Having 43 members in the Golden State, the NJCAA saw its membership plummet from 185 in 1950-51 to 137 in 1951-52."<sup>19</sup> To this day, the California community colleges have not returned to the NJCAA. Even the loss of 20% of its membership could not slow the momentum of the NJCAA in the 1950s, as the organization would continue its rapid expansion over the rest of the decade to reach 246 member colleges representing 37 different states by the end of the decade.<sup>20</sup>

### Great Sport Expansion (1959 through the 1970s)

- The NCAA, the very organization whose snubbing of two-year colleges led to the birth of the NJCAA, realized its mistake in 1959 and advanced an idea to absorb the NJCAA into its organization as an NCAA two-year division. The NJCAA leadership and member college presidents were vital in rebuffing the NCAA encroachment. "We believe that any junior college program, athletic or otherwise, should be administered by junior college people," [NJCAA President Reed] Swenson said in April 1959. "We believe that junior college presidents and athletic directors can more capably administer intersectional and national athletic competition for the junior colleges than the NCAA, which is primarily

designed to serve the needs of the large four-year colleges and universities."<sup>21</sup> The importance of presidential and administrator leadership was underscored and strengthened by these events.

- The 1970s exemplified, perhaps, the greatest example of the need for presidential leadership in NJCAA athletics. It was the NJCAA and its executive director, George Killian, that first cleared the path for gender equality in U.S. college athletics after the passing of Title IX in 1972. "In 1972, Killian formed the Presidents' Special Study Committee to analyze the prospect of adding a separate division for women within the NJCAA. 'I knew that if we got the presidents to say it was a good



move, then we could get this done,' Killian said. 'We brought them to Hutchinson and explained to them everything in detail. They thought it was a great idea and that's all we needed, the support of the [college] presidents.'" The progressive spirit, leadership, and courage of these community college presidents led to the NJCAA being the U.S. groundbreaker in gender equality in athletics. The very first women's national championship tournaments offered by an integrated national organizing body was offered by the NJCAA because of the leadership of these presidents. November 1975 marked the inaugural U.S. collegiate women's championship as the NJCAA held their volleyball championships that month. It would take until 1980 for the National Association of Intercollegiate

Athletics (NAIA) to hold their first women's championship, and the NCAA would not hold their first until 1981.<sup>22</sup>

- As the 1970s drew to a close, the NJCAA had grown to have 489 colleges participating in its Women's Division and 562 colleges participating in its Men's Division. The NJCAA Board of Directors had grown to contain 44 representatives; one Men's Division representative and one Women's Division representative were selected from each of the NJCAA's 22 regions to collectively govern the organization.<sup>23</sup>
- During these two decades, the NJCAA added championships in 13 men's sports and 11 women's sports, bringing the NJCAA total to 24 championships, four times more than it had going into 1959.<sup>24</sup>

### **Governance Development and Organizational Maturation (the 1980s and 1990s)**

- In 1986, the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (AACJC) created an ad hoc committee to seek feedback from all community/junior college presidents on changes needed regarding intercollegiate athletics. This group made requests to the NJCAA to make changes/additions to the rules in the following areas: adding college presidents into the governance structure of the NJCAA, standardization of academic eligibility standards including credit attainment and grade point average, individual sport procedures, and scholarship limitations.<sup>25</sup>
- Semester-based eligibility standards were implemented by the NJCAA in 1988, making the NJCAA the first intercollegiate athletic organization to adopt such eligibility mandates. A national letter of intent system was imple-

mented soon after with comprehensive, new sport procedures adopted in 1993.<sup>26</sup>

- "The NJCAA again leads the way [towards gender equity in U.S. collegiate athletics] as its board of directors tap Lea Plarski as its 13th president in 1990. The election of Plarski made her the first female to hold the top position of a national sports organization in the United States."<sup>27</sup>
- In 1995, the NJCAA divisional structure system began, giving member colleges a choice as to the level of financial commitment they would make toward athletics-related, student-athlete financial support.<sup>28</sup>

## The New Millennium and the Changing NJCAA (2000 to present)

- "In July 2009, the NJCAA set another milestone for women in sports when Mary Ellen Leicht was named the association's executive director. Leicht is the first and only female chief executive of any national collegiate athletic organization in the United States."<sup>29</sup>
- Leadership change has been the reality for the NJCAA in the new millennium. In the 40 years from 1969 to 2009, the NJCAA had two executive directors and seven presidents. In the 10 years since, the NJCAA has had two executive directors and four presidents (President Art Becker's tenure spans both periods).<sup>30</sup>
- With the growing pace of leadership change, an argument can be made that college president participation in the NJCAA is more important than ever. To this end, the NJCAA created a 12-member Presidential Advisory Council (PAC) to help steer the NJCAA. When new NJCAA executive director, Dr. Chris Parker, revamped the governing body into a 37-member Board of Regents in 2017, he devoted six voting spots on the board to members of the PAC.<sup>31</sup>
- Membership and sport changes are again looming on the horizon as several colleges are choosing to either add athletic programs or add to their athletic sport offerings for the positive enrollment impacts these additions might have. Beach volleyball was added in April 2018, which marked the first time since 2004 that the NJCAA added a new sport to its offerings.<sup>32</sup> Esports, multi-player videogame competition, has been added as well.

### For more information:

1. NJCAA website – [www.njcaa.org](http://www.njcaa.org) – sections on: History, Timeline, 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Features.

<sup>12</sup> NJCAA, 2019e

<sup>13</sup> Raepple, Peery, & Hohman, 1982

<sup>14</sup> NJCAA, 2019e

<sup>15</sup> Teague, 2012a

<sup>16</sup> Teague, 2012a

<sup>17</sup> NJCAA, 2019e

<sup>18</sup> NJCAA, 2018

<sup>19</sup> Teague, 2012a

<sup>20</sup> Teague, 2012a

<sup>21</sup> Teague, 2012a

<sup>22</sup> Teague, 2012b

<sup>23</sup> Raepple et al., 1982

<sup>24</sup> NJCAA, 2019e

<sup>25</sup> Champion, 1990

<sup>26</sup> NJCAA, 2018

<sup>27</sup> NJCAA, 2019e

<sup>28</sup> NJCAA, 2019e

<sup>29</sup> Teague, 2012b

<sup>30</sup> NJCAA, 2019e

<sup>31</sup> NJCAA, 2019e

<sup>32</sup> NJCAA, 2019b

# NJCAA NATIONAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

## Why is this important to me as a community college executive leader?

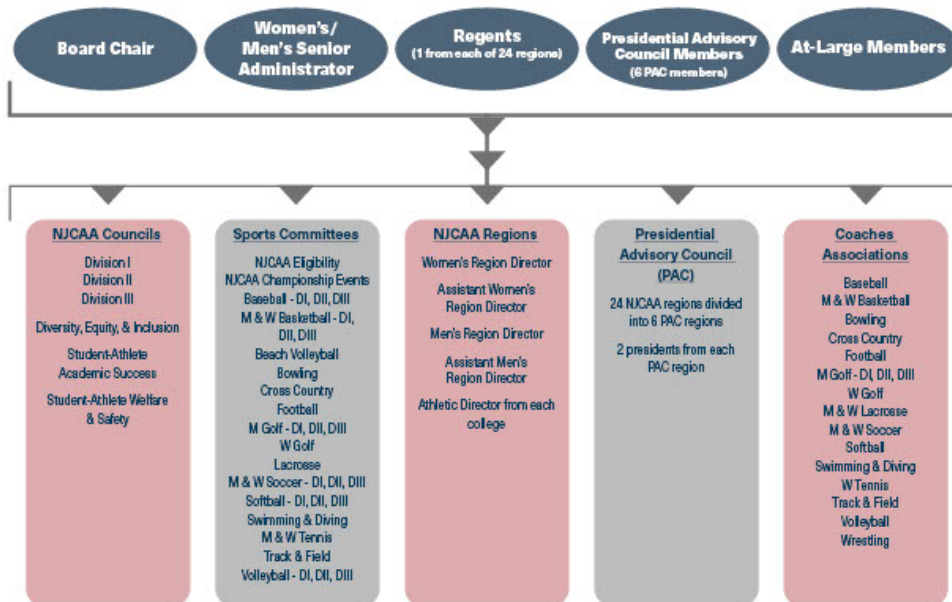
1. Understanding the NJCAA organizational and national office structure will provide college leaders with insight into how the rules that govern student-athletes and the operation of the athletic department are created and changed. Understanding this governance structure will also add knowledge regarding how an executive leader can best support the success of their student-athletes.
2. For the benefit of student-athletes, the athletic department, and the entire college, presidential and vice presidential participation in this governance structure is extremely valuable and necessary. As new rules or changes to current rules are proposed and debated, each college will be asked to register input on the proposals with their regent or their Presidential Advisory Council representative. The president and vice president will need to have a detailed understanding of these proposals so they are able to join the athletic director in setting the input for their college. A president also should feel free to engage their Presidential Advisory Council representative to lodge input on proposals and the direction of the NJCAA.
3. College presidents have the opportunity to make an even greater impact by serving on the NJCAA Presidential Advisory Council or a subcommittee of the Board of Regents (BOR).

When Dr. Chris Parker took over as executive director of the NJCAA in 2019, he enacted a new governance structure for the organization. His goals in creating this new structure were to improve communication, to create an egalitarian body where each region of the organization had an equal voice in decision making, and to make the body more nimble and timely in decision making compared to the former executive committee/annual meeting structure.<sup>24</sup>

The NJCAA is governed by a 37- to 39-member Board of Regents (BOR). All policy, rule, region geography, championship, sport, and financial decisions for the organization are run through this body. The membership of the BOR is made up entirely of volunteers from the member colleges and regions and is organized as follows:

- **Board Chair** – In the new governance structure, the board chair position has replaced the president of the NJCAA that previously existed. Mick McDaniel took over as the 19th president of the NJCAA in 2017, but shortly transitioned to board chair in 2018.<sup>25</sup>
- **Men's Senior Administrator** – This position serves as the top administrator in the NJCAA for all men's sports.
- **Women's Senior Administrator** – This position serves as the top administrator in the NJCAA for all women's sports.
- **24 Regents** – Each of the 24 geographic regions in the NJCAA has one regent elected by its colleges. In many regions this is a region administrator or athletic director. The position is crucial for the effectiveness of

## NJCAA Board of Regents



Note: Information adapted from the NJCAA.<sup>39</sup>

the NJCAA governance structure because these representatives are the most intimately familiar with the importance and implications of the decisions being voted on.

- **6 Presidents** – These six presidents are geographically selected by NJCAA regions and are members of the 12-member Presidential Advisory Council.<sup>36</sup> The presidents' role in the governance structure is vital to the long-term success of the organization. According to Dr. Parker, the presidents "connect all of the dots" among larger trends and initiatives within the community college sector and higher education as a whole. The presidents also ensure that the primary focus of the NJCAA never waivers from the academic success of student-athletes, the proper role of athletics within the member colleges.<sup>37</sup>

- **6 At-Large Members** – As with most at-large positions on governing boards, these six positions on the Board of Regents allow the board chair and executive director to add perspectives to the decision-making body that are missing from the BOR, or that are present but need to be strengthened.

The NJCAA national office is staffed predominantly by paid employees of the organization. According to Dr. Parker, the retooled NJCAA office structure was created to mimic the typical community college structure. Each of four areas is headed by a chief who reports either to the executive director directly, or indirectly to Dr. Parker through the vice president of the NJCAA.<sup>38</sup> The four heads of the divisions of the national office structure are:

- **Vice President/Chief Operating Officer** – This position operates as the top financial person in the organization, and the division is responsible for all of the business work and processes flowing through the NJCAA.<sup>39</sup>
- **Chief Legal, Diversity, and Compliance Officer** – The compliance component of this position handles all student-athlete eligibility and compliance areas.<sup>40</sup>
- **Chief Membership, Championships, and Events Officer** – This division is responsible for recruiting new members to the organization, making sure current members are taken care of and have what they need to be successful, putting on the national championships, and hosting many other events for the NJCAA.<sup>41</sup>
- **Chief External Affairs and Development Officer** – This division is responsible for all marketing and public relations for the organization, cultivating new and maintaining existing sponsorships, and coordinating all NJCAA fundraising efforts.<sup>42</sup>

**For more information:**

1. NJCAA website – [www.njcaa.org](http://www.njcaa.org) – sections on: National Office, Governance Structure, and Foundation.

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<sup>33</sup> NJCAA, 2021a

<sup>34</sup> Parker, personal communication, August 2, 2019

<sup>35</sup> NJCAA, 2018

<sup>36</sup> NJCAA, 2018

<sup>37</sup> Parker, personal communication, August 2, 2019

<sup>38</sup> Parker, personal communication, August 2, 2019

<sup>39</sup> NJCAA, 2019c

<sup>40</sup> NJCAA, 2019c

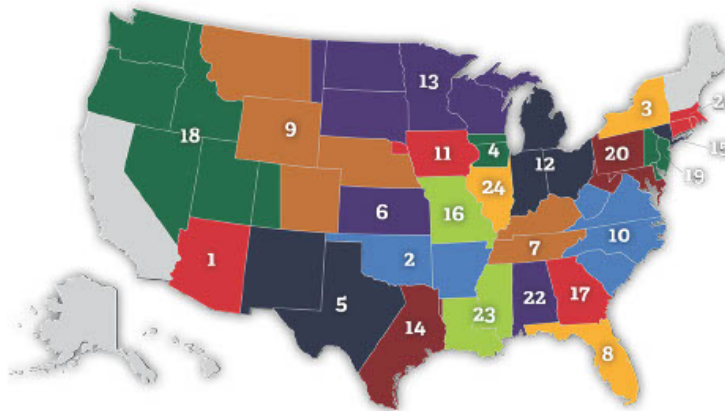
<sup>41</sup> NJCAA, 2019c

<sup>42</sup> NJCAA, 2019c

# NJCAA REGION GEOGRAPHY AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

## Why is this important to me as a community college executive leader?

1. The size of a college's NJCAA region, as well as its sport division composition, will heavily impact the amount and type of travel needed for a college to compete in any particular sport. Regions such as Region 4 or Region 24, which are densely populated with participating colleges and also smaller in terms of square miles, can have lower travel costs and time commitments compared to large regions such as Regions 18 and 9.
2. As conversations about sport additions, or sport division selections or changes, occur on campuses, the upper-level administrators need to be knowledgeable about NJCAA geography, especially of their own region, in order to make informed decisions.
3. The geographic landscape of the NJCAA could change significantly if other states such as California or Kentucky were ever to join the organization. In these circumstances, campus administrators will want their voices heard as NJCAA makes changes to the current region structure.



*Note: NJCAA region map taken from NJCAA.org.<sup>43</sup> Not all states have member colleges. See the table that follows for indication of which states do and do not have NJCAA member colleges.*

## Regional College Membership

Region	Geographic Area <sup>44</sup>	Member Colleges <sup>45</sup>
1	Arizona	16
2	Arkansas and Oklahoma	19
3	Upper New York State	22
4	Upper Illinois and Southern Wisconsin	30
5	New Mexico and Western Texas	28
6	Kansas	21
7	Kentucky* and Tennessee	10
8	Florida	26
9	Colorado (east of the Continental Divide), Eastern Montana, Nebraska, and Wyoming	19
10	North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and Southern West Virginia	34
11	Iowa and Northeast Nebraska	15
12	Indiana, Lower Michigan, and Ohio	33
13	Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota,* Upper Michigan Peninsula, and Northern Wisconsin	31
14	Eastern Texas and Southwestern Louisiana	21
15	Lower New York	18
16	Missouri	12
17	Georgia	14
18	Idaho, Nevada, Oregon,** Washington,** Western Montana, Colorado (west of the Continental Divide), and Utah	13
19	New Jersey, Eastern Pennsylvania, and Delaware	31
20	Maryland, Western Pennsylvania, and West Virginia Panhandle	24
21	Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island	14
22	Alabama	21
23	Mississippi and Louisiana	20
24	Lower Illinois	20

\*State currently has no NJCAA member colleges, including Kentucky, South Dakota, Hawaii, Alaska, California, Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

\*\*Washington and Oregon are limited NJCAA members in only 3 sports: Wrestling, Swimming and Diving, and Esports

## Regional Governance Structures

The governance structure of each of the 24 NJCAA regions varies from region to region. Each region should have a constitution and by-laws that outline the governance structure for the region. There are some commonalities in the governance structures of each region that are set forth by the NJCAA Constitution:

- 1. Regent** – Official delegate to the NJCAA Board of Regents for each region. This regent can be one of the region directors or can be independent of that position.
- 2. Region Directors** – Most regions have one men's region director and one women's region director. Each of these is the chief administrator for either the men's or the women's sports within the region. They are in charge of organizing and/or supervising the men's and women's sport championships. They also are in charge of administering the

region's processes for dispute resolution and rules compliance. If a region director is an employee of a region member college, they must have a letter of support from their college president to the region before they can be a candidate for the position. The region directors also can serve on NJCAA sport and standing committees.<sup>46</sup>

- 3. Assistant Region Directors** – Most regions have a men's assistant region director and a women's assistant region director. The assistant region director not only assists the region director with all of the duties, but also is vital in adding another arbitrator when the region director has a conflict of interest in dispute resolution and rules compliance duties. The assistant region directors also can serve on NJCAA sport and standing committees.<sup>47</sup>

### For more information:

1. NJCAA website – [www.njcaa.org](http://www.njcaa.org) – sections on: Membership Directory.
2. The constitution and by-laws for the region that a college is in can be obtained from each region's regent, men's region director, and/or women's region director.

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<sup>43</sup> NJCAA, 2021b

<sup>44</sup> NJCAA, 2019d

<sup>45</sup> NJCAA, 2019a

<sup>46</sup> NJCAA, 2019d

<sup>47</sup> NJCAA, 2019d



# COMMUNITY AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT FOR INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

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## Why is this important to me as a community college executive leader?

1. A new community college executive leader should understand the economic impact of the components of their institution, including the athletic department, in order to leverage the positive economic benefits in a number of ways.
2. When asked about the budget expenditures on athletics, a new executive leader should be able to speak knowledgeably on all components of the return on investment for those expenditures, including returns that are difficult to quantify in dollars and cents. Athletic expenditures will likely be a topic that executive leaders will need to discuss and justify, at times, to both internal stakeholders and external taxpayers.
3. Fundraising activities of a new community college executive leader might include conversations with those interested in the college's athletic program, and the executive leader will want to be well-versed for those conversations.

The importance of the community (or communities) in which a community college is located and which that community college serves is so strong it is likely emphasized in the mission, vision, and core values of each institution. For most community colleges, there are certainly an almost endless number of ways in which the community is served and impacted by their local community college. "Nowadays, everyone knows the positive employment, economic contributions and impact made by the educational sector on a community, as well as the purchasing power that school officials, faculty and staff, as well as students [and visitors], have in the neighborhoods

where schools are located . . . The revenues from the economic impact generated from those folks associated with schools in a given community is very significant. Also, the economic development influence of a school on the neighborhood where it is located is dramatic."<sup>48</sup>

Understanding what role a community college athletic program has in the course of the town-and-gown relationship between the community college and its community is an important aspect of a new executive's understanding of their athletic program. The relative economic impact of a community college athletic program certainly can vary from great to small depending on the location

of the community college and the composition of the economy in that community. Impacts from a community college athletic program on the local economy can include:

- Housing rentals<sup>48</sup>
- Local business expenditures by the community college's athletes at department stores, gas stations, grocery stores, clothing stores, restaurants, and entertainment venues
- Local business expenditures by visiting teams and their fans at hotels, gas stations, and restaurants

The economic impact on the local economy that is generated from the community college athletic programs may potentially lead to corporate sponsorships for the community college as well.<sup>50</sup> The sponsorships can take many forms:

- Direct donations
- Advertising-based contributions on venue billboards, event programs, or websites
- Gifts-in-kind
- Tournament sponsorships

Besides economic impact, an athletic program might have a significant cultural, social, historic, and entertainment importance for some communities that house community college athletic programs. It is very important that a new community college executive leader understand the economic, historic, social, entertainment, and cultural contexts of the athletic department so they are not caught unaware or uninformed when interacting with community or institutional constituents. A new executive leader never knows when their athletic program will be the topic of conversation with a community member. Some of the important community-based items to understand about the community college athletic program are:

- Which alumni of the athletic program are in the area who might be important to the college as a business, political, or social leader in the community?
- What social connections does the athletic department have in the community?

- Which charities, youth groups, or social organizations do they work with?
- What cultural connections do the athletes or coaches in the program have in terms of schools, churches, or youth organizations?
- What is the history of the athletic program and how has the community been connected to that athletic history?

The geographic setting of the community college may be important to understanding the relative strength of the connections to the community college athletic program by both external and internal stakeholders. Rural community colleges have historically been the most dedicated to their commitments to athletic programs, as discussed by Castañeda<sup>51</sup> and Rooney:<sup>52</sup>

- Enrollment impact of athletic program relative to the overall enrollment size of the institution is greater at smaller, rural colleges "which provides several benefits: increased efficiency and economies of scale in housing, food service and student activities" along with more state funding revenue.<sup>53</sup>
- "The spatial organization of intercollegiate sport also favors the sparsely populated areas' (1972, p. 287)."<sup>54</sup>
- "Sport seems to be given highest priority in small towns and cities, characterized by average income and a lack of intervening opportunities' (p. 284) . . . [There are] a higher percentage of athletes found in small rural colleges than in colleges of any other type."<sup>55</sup>
- In many cases, the popularity of community college athletic programs at rural community colleges also stems from the lack of other athletic and entertainment activities for citizens in those communities.<sup>56</sup>

A community college athletic program also can have a profound importance within the community college itself and its institutional constituents. Some of the most heated conversations regarding athletics that an executive leader may have early in their tenure might be with faculty, staff, unions,

or institutional senates. On the other hand, the culture of that community college may value its athletic program as a source of institutional pride, enrollment stability, and student engagement. In terms of institutional pride, some have offered the following conjectures for new executive leaders to frame the context of their intercollegiate athletic offerings:

- "At colleges and universities across the nation, intercollegiate athletics is a key element of campus community. Almost since the first intercollegiate competition—a rowing race between Harvard and Yale in 1852—athletic competition has brought students together as athletes and spectators in a manner different from the intellectual pursuits of the classroom, yet similar in embodying the core values of collegiality, hard work, integrity, and respect."<sup>57</sup>
- Some scholars believe that athletics are a glue that binds the student body to the institution.<sup>58</sup>
- Additional scholars advocate that community college athletic programs have made "an important contribution to the total educational program, both as a job opportunity for many young men and women and a pivot around which junior college school spirit has been built (p. 247)."<sup>59</sup>
- Shared college activities, such as athletics, help unite the community college and its

community and citizenry.<sup>60</sup>

- School spirit and pride are created in the general student body and faculty/staff constituency by the athletic program. This is enhanced by cheerleading teams, dance teams, and pep bands that are related to the athletic department.<sup>61</sup>
- Community college athletics can provide additional demand for stylish college-branded apparel.<sup>62</sup>
- Community college athletic programs can provide a more traditional four-year college atmosphere.<sup>63</sup>
- Alumni, especially alumni of the athletic department, and community members giving to the institution might be enhanced by the community college athletic department.<sup>64</sup>  
The size and geographic location of the community college can account for significant variance on the scope of this impact.
- Marketing impacts for the college may result from a community college athletic department's competitions and successes.<sup>65</sup> For example, athletic success and its subsequent coverage and messaging by a college can drive traffic to an institution's websites and social media sites where content on other non-athletic institutional information is presented and digested by community members, as well.

**For more information:**

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2. Noonan-Terry, C. M., & Sanchez, R. M. (2009). Honing athletic skills, academics at community colleges. *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*, 26(8), 20.
3. Castañeda, C., Katsinas, S. G., & Hardy, D. E. (2005). The importance of intercollegiate athletics at rural-serving community colleges. *Partnership Brief*.
4. Klingaman, S. (2012). *Fundraising strategies for community colleges: The definitive guide for advancement*. Stylus Publishing.

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<sup>49</sup> Kemp, 2013, p. 1

<sup>49</sup> Lawrence, Mullin, & Horton, 2009

<sup>50</sup> Lawrence, Mullin, et al., 2009

<sup>51</sup> Castañeda, 2004

<sup>52</sup> Rooney, 1974

<sup>53</sup> Castañeda, 2004, p. 135; Rooney, 1974

<sup>54</sup> Castañeda, 2004, p. 135

<sup>55</sup> Castañeda, 2004, p. 135; Rooney, 1974

<sup>56</sup> Castañeda, 2004; Rooney, 1974

<sup>57</sup> Holbrook, 2004, p. 27

<sup>58</sup> Noonan-Terry & Sanchez, 2009

<sup>59</sup> Alexander, 2009, p. 12

<sup>60</sup> Kissinger, Newman, Miller, & Nadler, 2011

<sup>61</sup> Castañeda, 2004

<sup>62</sup> Ashburn, 2007

<sup>63</sup> Ashburn, 2007

<sup>64</sup> Lawrence, Mullin, et al., 2009

<sup>65</sup> Castañeda, 2004

# ROLE OF EXECUTIVE LEADERS IN AN NJCAA ATHLETIC PROGRAM

## Why is this important to me as a community college executive leader?

1. One's role as an executive leader is vital to the success of many aspects of the athletic department.
2. Issues within the athletic department tend to be highly visible in the campus community and externally.
3. A well-administered community college athletic department can provide many benefits for the institution.

The range of personal feelings that executive leaders have about their athletic program will fall somewhere on a gamut between love and despise and the million emotions in between. Throughout much of the history of intercollegiate athletics in the United States, campus executive leaders, especially presidents, have kept their institution's athletic program at arm's length despite their personal feelings. The issue for these executive leaders has been that athletics are a "no-win proposition . No matter what happens, someone is visibly and vocally upset, thus leading to the syndrome of 'presidential inattention' (Hanford 1976)."<sup>66</sup> Historically, the perfect intercollegiate athletic scenario was that the sports teams win, the student-athletes succeed in the classroom, and no off-the-field public relations nightmares take place. If this perfect scenario were approached at an institution, the credit went to the coaches and the athletes, and the executive leaders were rarely considered when credit was doled out. Conversely, if there were any problems in the athletic department, it was the executive leaders taking some to all of the blame. The ex-

ecutive leaders were blamed for allowing the academic mission and values of the institution to be compromised, for not providing the level of support that allowed the teams to succeed on the field, or for the lack of leadership that let the problems off the field manifest. Executive leaders recognized that the athletic program was a lightning rod that could draw the ire of the board of trustees, faculty, alumni, community, or the media at any time and with little to no warning.<sup>67</sup> This is why many executive leaders, over time, unfortunately chose to take a hands-off approach with respect to their athletic program, regardless of their personal feelings about it.

### Suggested Roles:

For years, this was the collective wisdom for presidents in universities, colleges, and community colleges alike. An argument can be made that in a modern community college, where the executive leaders must navigate the myriad of issues facing community colleges, including financial resources, enrollment, student engagement, diversity, and student success, executive leaders must have a much greater role in their institutions' inter-

collegiate athletic program than the “old wisdom” referenced above suggests. Today, community colleges with NJCAA athletic programs require the following roles from their executive leaders:

- Institutional mission protection – In a 2006 research study, many community college presidents at community colleges with athletics believed that a well-functioning community college athletic program is not only in line with the mission of their community college, but in fact supports that mission. Williams and Pennington, in that study, indicated that “just as presidential leadership is imperative to students’ academic success, it is also crucial for athletic success. The support and promotion of athletics as a valuable educational activity on the part of [executive] leaders is vital to a thriving, sustainable athletic program.”<sup>68</sup> As the people ultimately responsible for ensuring that the mission of the community college is carried out, the executive leadership needs to ensure that the athletic department constantly contributes to and supports that mission.
- Philosophy setting – The college needs to have clearly defined philosophies regarding its athletic programs. These philosophies will include the level of athletic success expected, the resources that will be devoted to athletics, and the recruiting and enrollment expectations of the athletic department. Executive leaders will want to be active participants in the setting of these philosophies and the annual review of these expectations.
- Compliance oversight – Executive leaders must maintain a good understanding of what is transpiring in their athletic department at all times in order to maintain an athletic program that is “clean.” This level of understanding will come from dedicated vigilance and regular attention focused on the athletic program.<sup>69</sup> Title IX, the Clery Act, NJCAA eligibility and sport rules, region and conference

rules, and college policies and procedures all demand compliance responsibilities for an organization relative to its athletic department. Oversight of these institutional, athletic compliance endeavors ultimately is the responsibility of the executive leadership. Failures in these compliance areas can lead to costly and public errors that will certainly be big challenges for executive leaders. Avoid these compliance mistakes at all costs.

- Academic oversight – Community college executive leaders should set expectations academically for their athletic departments and then communicate this philosophy to the athletic department and faculty alike.<sup>70</sup> The faculty relationship with the athletic department and its student-athletes can be a contentious one if left unattended, but an extremely positive one if the executive leadership fosters collaboration and cooperation between the athletic department, the student-athletes, and the faculty. The executive leadership ultimately is responsible for ensuring that high academic standards for student-athlete success in the classroom are met.
- Representation of the college’s interests at the NJCAA, region, and conference levels – “How can the individual president or chancellor take responsibility for the conduct of intercollegiate athletics and participate effectively in the movement for reform? . . . One obvious answer is that [executive leadership] should be involved at the national level (NCAA, NAIA, and so forth), at the regional or conference level, and at the campus or institutional level.”<sup>71</sup> As philosophies, policies, and rules are being made at all of these organizational levels through debate and vote, the executive leadership of the individual community college needs to represent the philosophies of their institution and governing board in these processes. A proactive and participatory approach is advised. Executive

leaders have an important perspective on the state of community colleges in general, and can make sure that athletics remains aligned with the mission and context of community colleges.

- **Community relations** – Collegiate athletic programs are referred to by many as the “front porch” of an institution. The people who comprise the community college athletic department, from the athletic director to the coaches to the student-athletes, are a bridge between the college and the community.<sup>72</sup> Executive leaders will often be asked in the community about a community college athletic program, its coaches and athletes, and the teams’ success in competition and in the classroom. The athletic programs will provide an opportunity to endear the campus to its community, and executive leaders will want to leverage their knowledge of their athletic departments into stronger community partnerships benefiting the entire campus.
- **Local media** – Especially for community colleges that are in smaller or rural communities, the local media has a strong desire for stories from the local community college. Athletic success stories are especially appealing to many of these local media sources. Executive leaders can promote the college more generally by encouraging local media coverage of contest results, post-season success, award acquisition, and transfer opportunities for its athletes. These stories can then be used to drive attention to other college information, including enrollment opportunities, academic successes, and community-oriented events.
- **Fundraising support** – “Athletics also promotes fundraising whether through alumni or community donations, corporate sponsorships or through sales of college merchandise.”<sup>73</sup> The executive leadership is often needed to “make the final ask” in larger

community college fundraising endeavors. Corporate sponsors and private individuals may be interested in large gifts to an athletic department because of business implications and advertising benefits. An example might be an apartment complex where many student-athletes choose to live in a college town that then donates to a student orientation program at the college because of the apartment complex’s connection with the students at that institution.

Private individuals might have an affinity for the athletic programs in a college and be interested in naming rights of facilities. For example, the gymnasium building at one athletically prominent community college in Illinois was named after a community member who made a large donation to the college in the name of the athletic program. That individual enjoyed the athletic program but had no other substantial connection to the program.

*As the people ultimately responsible for ensuring that the mission of the community college is carried out, the executive leadership needs to ensure that the athletic department constantly contributes to and supports that mission.*

Alumni of the athletic program also are important relationships for a community college foundation to cultivate. Often some of this relationship cultivation will need to be done by executive leaders who are not part of the college’s foundation. This is especially true for the college president. After achieving financial success through professional sports or business enterprises, these alumni can be in a position to contribute major gifts to their community college athletic program.

### For more information:

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3. Raepple, R., Peery, D., & Hohman, H. (1982). Athletics in community and junior colleges. In J. H. Frey (Ed.), *The governance of intercollegiate athletics* (pp. 155-167). Leisure Press.
4. Hagedorn, L. S., & Horton, D. Jr. (2009). Conclusions and parting words from the editors. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2009(147), 85-92.

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<sup>66</sup> Thelin & Wiseman, 1989, p. 65

<sup>67</sup> Thelin & Wiseman, 1989

<sup>68</sup> Lawrence, Mullin, et al., 2009, p. 42

<sup>69</sup> Brown, 1989

<sup>70</sup> Brown, 1989

<sup>71</sup> Slaughter, 1989, p. 190

<sup>72</sup> Lawrence, Mullin, et al., 2009

<sup>73</sup> Noonan-Terry & Sanchez, 2009, p. 20





**SECTION II**

**INFORMATION  
ABOUT  
ATHLETICS  
NEEDED BY  
COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE  
EXECUTIVE  
LEADERS**

**DANIELLE ADAMS, JEFFERSON (MO)**

*Cheryl Vorhis, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons*

# INSTITUTIONAL ROLES NEEDED TO RUN AN NJCAA ATHLETIC PROGRAM

## Why is this important to me as a community college executive leader?

1. As college staffing plans and decisions are considered, an understanding of what roles must be completed to run an athletic department is essential to make informed and appropriate decisions.
2. Seeing the interconnectedness of the athletic department with the rest of the college departments is essential to understanding work volume across the campus. One way executive leaders support their athletic department is by strengthening the relationships the athletic department has with the other departments within the college. The athletic department's success is partially dependent on the strength of these relationships.
3. As athletic department budget decisions are considered, this is important information.

In the community college there are many institutional roles needed to make the athletic department function. In larger community college athletic departments, there might be several employees, each of whom is performing one or two of these roles. In smaller departments, a few employees might be performing several of these roles each in order to meet all of the needs of the department and its student-athletes. At many community colleges, many of these roles will be performed by members of other departments in the college as part of their comprehensive service to all endeavors of the college. For example, much of the financial and business operation of the athletic department might be conducted by members of the college's general business operation, such as college accounts payable and accounts receivable staff. The following is a list of roles/duties that a staff member of the institution, whether inside or outside of the athletic department, will

need to perform. This list was created from years of personal experience working within community college and four-year athletic administrations, in conjunction with more general college athletic career information from Glen Wong.<sup>74</sup>

As a new community college executive leader is trying to build their understanding of the athletic department at their institution, they should meet with the athletic director and the human resources director to discuss which position at their institution is responsible for each of these duties. This will allow the executive leader to understand how the athletic department is structured at their institution in a much more meaningful way than just looking at an organizational chart. Job titles vary greatly from institution to institution. A review by the new executive leader of job descriptions for these positions might be useful in conjunction with the conversations recommended above.

### **Athletics Director**

- Leads strategic planning for all aspects of the athletic department
- Coordinates and manages all athletic operations and personnel
- Evaluates staff, creates staffing plans, and coordinates all staffing decisions
- Represents the athletic department within college administration
- Maintains financial responsibility for the entire athletic department budget
- Fosters positive community relations with local community
- Evaluates all aspects of the athletic department annually

### **Compliance Coordinator**

- Conducts all academic eligibility evaluations, completes all requisite paperwork, garners all necessary signatures, and reviews and submits all paperwork for all student-athletes and teams
- Ensures compliance with all other NJCAA, region, conference, and institutional rules. Rule areas include, but are not limited to, recruiting, academic eligibility, transfer into the community college, travel, sport participation and practice limitations, scholarship, and housing

### **Athletics Academic Advisor**

- Academic advising:
  - Assists all student-athletes with course selection for every semester
  - Facilitates and monitors student-athlete academic schedule creation with emphasis on athletic responsibilities such as practice time, contest participation, and travel
  - Promotes and oversees academic and athletic transfer planning; monitors NCAA/NAIA transfer requirements for each student-athlete when athletic participation upon transfer is a possibility (four-year colleges belong to one of these two athletics governing bodies)

- Safeguards work toward community college retention, persistence, and completion for student-athletes
- Develops and implements academic success plans when academic issues arise for a student-athlete
- Fosters a strong relationship with campus academic advisors
- Academic monitoring:
  - Assures class attendance by each student-athlete
  - Monitors class progression and success
  - Administers study table for all student-athletes. Study tables are study halls where athletes get caught up on reading, prepare for tests, get tutoring, and prepare upcoming assignments and course preparations

### **Registrar**

- Confirms all grades earned and hours attained for student-athletes
- Performs an institutional check and balance on academic eligibility processes
- Certifies all final eligibility documentation
- Verifies all hours and grades on transfer transcripts
- Validates all award nominations for academic awards, both team and individual

### **Athletics Training**

- Provides connection between the athletes and the doctors/physical therapists
- Performs injury diagnoses and treatments
- Provides physical rehabilitation and enhancement programming for the athletes
- Supervises the athletic department's drug-testing regimen
- Consults with coaching staffs on athlete physical and participation limitations
- Supplies wellness consultations for student-athletes
- Orders all needed athletic training supplies

#### **Doctor**

- Provides initial physical certifications for all athletes every year
- Makes final injury diagnoses and approves injury treatment regimens that athletic trainer develops
- Provides final clearance for injured athletes to return to competition
- Authorizes medical redshirt requests. A medical redshirt is a rule provision that allows a student-athlete to get a year of eligibility back if they have played a small number of games in a season and then suffer a season-ending injury

#### **Strength/Conditioning**

- Creates off-season and in-season strength, agility, speed, and conditioning training plans for the athletes
- Supervises and instructs athletes on proper training techniques
- Consults with coaching staffs on in-season performance modifications for athletes

#### **Title IX Coordinator**

- Monitors gender equity in all aspects of the athletic department
- Completes federal Equity in Athletics report (EADA) annually
- Oversees sexual harassment, discrimination, and misconduct prevention training for athletes and athletic department employees
- Manages the investigation of any reports of sexual harassment, discrimination, and misconduct claims, including disparity of resource or treatment claims between genders in intercollegiate athletics

#### **Events Management**

- Administers all aspects of home athletic contests, including:
  - Scheduling all needed facilities
  - Staffing and implementing all ticket sales operations
  - Staffing and implementing all concession

and souvenir sales operations

- Hiring, coordinating, and paying all contest officials
- Hiring, coordinating, and paying all support personnel, including bench personnel, score keepers, scoreboard operators, statisticians, audio/visual personnel, announcers, and janitorial staff
- Publicizing home contests

#### **Facilities Management**

- Ensures all athletic facilities are properly maintained and equipped to meet all practice and competition needs
- Coordinates all mowing, weeding, watering, painting, and maintenance of all safety equipment, netting for spectators, spectator seating, lighting, restroom facilities, locker rooms, storage facilities, scoreboards, athletic fields or courts, and signage
- Fosters a strong relationship with the campus physical plant department

#### **Equipment Management**

- Orders and distributes all uniforms and apparel for athletes
- Purchases and maintains all equipment for each sport
- Acquires and maintains all general athletic department equipment
- Coordinates washing and distributing all practice and game apparel for athletes
- Coordinates washing and disseminating all athletic department towels and other equipment

#### **Foundation/Fundraising**

- Oversees all sport-specific and general gift giving to athletics. This can include major gifts and naming of facilities
- Coordinates corporate and personal sponsorship programs for athletic teams and events. This includes sponsorship sales of advertisements
- Fosters a strong relationship with the campus foundation enterprise

### **Alumni Relations**

- Maintains records of all past players and their athletic, academic, and career achievements after leaving the community college, including current contact information
- Maintains all college Athletic Hall of Fame records, including those for induction ceremonies and future enshrinement class discussions
- Works with foundation/fundraising efforts

### **Head Coaches**

- Undertakes and oversees recruiting for the program
- Plans and executes all player development
- Facilitates all in-season coaching activities, including scouting, game planning, and game coaching
- Builds all competition schedules
- Organizes all team travel arrangements, including transportation, meals, and lodging
- Promotes athletic placement of student-athletes to post-community college athletic programs
- Implements the program budget

### **Assistant Coaches**

- Assists head coaches with all head coaching duties

### **Sports Information**

- Completes and publishes the athletic website, including:
  - All player and coach "bios"
  - All game schedules
  - All team rosters
  - All athletic department general information
- Writes and publicizes all contest "recaps" and related stories for all contests
- Writes and publicizes all press releases and news stories for all sports and the athletic department as a whole
- Submits all weekly sport award nominations
- Submits all sport statistics weekly
- Maintains all annual record keeping for ath-

letic department, including final sport statistical records, letter-winners, and awards

- Promotes all athletic department games, promotions, events, and announcements
- Oversees and initiates all athletic department social media
- Fosters a strong relationship with the campus public relations department

### **Marketing**

- Creates all website and social media graphic design elements for the athletic department
- Designs all print and graphic elements and layouts for all athletic department print material
- Fosters a strong relationship with the campus marketing department

### **Budgeting and Business Services/Comptroller**

- Creates and reviews athletic department and sport budgeting
- Conducts all athletic department accounts payable work
- Handles all athletic department accounts receivable work
- Initiates and reviews all insurance policies and claims
- Fosters a strong relationship with campus comptroller, business services, accounts payable/receivable, and risk management departments

### **Administrative Assistant**

- Supports athletic director, coaches, and other athletic department personnel in administrative tasks, including, but not limited to, communication with organizations and opponents, scheduling, contracts work, vendors, and business services
- Maintains initial point of contact for athletic department for constituents in-person, by phone, and email
- Manages the athletic department main office
- Assists the athletic director with all duties listed above

### Human Resources

- Supports all athletic department hiring and personnel work

- Fosters a strong relationship with the campus human resources department

### For more information:

1. Wong, G. M. (2009). *The comprehensive guide to careers in sports*. Jones and Bartlett Publishers.
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4. Castañeda, C. (2004). *A national overview of intercollegiate athletics at public community colleges* (No. 3144975) [Doctoral dissertation, University of North Texas], ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.



**BOB MCADOO, VINCENNES (IN)**

*Unknown author, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons*

<sup>74</sup>Wong, 2009

# ENROLLMENT AND DIVERSITY RELATED TO ATHLETICS

## Why is this important to me as a community college executive leader?

1. In times of population decline, demographic change, and national economic prosperity, enrollment and enrollment management are some of the most complex and important issues for today's community college executive leaders to be engaged with.
2. Athletics' role in the enrollment strategy is a key and vital one for many community colleges, especially smaller and rural community colleges.
3. As athletic department budget decisions are considered, this is important information.

Community college enrollment has seen a considerable drop in many states over the course of the last decade. A highly publicized decline in birth rates predicted for the midpoint of the next decade also could cause a drop in traditional-aged college students at community colleges. Many community colleges also have seen a considerable drop in state funding. Given these enrollment-related factors, over the last 10 years community colleges are at the point where enrollment is a considerable focus on almost every community college campus. Strategic enrollment management philosophies, structures, and priorities are as prevalent at community colleges as they are on the campuses of four-year institutions. With this drastic change in enrollment focus, community college athletics and the interplay between athletics and campus enrollment seems to be changing as well. The opportunities for enrollment growth for community colleges through athletics, or at least maintaining the enrollment a community college has, are getting considerable attention

on many community college campuses. Much academic study around the topic of enrollment growth in community colleges through athletics is needed. Empirical evidence linking athletics with increases in community college enrollment increases is very sparse in the literature, but many scholars are in anecdotal agreement that the linkage exists at some level of certainty, especially in rural community colleges.<sup>76</sup> There is a growing tide in community college enrollment management strategy development to include athletic recruitment as a tactic.

- Brian Alexander and Elyse Ashburn note strategies to increase enrollment through athletics in community colleges in Virginia, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and many Midwestern states.<sup>76</sup>
- Enrollment management presentations involving athletic concepts at national conferences are starting to pop up, including one at the American Association of Community College's convention titled "Enrollment Growth Through Athletics."<sup>77</sup>

- “Paul Thein, vice president of student services and institutional development and director of athletics at Feather River College, explained how his small two-year institution in Northern California hit on the novel idea of starting a football program—football!—to rejuvenate sagging enrollment and increase student retention.”<sup>78</sup>
- “Officials at Iowa Central Community College see it a little differently. They’re using sports to attract local students, but are also interested in recruiting from out of state. ‘It’s about enrollment,’ says Dee A. Brown, head coach of the men’s and women’s cross-country and track teams. Iowa Central already fielded 11 teams when it added rodeo, cross-country, and track in 2004. The cross-country and track teams attract about 60 men and women each year who probably would not attend Iowa Central otherwise, Mr. Brown says. That is not an insignificant number given that the 6,700-student college is growing slowly, adding only 100 to 150 students a year. Mr. Brown’s athletes have come from all over the state and from nearby Minnesota, Nebraska, and Wisconsin. He has also landed a couple students from Kenya and one each from Texas and Florida.”<sup>79</sup>
- The Flutie Factor, a theory that a successful sports team will produce exposure for a college and lead to subsequent enrollment increases in the immediate years following, has largely been discounted in the literature, especially for community colleges. However, increased enrollment and other related positive impacts for a college from providing athletics are receiving attention in the literature.<sup>80</sup>
- Most student-athletes at a community college would go to a different institution to play if not for the athletic program at their community college, so they are direct additions to headcount.<sup>81</sup>
- Every walk-on (a student who is on an athletic team but is receiving no athletic-related aid, regardless of whether the student was recruited to play or earned their spot on the team in a tryout) or partial scholarship student-athlete is paying tuition that the institution would not receive otherwise.
- Every athlete has the potential to bring other students with them in the form of friends, siblings, boyfriends/girlfriends, or classmates who want to come to the same town to share the college experience.
- Every athlete will be a full FTE, because athletes must maintain full-time student status for the most part, as compared to the general student body, which averages much less than full-time status at most community colleges. A relative efficiency of athlete recruiting versus recruitment of general students can be calculated.
- All athletes are generating full-time reimbursement levels from states that reimburse community colleges based on credit, regardless of whether the students are on scholarship or not.
- Athletics provides a venue to draw other students to the institution to participate in other activities, such as marching band, pep band, dance groups, spirit squads, cheerleaders, athletic training students, and fitness studies students.
- Media coverage for athletics is highly visible free marketing for the entire college.

Listed below are some of the considerations regarding where enrollment management philosophy and planning meet the athletic department:

- Athletics are an opportunity for head-count growth.



For many community colleges, the composition of the athletic department is likely to be very different from the general student body of the institution and perhaps the community itself. Athletics has the opportunity to provide diversity in a number of ways to the campus and the community: racial/ethnic diversity, global/international diversity, U.S. region diversity, gender diversity, and diversity of experience/thought.

- John Wood Community College president Mike Elbe, the former athletic director at the college, reinforced the importance that athletics played in adding multiple types of diversity to his small rural community college campus in Illinois. President Elbe indicated

that athletics “does provide a sense of diversity on our campus, and I think our students in the end really enjoy interacting with students” from other parts of the world and who are different demographically than they are.<sup>82</sup>

- “Community college presidents have long considered athletics as a mechanism for increasing gender and ethnic diversity within their student populations (Lawrence, Mullin, & Horton, 2009; Williams & Pennington, 2006). However, attracting new and diverse populations using athletics has its limits, such as team roster and international student recruiting restrictions.”<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Lawrence, Mullin, et al., 2009

<sup>76</sup> Alexander, 2009; Ashburn, 2007, pp. 2-3

<sup>77</sup> Jenkins, 2006, p. 1

<sup>78</sup> Jenkins, 2006, p. 1

<sup>79</sup> Ashburn, 2007, pp. 2-3

<sup>80</sup> Horton, 2009

<sup>81</sup> Nichols, 2014

<sup>82</sup> Elbe, personal communication, March 8, 2016

<sup>83</sup> Horton, 2015; Williams & Pennington, 2006

# STUDENT SUCCESS BY ATHLETES

## Why is this important to me as a community college executive leader?

1. Striving for excellence is imbedded in the nature of every athletic program. Executive leaders must ensure that striving for excellence is maintained in balance on both components of the student-athlete experience.
2. Resources and institutional connectivity between the athletic department and student support services on campus will need to be ensured if the student-athletes are going to maximize their academic success.
3. A positive faculty/athlete relationship is crucial to student-athlete academic success. Its creation and maintenance require nurturing from executive leadership.

There is no disputing that intercollegiate athletics as a whole, and especially community college athletics, can engender harsh criticism when it comes to academic qualifications, dedication, successes, and attainments of the students who choose to add athletics to their scholarly pursuits. Historically, the criticisms of the term *student-athlete* sometimes were well deserved. Some of these criticisms are that community college student-athletes are underprepared, unmotivated academically, and "less intelligent"; take only easy classes that do not count toward degree attainment; take only physical education courses; are blocked by their athletic demands from academic achievement; and do not graduate or succeed academically.<sup>84</sup> While these criticisms surely have been warranted at some points in history with some community college student-athletes, a review of the literature includes a contrasting view of academic success by community college student-athletes. There are contrasting data in the literature regarding the academic success of student-athletes at community colleges and the relative impact of the athletic participation on these success metrics. Although not irrefutable, evidence can be found in the literature indicating

that the following is true of community college student-athletes:

- When comparing student-athletes and non-student-athletes, it is the student-athletes who tend to outperform their non-athlete counterparts in terms of both credit hours earned per semester and grade point average.<sup>85</sup>
- Different studies provide contrasting results as to whether student-athletes have a higher degree-attainment rate than their non-athlete counterparts.<sup>86</sup>
- "Within the context of community colleges, it could be argued that athletic participation increases the likelihood of success for student-athletes, rather than serves as a distractor from academic performance, compared with students in the general population."<sup>87</sup>
- In a 2009 study, one researcher "found that [community college] students felt as if their academics supersede the sport in which they participate. In relation, the stronger of a relationship they had with their team and coaches correlated with a commitment to succeed in the classroom."<sup>88</sup>

- Persistence and retention rates at community colleges are generally higher for student-athletes than non-athletes.<sup>89</sup>
- A 2002 study at Palomar College showed that degree attainment time is much faster for student-athletes than non-athletes, with as many as five times more student-athletes attaining a degree by the fifth semester than non-athletes.<sup>90</sup>

Every college with athletics should calculate these comparisons of their student-athletes versus non-athletes in order to have an understanding of the impact of athletics on institutional student success metrics and the effectiveness of their athletic-academic support services.

It is imperative that new executive leaders make certain the academic environment of their athletic department fosters positive academic metrics and does not allow academic complacency to set in. Setting the academic expectations and monitoring the fulfillment of these expectations are vital roles of new executive leaders if the athletic department is to maintain its place within the mission of the community college.

Demanding a culture of student-athlete academic success needs to start with the executive leadership of the college creating that expectation. The new executive leaders overseeing athletics then need to create or maintain the infrastructure that will allow the coaches and the athletic department leadership make that culture a reality. This infrastructure includes:

- **A positive athletic department/faculty relationship.** One idea to strengthen this relationship would be to include a blend of student services and academic services staff/faculty when designing the academic supports for student-athletes and when setting the academic expectations of the athletic program.<sup>91</sup> Constantly monitoring and improving the relationship between faculty and the athletic department is a vital role

of executive leadership. According to one study, more than one third of all community college student-athletes report animosity between themselves and their faculty, especially related to absences. Fostering a collaborative and trust-filled relationship can be an arduous task but will undoubtedly pay dividends, as student-athletes will miss class from time to time and will likely need to make up missed assignments and exams on a frequent basis.<sup>92</sup>

- **A well-built academic monitoring and tutoring system.** "Athletes at most two-year colleges have the advantage of a sophisticated and comprehensive support system: coaches who force them to go to class, assistant coaches and tutors who monitor their academic progress, and required study halls and tutoring sessions. Without that support system, many athletes would undoubtedly drop out. With it, they tend not only to stay in school but usually end up moving on."<sup>93</sup> One

*Setting the academic expectations and monitoring the fulfillment of these expectations are vital roles of new executive leaders if the athletic department is to maintain its place within the mission of the community college.*

study indicated that these student-athlete academic support services can have dramatic impacts on success rates of student-athletes from underrepresented groups, as compared with their non-athlete counterparts of the same demographic groups. This is especially true of African-American males. This study suggested "the proliferation of student social and academic integration manifested

through sport participation, and the encouragement and mentorship provided by athletic coaches and other institutional members, contributed to the differences found in retention rates between Black male nonathlete students and student-athletes.<sup>94</sup> This is a component of the athletics enterprise that is potentially fraught with institutional tension, as other members of the campus community may wonder why these extensive supports are not provided for all students or why the expenditures for these supports are made only when they benefit student-athletes. Executive leaders should be prepared to have conversations regarding these potential criticisms.

- **A strong academic advising system for student-athletes.** Student-athlete academic success requires these athletes to get through a myriad of challenges that fall within the student-academic advisor relationship. These potentially include navigating the maze of developmental courses before entering college-level coursework and completing all degree requirements. Student-athletes will need to complete “the required core courses, avoid taking non-transferable credit hours that will not count toward transfer, and be quickly brought up to college-level readiness, if they enter college not ready for college-level work.”<sup>95</sup> Academic advisors play a central role in assisting student-athletes through these obstacles. Additionally, the academic advisors used by student-athletes will need very specific and up-to-date understandings of all the NAIA and NCAA transfer

rules to help student-athletes prepare for athletic scholarships and playing opportunities once their community college playing days are over.<sup>96</sup> Studies also show that to produce the positive success metrics for underrepresented student-athletes, a strong relationship between the student-athlete and the academic advisor, coaches, and faculty was crucial.<sup>97</sup> Executive leaders should be involved in this component of the athletics enterprise by monitoring the degree attainment rates and degree types earned by the student-athletes in order to adjust expectations if this is needed over time.

- **A strong student-athlete personal development system.** “A well-run and well-connected athletics program also helps promote educational values to future generations of students. Student-athletes are among the most active community volunteers, frequently speaking to school children and hospital patients. Many talk passionately about their academic goals.”<sup>98</sup> The skills at the heart of any good athletic personal development program include proper socialization skills, leadership skills, sportsmanship skills, community service, and appropriate citizenry skills.<sup>99</sup> “The overwhelming majority [of student-athletes] stated that these learned skills and values, as well as the personal contacts they have made through intercollegiate athletics, will indeed help them in the future to obtain a desirable job or career.”<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Horton, 2009, p. 17

<sup>85</sup> Horton, 2015

<sup>86</sup> Horton, 2015; Nichols, 2014

<sup>87</sup> Horton, 2015, p. 292

<sup>88</sup> Nichols, 2014, p. 13

<sup>89</sup> Mendoza, Horton, & Mendez, 2012; Nichols, 2014

<sup>90</sup> Nichols, 2014

<sup>91</sup> Lawrence, Ott, et al., 2009

<sup>92</sup> Nichols, 2014

<sup>93</sup> Jenkins, 2006, p. 2

<sup>94</sup> Mendoza et al., 2012

<sup>95</sup> Horton, 2015

<sup>96</sup> Lawrence, Mullin, et al., 2009

<sup>97</sup> Horton, 2015

<sup>98</sup> Holbrook, 2004, p. 28

<sup>99</sup> Castañeda, 2004

<sup>100</sup> Nichols, 2014, p. 68

# COMPLIANCE PART A – TITLE IX GENDER EQUITY

## Why is this important to me as a community college executive leader?

1. Given the understaffing and underfunding of most Title IX compliance programs at community colleges, it is easy for Title IX athletic compliance to take a backseat to the sexual harassment and misconduct efforts that currently are responding to frequent changes in federal requirements. Because the Title IX coordinator at many community colleges reports directly to the executive leaders, these top administrators must make sure Title IX athletic compliance is regularly reviewed and maintained.
2. “[Recent legal cases and complaints to OCR] reveal that Title IX compliance in athletic departments is being monitored at the community college level and institutions may be vulnerable to complaints and lawsuits. The cost of such litigation can be extremely high, not only in time and effort to respond to complaints but in the cost of litigation itself.”<sup>101</sup>

Title IX compliance is a fundamental requirement for all aspects of community college service to its constituencies. “Fundamentally, Title IX of the Education Amendment to the 1964 Civil Rights Act is the law that offers protection against sex discrimination for students participating in programs offered by educational institutions that receive federal financial support. In relevant part, the statute reads: No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance [Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 44 Fed. Reg. at 71413].”<sup>102</sup> It is this statute that paved the way for women’s athletic teams and opportunities to be added to the male teams and opportunities that existed prior to 1972 in community college athletic departments. Soon after the Title IX law was passed, the federal government was asked how it would be determined if a college or university was meeting the standards

for gender equity as required by Title IX. “The requirements for Title IX compliance are clarified and outlined in the 1979 Intercollegiate Athletics Interpretation, otherwise known as the Policy Interpretation. It is in the Policy Interpretation where a measure of athletic participation opportunities known as the ‘three-part test’ is found.”<sup>103</sup> The three-part test has been further clarified several times by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) in 1996, 1998, 2003, 2005, and several other times since the first discussion of the test in 1979.<sup>104</sup> To demonstrate a community college is providing equal gender access to their athletic program, a college must meet at least one of these three requirements:

“**Test one** is proportionality. Ensure participation in athletics for women and men at rates that are proportional to their enrollment.

**Test two** is the continued expansion of programs for the underrepresented sex as their interests and abilities have evolved.

**Test three** is full accommodation of the un-

derrepresented sex: Offer every team for which there is sufficient interest and ability, as well as sufficient competition in the geographic areas where the college normally competes."<sup>105</sup>

Beyond equal gender access to athletic programs, Title IX requires equal treatment between the genders after access has been achieved. Bonnette and Von Euler (2004) describe the 12 areas in which gender equality must be reviewed and achieved for a community college to achieve Title IX compliance:

- "Athletic Financial Assistance [scholarships]
- equipment and supplies
- scheduling of games and practice times
- travel and per diem allowances
- tutoring
- coaching
- locker rooms, practice and competitive facilities
- medical and training facilities and services
- housing and dining facilities and services
- publicity
- support services
- recruitment of student-athletes"<sup>106</sup>

There are many facets to each of these aspects that must be carefully administered to ensure compliance. Even the most diligent of athletic programs can contain areas of non-compliance if they are not regularly reviewed. Sports with large rosters and large budgets, such as football, can present significant compliance challenges for Title IX compliance at community colleges.

One of the most common problem areas for Title IX compliance for community colleges of concern is facilities. Most sports where there are corresponding male and female versions that usually play at the same venue are a little easier to manage in some ways under these compliance requirements because the playing spaces and ad-

jacent facilities, such as locker rooms and training spaces, are likely to be equivalent. Even with these matching male and female sports, there are other Title IX compliance pitfalls, such as which team gets which practice times, training times, and the prime time for contests when they play on the same evening, which is common. Baseball and softball can prove to be particularly difficult from a Title IX compliance standpoint and should be very closely examined on a regular basis because they are corresponding sports but play at different but easily comparable facilities. Football is another NJCAA sport that creates considerable Title IX challenges pertaining to facilities because of the requisite number of facilities, size of those facilities to facilitate such a large roster, and the event management needs of such a sport.

The OCR monitors every intercollegiate athletic program annually to help ensure Title IX compliance, including the publication of every institution's compliance data as part of its annual disclosure requirements. The Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act mandates that every Title IV federal aid-eligible, co-ed community college submit an annual accounting of "athletic participation, staffing, and revenues and expenses, by men's and women's teams." The Department [of Education] will use this information in preparing its required report to the Congress on gender equity in intercollegiate athletics.<sup>107</sup> This report is due mid-October every year and will likely take significant efforts from an institution's athletic director and Title IX coordinator, along with assistance from the human resources department, the business office, and the institutional research department.

**For more information:**

1. OCR Reading Room – Policy – Sex Discrimination <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/frontpage/faq/rr/policyguidance/sex.html>
2. Bonnette, V. M., & Von Euler, M. (2004). *Title IX and intercollegiate athletics: How it all works—in plain English*. Good Sports.
3. Staurowsky, E. J. (2009a). Gender equity in two-year athletic departments: Part I. *Student Athletes and Athletics. New Directions for Community Colleges, 2009(147)*, 53-62. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.377>
4. Staurowsky, E. J. (2009b). Gender equity in two-year athletic departments: Part II. *Student Athletes and Athletics. New Directions for Community Colleges, 2009(147)*, 63-73. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.378>
5. Miller, B. A. (2019). *Title IX after 45 years: Overlooked disparities in the National Junior College Athletic Association and California Community College Athletic Association*. <https://commons.lib.niu.edu/bitstream/handle/10843/20252/Vol10Iss2-Miller-PDFA.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

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<sup>101</sup> Staurowsky, 2009b, p. 69

<sup>102</sup> Staurowsky, 2009a, p. 56; Miller, 2019

<sup>103</sup> Staurowsky, 2009a, p. 56

<sup>104</sup> Bonnette & Von Euler, 2004

<sup>105</sup> Pierce, 2018, p. 12

<sup>106</sup> Bonnette & Von Euler, 2004, p. 2

<sup>107</sup> U. S. Department of Education, 2017



# COMPLIANCE PART B – OTHER FEDERAL AND NJCAA COMPLIANCE

## Why is this important to me as a community college executive leader?

1. Executive leadership must ensure that the community college has adequate resources to meet all of these compliance requirements.
2. Compliance violations can be very visible “black eyes” for a community college. They also can have significant financial impacts in terms of fines, lawsuits, or eligibility to participate in Title IV funding with the U.S. Department of Education.
3. Many of these compliance requirements exist for the safety of our student-athletes, and protecting these students must be a priority for any community college with an athletic department.

**G**ender equity in athletics certainly receives a considerable amount of attention with regard to federal compliance in intercollegiate athletics; however, it is but one of many compliance requirements a community college athletic department must successfully navigate for the good of its student-athletes and the institution. It is the role of the executive leaders in an institution to make sure that all those involved with the athletic enterprise at the community college do not let the wins and losses and the day-to-day athletic grind of practices, home events, road trips, and post-season success overshadow the compliance efforts in these environments.

### Sexual Violence Prevention

Midway through the last decade, the major college athletic organizations focused significant attention on the larger societal issue of sexual misconduct, especially as it related to the misconduct of college athletes. “Sexual misconduct—including sexual and gender-based harassment,

sexual assault/sexual violence, stalking, and intimate partner violence—is embedded in American society and affects people of all socioeconomic levels in our culture. Institutions of higher education and their athletics programs are not immune to the attitudes and behaviors that contribute to sexual violence, a major public health threat that demands a strong and comprehensive public health response.”<sup>108</sup>

In 2015, the NJCAA announced the “It’s On Us”<sup>109</sup> campaign to help its member colleges and their athletes at the same time the NCAA had commissioned a task force to develop their “Sexual Violence Prevention: An Athletics Tool Kit for a Healthy and Safe Culture.”<sup>110</sup> Under Title IX, the Clery Act, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), and various state laws, such as Illinois’ Preventing Sexual Violence in Higher Education Act, community colleges have an affirmative duty to work with their students and campus communities to combat sexual violence. Working with student-ath-

letes is a significant component of these duties.

Examples of the connectivity between institutional compliance with these laws and a community college's athletic departments comes from the Department of Education's *The Handbook for Campus Safety and Security Reporting 2016 Edition, a manual for college compliance with the Clery and VAWA acts*.<sup>111</sup> This manual details a community college's responsibility to:

- Count non-contiguous athletic complexes into a college's Clery geography and reporting obligations.
- Designate "a director of athletics, [and] all athletic coaches (including part-time employees and graduate assistants)" as Campus

*It is the role of the executive leaders in an institution to make sure that all those involved with the athletic enterprise at the community college do not let the wins and losses and the day-to-day athletic grind of practices, home events, road trips, and post-season success overshadow the compliance efforts in these environments.*

Security Authorities (CSAs) which creates in them specific reporting and training obligations.<sup>112</sup>

- Include in the annual campus safety report crime statistics of properties that teams stay at during their travels.

Fines for Clery violations can range as high as \$59,017 per offense currently. There are not only moral and ethical reasons to work toward sexual misconduct prevention, but financial reasons to make compliance a priority as well.

#### **Biennial Alcohol and Drug Review**

According to the Drug-Free Schools and Campuses regulations, all colleges and universities must review all alcohol and drug use mitigation

programming and its effectiveness every two years.<sup>113</sup> One of the components required in this review is a reporting of any athletic department infractions of its drug and alcohol policies. Also, these policies require a review to determine sufficiency or needed alterations. If one's community college has an athletic drug testing policy, it will need to be reported and reviewed in this biennial review as well. The drug testing policy for an institution can be an important issue for new executive leaders to become informed about, especially regarding decisions on test types administered, frequency of testing, and consequences for positive tests. There are significant competitive, legal, and public perception implications for these decisions. Executive leadership will be needed to work with legal counsel for the institution in this area.

#### **NJCAA Compliance**

NJCAA compliance is an extensive and daunting endeavor for any community college athletic department. The more teams and student-athletes that an institution has, the larger this task is. Compliance rules are published annually by the NJCAA in the *NJCAA Handbook*.<sup>114</sup> They can be grouped into the following categories:

- Initial Athlete Eligibility – These are the standards that athletes coming out of high school must meet initially to be eligible to compete athletically for a community college.
- Academic Eligibility – These rules all revolve around the academic progress and success metrics that student-athletes must meet to continue to be eligible to participate in their sports. These rules include credit-hour attainment rules for both semesters and academic years, grade-point-average rules, acceptable course-completion rules, and rules pertaining to student-athletes with disabilities.
- Athletic Eligibility – These rules pertain to seasons of competition and the ability for student-athletes to compete for their community college team.

- **Medical Safety** – These are rules that focus on physical examinations, drug and alcohol use, and concussion protocols.
- **Amateurism** – These rules focus on athletic competition and participation that are legal for NJCAA student-athletes outside of their community college teams. Definitions of what constitutes prohibited professional athletic participation are crucial in this area.
- **Administrative Procedures for community college athletic departments** – These rules focus on the procedures athletic departments must follow with regard to certifying athlete eligibility, participation, and communication with the national office.
- **Hardships** – These rules pertain to situations when athletes start a season of competition and cannot finish. These are commonly known as “Redshirt” situations.
- **Transfer** – These rules govern situations when student-athletes transfer from another community college or four-year institution. They are used to determine if that student-athlete will be eligible to compete for their new community college upon transfer.
- **Grant-in-Aid** – These rules govern all aspects of athletic scholarships and include which costs scholarships can cover, to whom scholarships can be given, how scholarships are renewed or retracted with student-athletes, institutional obligations, number of scholarships permitted by sport, and Letters of Intent (LOIs). LOIs are the agreements created between the institution and the athlete that outline the terms of the scholarship.
- **Recruitment** – These rules govern which students can be recruited, which recruitment practices are permissible, and financial expenditures in recruiting.
- **Athletic Calendar and Participation** – These rules govern the yearly athletic calendar for each sport and which activities are permis-

sible in each component of that yearly cycle. They delineate between each sport’s official in-season and out-of-season designations; establish practice, workout, and competition limitations for in-season; and establish practice, workout, and competition limitations for out-of-season times.

- **Financial Rules** – These rules detail which expenditures are legally covered by institutional funds for all aspects of the athletic department.
- **Sport Procedures** – These rules govern all aspects of the competition seasons for individual sports, including, but not limited to, the number of allowable contests, facility rules, sport rules unique to that sport, post-season tournament structure and eligibility, sport relevant dates and deadlines, athletic awards, uniform and equipment rules, and sport-specific health and safety rules.

#### **Region/Conference Compliance**

NJCAA regions may create rules that are applicable only for their respective regions. Compliance with these rules must be maintained by each regional athletic department. Many of these rules will govern competition rules and requirements for member institutions as they relate to regional tournaments, the beginning phase of post-season play for most NJCAA sports. These rules might require a certain number of competitions among regional teams, establish seeding and regional tournament structures, govern regional awards, set conduct standards, and govern disciplinary requirements. These rules might also set official pay and assignment guidelines, set regional dues, set regional leadership selection, and establish dispute resolution procedures. In addition to the types of rules mentioned for NJCAA regions, conferences might establish additional conference transfer rules, championship procedures, and conference membership guidelines. The NJCAA sets the overall rule structure, the boundaries, for all rules at the

region, conference, and institutional level. The region, conference, and institution can then choose to make additional and more restrictive rules as

long as they stay within these general guidelines of all of the entities above them in this hierarchy.

**For more information:**

1. The latest Campus Security Reporting Guidelines: <https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/campus.html>
2. NJCAA. (2020). *NJCAA handbook: 2020-2021 academic year*.
3. Region and Conference By-Laws – These can be obtained from each region’s Regent, Men’s Region Director, and/or Women’s Region Director.
4. National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and Sport Science Institute. (2019). *Sexual violence prevention: An athletics tool kit for a healthy and safe culture* (2nd ed.). [https://ncaaorg.s3.amazonaws.com/ssi/violence/SSI\\_SexualViolencePreventionToolkit.pdf](https://ncaaorg.s3.amazonaws.com/ssi/violence/SSI_SexualViolencePreventionToolkit.pdf)

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<sup>108</sup> National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) & Sport Science Institute, 2019, p. 1

<sup>109</sup> NJCAA, 2015

<sup>110</sup> NCAA & Sport Science Institute, 2019

<sup>111</sup> U.S. Department of Education, 2016

<sup>112</sup> U.S. Department of Education, 2016, p. 4-3

<sup>113</sup> U.S. Department of Education, 2006

<sup>114</sup> NJCAA, 2020

# RISK MANAGEMENT

## Why is this important to me as a community college executive leader?

1. Analyzing and finding solutions for all of these factors requires significant resources. Risk management is not the area in which to skimp financially within the community college athletic budget. To protect the institution, resource allocation for athletic risk management needs to be a high priority for executive leaders in the community college.
2. Many risk management policies are institutional policy level and therefore require the support of college executive leadership.
3. At most community colleges, this level of legal and financial risk assumption is a decision for the highest levels of leadership and governance.

The area of risk management in athletics is a particularly important component of executive leadership participation in the athletic program at a community college. Inherent dangers lurk in almost every aspect of a community college athletic program, but most programs do not have the legal or risk management staff to handle these topics at the athletic department level. The significant amount of policy development and legal and risk management development needed for a community college athletic department almost certainly requires the involvement and significant participation of the community college's executive leadership. For most new executive leaders, even if they have experience with risk management in other aspects of the community college operation, there are many components of the athletic risk management portfolio that will be new to their attention. Every athletic program is different in its offerings, facilities, and practices, so no section of this tool outlining general risk management concepts could be comprehensive, nor is that the intent of this section. It will, however, provide several starters for the conversations that will need to occur among new executive leaders, athletic department leadership, campus risk management experts, college legal counsel, and trustees.

## Informed Consent

"Risk warning and informed consent ... [are] critical aspects of sport risk management."<sup>115</sup>

- Athletic participation comes with an inherent risk of injury. In order to lessen the risk of litigation by an athlete when injury does occur, most colleges will attempt to protect themselves by asking the participants, or the parent/guardian if the athlete is a minor, to waive their right to sue.<sup>116</sup>
- In order for the waiver of risk to be effective, it must be combined with another legal doctrine—informed consent. "Adult athletes are agreeing to submit themselves to the circumstances of participation with the attendant risks."<sup>117</sup>
- Athletes must not only be informed about the risks associated with their participation, but also be educated about injury prevention and risk reduction. "Thus, the issues of 'risk warning' and 'informed consent' are interrelated. Unless athletes and parents are advised of the risk of injury in their chosen sport, and fully understand that risk, they have not given legally effective consent to participation. For that reason it is essential to integrate warning and informed consent into one process."<sup>118</sup>

- Regular evaluation and adjustment of a community college's risk warnings and informed consent policies and procedures should be part of the work done by the executive leaders over athletics.

#### **Transportation**

- The legal duty for a community college to provide safe transportation to and from its athletic contests is well documented both legally and in the academic literature.
- "The duty to provide safe transportation begins with securing or checking current travel insurance policies, gaining required authorized travel forms, selecting the appropriate mode of safe transportation for one's group, selecting a qualified driver, supervising the entire group from the point of meeting at the vehicle and throughout the entire trip, and finally ensuring all passengers are safely in their vehicles to return to their destinations."<sup>119</sup>

#### **15-passenger vans**

- Selection of the appropriate mode of transportation is worth additional attention. Because of their cost effectiveness and prevalence, 15-passenger vans have been a very common form of transportation among community college athletic programs. This mode of transportation also has proven to be one of the most dangerous when it comes to catastrophic athletic-related accidents over the years.
- "The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) and National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) have addressed the risks and dangers of rollover accidents associated with continued use of 15-passenger vans. After conducting numerous tests on 15-passenger van travel, the NHTSA and NTSB have issued repeated warnings regarding the use of 15-passenger vans. The tests indicated that vans are three times more

likely to roll over when carrying more than 10 passengers (NHTSA, 2001, 2002, 2004; NTSB, 2002). The NTSB also found that 15-passenger vans are involved in a greater number of single-vehicle accidents resulting in rollover crashes than any other passenger vehicles (NTSB, 2002)."<sup>120</sup>

- Facilitating creative vehicle sharing or the funding for transportation rental agreements is another way executive leaders in community colleges can be influential to minimize the financial and risk issues associated with athletic travel.

#### **Drivers**

- A common practice in community college athletics is to have coaches serve as drivers for their teams. Extreme care should be taken with this practice.
  - Imagine a situation where a part-time basketball coach works her full-time job off campus starting at 8 AM, comes to campus to pick up her team at 3 PM, and drives them the 2.5 hours to their basketball game. She then goes through a stressful and exhausting 3-hour game where various mishaps, or even serious injuries, might have occurred. She then gets back into the vehicle at 10 PM, driving her team home, arriving after midnight, while she has been distracted by thoughts of the game and the needed next steps for the season. That coach has had the team's safety put in her hands after already working 14 hours that day.
  - Driver training and hours limitation regulations should be put in place for every community college. Additional state regulations might exist for drivers of this nature as well.
- The risk associated with staff drivers,

along with the costs associated with college-owned fleet vehicles has led some community colleges to contract out driving and/or vehicle use.

- "Transporting college athletes has been an overlooked risk management issue facing administrators. Team travel accidents have caused death, injury, liability claims, property loss, and grief."<sup>121</sup> If a college has not had any major travel-related issues ever, or for a long period of time, they can be lulled into a false sense of security with regard to transportation-related liability.
- Transportation costs and risks should be significant components in all decisions regarding adding, retaining, or eliminating sports when these decisions are being considered by executive leaders.
- Regular athletic transportation policy and procedure development and review are needed and must involve the college's executive leadership. With the great volume of athletic trips, consistent follow-through is the key to minimizing risk in transportation. "If exceptions and inconsistencies prevail, then prudent practices begin to slacken and the institution increases its risk for lawsuits."<sup>122</sup>

#### **Property and Facility Risk**

Community college athletic departments may have several facilities, both indoor and outdoor, that will need to be part of an institution's risk management portfolio in order to ensure safety for both athletes and spectators. These facilities include not only the facilities that house one's competitions, but also those that house one's practice complexes, fitness training spaces, locker rooms, storage facilities, and medical and athletic training facilities. Given the unique and nuanced uses of these facilities, it is difficult for athletic directors and coaches to have enough time and expertise to be solely responsible for facility risk management, and an institutional general risk management supervisor might not have requisite athletics under-

standing to adequately assess athletic facilities on their own. "There is no doubt that most managers at recreational facilities understand the basics of loss control and claims management. However, because many aren't full-time risk managers, it is difficult for them to keep pace with this sophisticated, evolving profession. . . . As is the case with the sporting activities that take place at many recreational facilities, a winning approach to risk management involves having a good team—in this case, consisting of [the athletic director, the coaches,] the risk manager, claims personnel, a loss control expert and the insurance agent, all working together to identify potential problems and their remedies."<sup>123</sup>

#### **Insurance**

Community colleges must take great care of the insurance components of their risk management strategies as they pertain to intercollegiate athletics. "All sports organizations . . . need to be covered and protected by a number of different liability and property insurance policies that comprise what is commonly known as a property and casualty insurance program. . . . And it's not just the sports organizations as legal entities that are at risk. It's of equal importance to protect the respective directors, officers, employees, and volunteers who operate these sports organizations, as their personal assets are often 'on the chopping block' during litigation."<sup>124</sup> It is important that each community college conduct a frequent analysis of existing coverage under general institutional policies for athletics and additional policies/endorsements or coverage limits needed to adequately protect the athletic program and those individuals within it. According to John Sadler,<sup>125</sup> examples of needed coverages might include:

- General Liability
- Student-Athlete Health
- Catastrophic Injury
- Cyber Liability
- Medical Liability
- Sexual Abuse/Molestation

- Warranty of Waiver
- Punitive Damages
- Property Liability
- Accident
- Business Auto/Transportation
- Management/Directors/Professional Liability
- Equipment Liability

**For more information:**

1. Appenzeller, H. (Ed.), *Risk management in sport: Issues and strategies* (3rd ed.). Carolina Academic Press.
2. Keehan, A. S. (2009). Bad tackles, stray balls, and hot weather: Managing risk in college athletics. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 56(14), A25-A25.

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<sup>116</sup> Ball, 2012, p. 23

<sup>118</sup> Ball, 2012

<sup>117</sup> Ball, 2012, p. 26

<sup>118</sup> Ball, 2012, p. 27

<sup>119</sup> LaVetter, 2012, p. 55

<sup>120</sup> LaVetter & Kim, 2010, p. 450

<sup>121</sup> LaVetter & Kim, 2010, p. 449

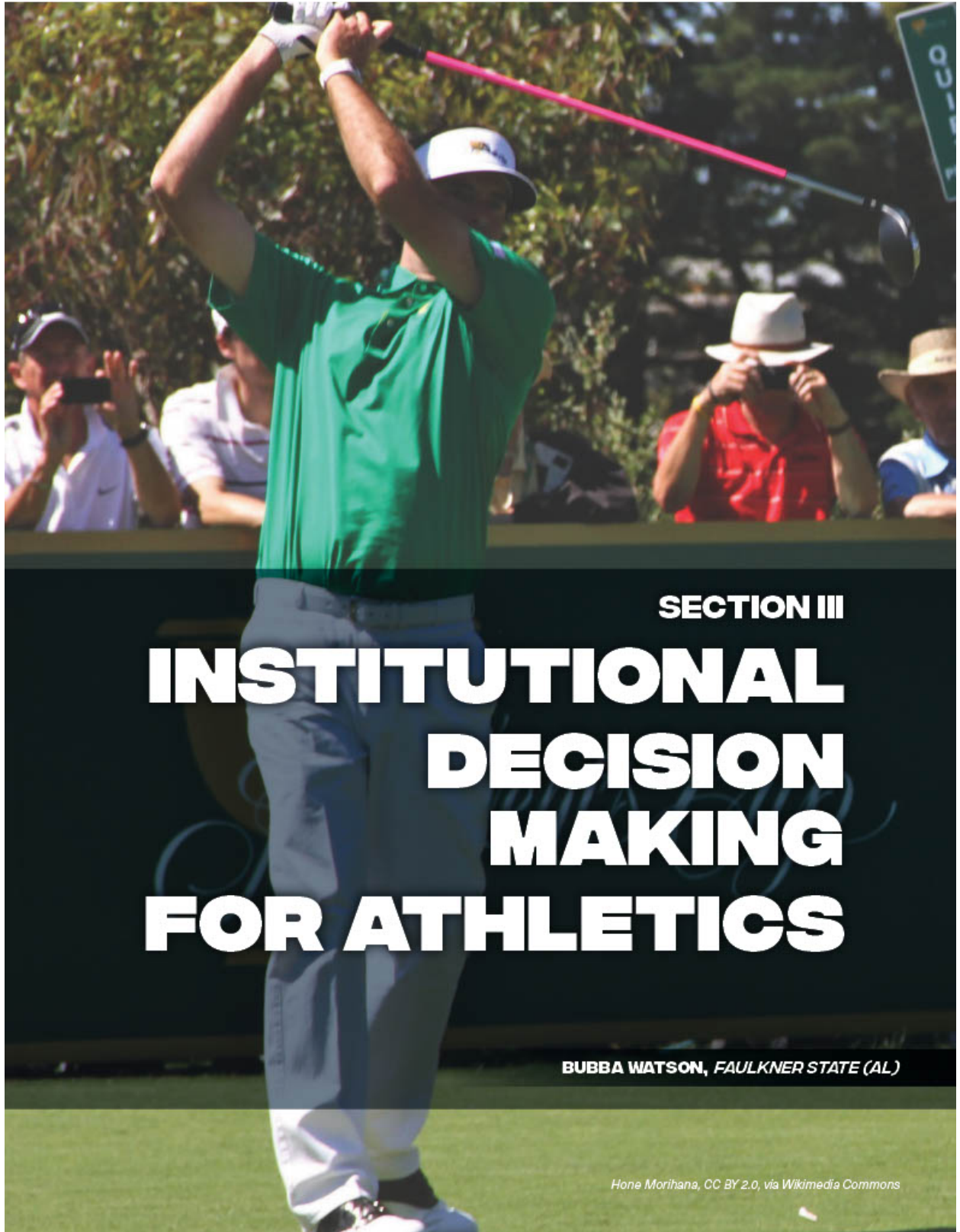
<sup>122</sup> LaVetter, 2012, p. 56

<sup>123</sup> Conway & Jones, 1993, p. 1; O'Brien, 2018

<sup>124</sup> Sadler, 2012, p. 139; Keehan, 2009

<sup>125</sup> Sadler, 2012, p. 139





**SECTION III**

**INSTITUTIONAL  
DECISION  
MAKING  
FOR ATHLETICS**

**BUBBA WATSON, FAULKNER STATE (AL)**

*Hone Morihana, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons*

# NJCAA DIVISIONS AND DECLARATION CONSIDERATIONS

## Why is this important to me as a community college executive leader?

1. Every four years, when NJCAA member colleges declare which sports they will be offering and at which division of play, the upper administration should be part of the review due to the financial and student success implications of these decisions.
2. The college's division of competition for each of its sports provides vital context for upper administrators in setting the strategic goals for the athletic department and completing a programmatic assessment of the athletic department.
3. The athletic division decisions made by neighboring colleges will have a significant impact on the decisions made at one's own college. Understanding these divisional decisions allows administrators to participate in informed conversations with their peers.

Another important aspect of NJCAA athletics that a new community college leader needs to understand is the divisional structure. Similar to the NCAA, the NJCAA division structure sets up competition in three sport divisions: Division I (DI), Division II (DII), and Division III (DIII).

NJCAA member colleges choose not only which sports they will offer, but also within which division they will participate and at what funding levels within that division. This determination is made during the declaration period, held once every four years. The last NJCAA declaration period was held in Fall 2020, with the declarations made by each member school at that time in effect from August 1, 2022 through July 31, 2026.<sup>127</sup> Some of the sports under the NJCAA umbrella are offered at all three divisions and others are offered at only one or two of the division levels.

### NJCAA Divisional Grant-In-Aid Differences<sup>126</sup>

	D-I	D-II	D-III
Tuition and fees	Yes	Yes	No
Room and board	Yes	No	No
Course-related books	Yes	Yes	No
"Up to \$250 in course-related supplies"	Yes	Yes	No
Transportation – 1 trip each way to and from the student-athlete's home by most direct route per academic year	Yes	No	No

**NJCAA Sports Participation by Divisions Offered**  
(Number of Teams for 2021/2022 Year)<sup>128</sup>

Region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	Total
Baseball I	7	5	0	4	18	18	10	20	8	7	4	0	0	11	2	8	6	6	0	3	0	18	2	11	168
Baseball II	7	9	1	13	0	1	0	4	0	15	8	21	7	0	6	2	0	0	7	11	1	0	16	9	138
Baseball III	0	1	17	8	6	0	0	0	0	4	0	4	17	2	7	0	0	0	14	4	6	0	0	0	90
M Basketball I	5	9	0	8	17	13	10	16	13	8	3	0	6	14	2	5	9	7	1	4	0	16	18	10	194
M Basketball II	6	6	4	17	0	8	0	4	2	12	9	25	5	0	5	3	0	0	6	12	0	0	0	7	131
M Basketball III	0	0	15	5	6	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	16	0	9	0	1	0	20	6	12	0	0	0	94
M Bowling*	0	0	6	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	10	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	30
M XC I	2	0	0	0	9	13	0	1	3	2	4	0	0	3	1	0	3	2	2	2	0	1	1	1	50
M XC II	7	6	0	10	0	3	2	4	1	2	5	17	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	7	0	2	0	3	73
M XC III	0	0	12	3	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	2	0	0	9	2	2	0	14	7	6	0	0	0	61
M Football I	0	1	0	0	2	8	0	1	0	0	3	1	0	5	2	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	14	0	42
M Football II	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
M Golf I	3	0	0	0	8	7	0	1	6	2	2	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	10	0	1	43
M Golf II	5	2	0	13	0	1	3	0	2	5	9	11	0	1	0	4	1	0	0	2	0	0	10	10	79
M Golf III	0	0	10	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	4	0	7	0	2	0	8	5	5	0	0	0	46
M08H00Marathon*	0	0	0	0	5	7	1	2	3	1	5	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	28
M Lacrosse*	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	6	6	0	0	0	0	24
M Soccer I	2	7	1	2	3	8	0	3	8	8	5	0	0	8	2	2	0	7	2	4	0	0	1	3	76
M Soccer II	9	0	0	16	0	3	0	0	2	5	5	6	1	0	1	6	2	0	2	9	1	0	11	4	83
M Soccer III	0	0	17	7	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	11	0	1	0	17	4	9	0	0	0	72
M S&D	0	0	5	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
M Tennis I	3	0	0	10	2	4	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	4	10	3	44
M Tennis III	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	12
M IT&F	5	0	0	3	3	15	0	1	2	3	7	3	1	1	4	2	0	1	3	1	2	0	2	2	61
M OT&F I	5	0	0	2	6	15	0	2	3	2	7	4	1	2	0	1	0	1	2	5	0	0	3	2	63
M OT&F III	0	0	5	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	8	1	0	0	9	2	6	0	0	0	0	35
M Wrestling*	0	2	2	5	0	8	0	0	4	2	6	5	5	0	3	0	0	6	8	1	0	0	0	0	57
W Basketball I	4	9	0	6	17	13	10	14	12	3	0	0	6	10	2	6	7	7	0	2	0	13	18	9	168
W Basketball II	7	6	4	18	0	8	0	2	3	12	11	25	4	0	5	3	0	9	15	0	0	0	8	140	
W Basketball III	0	0	15	5	3	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	16	0	9	0	0	0	17	5	10	0	0	0	84
W Beach Volleyball*	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	6	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	18
W Bowling*	0	0	6	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	10	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	30
W XC I	2	0	0	0	10	13	0	1	3	2	4	0	0	3	1	0	3	2	2	2	0	1	1	1	51
W XC II	7	6	0	10	0	3	2	9	1	3	5	16	1	0	0	2	0	0	2	8	0	2	0	3	80
W XC III	0	0	12	3	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	2	0	0	9	2	2	0	13	7	6	0	0	0	60
W Golf I	6	3	0	5	3	5	1	3	3	6	7	2	1	3	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	8	1	4	64
W Golf III	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	0	4	1	1	0	3	4	0	0	0	0	28
W H Marathon*	0	0	0	0	5	6	1	4	3	1	5	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	29
W Lacrosse*	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	10
W Soccer I	3	9	1	0	4	10	4	3	9	7	4	0	0	8	2	0	5	7	2	4	0	0	1	4	87
W Soccer II	9	0	0	14	0	4	0	2	2	5	5	8	1	0	1	6	0	0	6	7	0	0	11	6	87
W Soccer III	0	0	18	7	6	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	7	1	1	0	12	2	2	7	0	0	0	64
W Softball I	5	9	0	0	16	9	10	20	7	4	5	0	0	14	1	7	7	6	0	1	0	16	1	11	149
W Softball II	8	6	0	19	0	12	0	2	3	17	7	21	7	0	1	3	0	0	6	13	0	0	16	8	149
W Softball III	0	0	17	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	16	0	3	0	0	0	13	4	2	0	0	0	63
W S&D	0	0	5	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
W Tennis I	4	0	0	9	3	4	0	4	0	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	6	10	3	51	
W Tennis III	0	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	15
W IT&F	5	0	0	3	3	15	0	1	2	3	7	3	1	1	4	2	0	1	3	1	2	0	2	2	61
W OT&F I	5	0	0	2	6	15	0	2	3	2	7	4	1	2	0	1	0	1	2	5	0	0	3	2	63
W OT&F III	0	0	5	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	8	1	0	0	9	2	6	0	0	0	0	35
W Volleyball I	3	0	0	2	14	9	0	9	12	2	3	0	0	9	1	3	1	6	0	1	0	11	0	6	92
W Volleyball II	7	3	0	18	0	11	4	10	3	15	10	22	8	0	1	3	0	0	4	11	0	0	3	12	145
W Volleyball III	0	0	16	6	6	0	0	0	0	5	0	2	17	0	14	0	0	0	15	6	6	0	0	0	93
Esports#	Data will be added for final edit																								
<b>NJCAA Exploratory Sport Declarations</b>																									
M Volleyball*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	7
W Wrestling*	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	7
W Flag Football*	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Clay Target Shoot#	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	7	0	7	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	18

\*Combination of schools offering scholarships and not - Only one championship offered regardless of scholarship status

#Combined gender sport

IT&F - Indoor Track & Field OT&F - Outdoor Track & Field S&D Swimming and Diving

There are many important contextual factors that go into the choice of the division a college selects for any given sport. Some of these factors, especially those related to finance and budget, will be covered in greater depth in other sections of this guide. The following, however, are some of the considerations:

- In which division do most other teams in an NJCAA region or conference compete for that sport? In some sports, choosing a division of competition different from a college's conference or regional peers might leave that college with challenging travel distances to find competitions, possibly resulting in concerns about student-athlete academic issues and missed class time, as well as large budgetary demands for travel and lodging costs.
- In an Illinois example, College X was participating at the DII level while almost all neighboring community colleges were participating at the DI level. College X reduced its sport offerings and moved these financial savings into financial support for the remaining sports to stay competitive athletically but minimize their travel distances.
- What level of competition is the college seeking? What level of aid is needed to draw the athletes that a college hopes to attract to its campus? In some cases, NJCAA DI teams are able to attract a higher caliber of athlete and field more athletically skilled teams than DII teams because of the increased athletic aid allowed. The same generally can be said for the competitive difference between DII and DIII teams. The location of the college, the enrollment and diversity goals of the college, and the existence of recruiting competitors might all weigh into the decision-making metrics in determining which athletic division—DI, DII, or DIII—makes the most sense for an institution's goals. The executive leadership of the college will need to create and

articulate its philosophy and its goals of athletics as it matches to its contextual realities of budget, geography, and enrollment. These philosophies and goals should be the primary components used by the executive leadership in the selection of division for its sports.

- College Y, for example, is on the edge of the DI/DII band in one Midwestern state and chooses to be DI in some sport offerings and DII in others.
- College Y's men's basketball plays at the DI level and their roster in 2019-2020 had two international players, nine out-of-state players, two out-of-district players, and three players from within their community college district.<sup>129</sup>
- College Y's women's basketball plays at the DII level, and their roster in 2019-2020 had no international players, two out-of-state players, six out-of-district players, and seven players from within their community college district.<sup>130</sup> It should be noted for transparency's sake that College Y attempts to maintain Title IX compliance by offering DI opportunities and resources in other women's sports, such as volleyball.
- Which competition levels are offered by the NJCAA for the particular sport the college wants to sponsor? Some divisions might not be available for particular sports.
  - Historically, all of Parkland College's (Illinois) teams participated at the DII level, except for men's and women's soccer. Those two sports were offered only at the DI and DIII levels. The sport is very popular in Parkland's community college district, so offering soccer is a big attraction for Parkland. The college provided DII-level grant-in-aid only for soccer, however, to keep it consistent with its other programs, despite the competitive disadvantage this created in post-season competition.

- When the NJCAA created Division II soccer in 2020, Parkland made the switch to the DII level and matched soccer with

all of its other sports in terms of division played.

**For more information:**

1. NJCAA website – [www.njcaa.org](http://www.njcaa.org) – sections on: Membership Directory and Divisional Structure.



<sup>126</sup> NJCAA, 2020

<sup>127</sup> NJCAA, 2020

<sup>128</sup> Lovett, 2021

<sup>129</sup> Lake Land College, 2019a

<sup>130</sup> Lake Land College, 2019b

# ADDITIONAL SCHOLARSHIP DECISIONS

## Why is this important to me as a community college executive leader?

1. Scholarship decisions have significant budget ramifications and need to be made at the institutional budget level of decision making.
2. Scholarship allocations may have governing board implications for community colleges so executive leadership should be involved in that interaction.
3. Regular review of these decisions and the effectiveness of the current scholarship system should be undertaken by the athletic director and the executive leadership. Foundation and institutional scholarships can be potentially combined with athletic grants-in-aid. There is potential for misuse and abuse of these non-athletic scholarships, especially in, but not limited to, DI and DIII sport situations. It is therefore imperative that new executive leaders understand these scholarship situations in great detail so they can provide the requisite oversight of an institution's scholarship practices and compliance.

In conjunction with decisions about NJCAA divisions for competition, scholarship decisions will need to be made if the community college is going to compete at the Division I or Division II levels. It first may be helpful to discuss some information from the community college literature regarding athletic scholarships.

### *Is a community college going to offer athletic grants-in-aid (athletic scholarships)?*

- There are many schools of thought regarding the necessity of scholarships for community college athletics. According to some scholars, "whether to offer athletic scholarships or not depends on the college's circumstances and mission. However, administrators should not assume that scholarships must always be offered to ensure a successful athletic program. Many students value the opportunity to participate in athletics beyond high school as sufficient reward."<sup>131</sup>
- "Institutions may also consider offering

partial scholarships as a way of containing costs while still presenting an incentive for students to attend and play sports at their institution. Though many successful athletic programs do award athletic scholarships, it is also possible to have a solid program without providing student-athletes with athletically related financial aid."<sup>132</sup>

- The circumstances these scholars discuss are likely geographic and demographic dependent. Rural community colleges spend more money on athletic-related aid for student-athletes than their suburban and urban counterparts in an effort to boost enrollment.<sup>133</sup>

*If scholarships are going to be offered, will the college offer the maximum number of allowable scholarships or some number less than the maximum?*

- On the chart below, the maximum number of Letters of Intent (LOIs) for each sport are listed. An LOI is the agreement between the player and the college; the player promises to attend the college and play for the team and the college promises some form of athletic aid and/or a spot on the team.
- Every student-athlete receiving any amount of athletic grant-in-aid must be on an LOI.
- Not every student on an LOI must be receiving athletic grant-in-aid. There might be strategic reasons to put a student-athlete on an LOI even if they are not receiving any athletic grant-in-aid if the college is giving fewer than the maximum allowable number of scholarships.
- If a college is providing fewer than the maximum number of allowable full athletic scholarships in a particular sport, the number of full athletic scholarships they are giving can be divided up between any number of student-athletes up to the maximum number of allowable LOIs. For example:
  - If College X decides to provide half the amount of allowable wrestling scholarships, they would allot 10 full scholarships to the wrestling coach to award. The head wrestling coach could decide to divide all 10 scholarships in half and give 20 different wrestlers each one-half of a scholarship, since wrestling is allotted 20 LOIs.
  - A combination of approaches can be used in a single sport. In volleyball, assume College Y allots 10 full scholarships to the sport. The volleyball coach could, for example, give out seven full scholarships to athletes, divide the other three scholarships in half, and give six athletes half scholarships, and then "lock up" one

walk-on on an LOI so that athlete cannot be recruited by a different community college.

- As indicated in the chart below, the number of allowable football scholarships is significantly larger than any other sport. Offsetting this potentially large number of male scholarships with requisite women's offerings in a way that is Title IX compliant can be incredibly challenging.

*What allowable scholarship components will a full scholarship include?*

- Remember from the previous section, DI athletic scholarships may include tuition and fees, room and board, books, and course supplies up to \$250 per academic year. Division II allows the same, except no room and board.
- Many community colleges do not include all of the allowable scholarship components in their scholarships. For example, DII College X might choose to include tuition, fees, and books for full scholarships, whereas College Y might choose to include only tuition and fees. This is purely an institutional decision.

*What will be the funding source for athletic scholarships?*

- A college may choose to use institutional funds to pay for grants-in-aid if that is allowed under their institutional policy and appropriate state laws. Some states prohibit the use of state and/or local funds for athletic scholarships.
- A college may choose to use student fee money collected from mandatory fees to pay for athletic scholarships.
- A college may choose to use fundraised money for athletic scholarships. This might be money raised by the college's foundation or by the athletic department itself.
- Colleges may choose to combine multiple allowable funding sources for athletic scholarships.

Men's Sport	Number of LOI - Full Scholarships
Baseball	24
Basketball	15
Bowling	12
Cross Country	10
Football	85
Golf	8
Half Marathon	*
Lacrosse	20
Soccer	24
Swimming & Diving	15
Tennis	**
Track & Field	20
Wrestling	20

Women's Sport	Number of LOI - Full Scholarships
Basketball	15
Beach Volleyball	10
Bowling	12
Cross Country	10
Golf	8
Half Marathon	*
Lacrosse	20
Soccer	24
Softball	24
Swimming & Diving	15
Tennis	**
Track & Field	20
Volleyball	14

\*Cross Country and Half Marathon get 10 combined scholarships

\*\* Division I Tennis will be limited to a maximum of nine Letters of Intent/Scholarships. Three of the nine scholarships given may be a maximum of tuition, course-related fees, room and board, course-related books, up to \$250 in course-required supplies and transportation costs to and from the college by direct route one time per academic year. Six of the nine scholarships are limited to tuition, course-related fees, course-related books, and up to \$250 in course-required supplies.

Chart created from the 2020-21 NJCAA Handbook.<sup>134</sup>

**Will the college place any residency limitations on scholarships?**

- If one considers the four main residency types of community college students—in-district, out-of-district but in-state, out-of-state, and international—colleges may choose to have stu-

dent-athletes from each of these categories.

- A college might choose to exclude or limit members of any of these residency categories from receiving athletic scholarships, in keeping with the college's mission, policies, or athletic philosophy.

**For more information:**

1. NJCAA Handbook – Eligibility Casebook Section: [https://d2o2figo6ddd0g.cloudfront.net/g/tr/km51pszfzt4xp/NJCAA\\_Handbook\\_-\\_Eligibility\\_Casebook\\_04-17-21.pdf](https://d2o2figo6ddd0g.cloudfront.net/g/tr/km51pszfzt4xp/NJCAA_Handbook_-_Eligibility_Casebook_04-17-21.pdf)
2. Annual institutional audit of the athletic department budget – Obtained from institution's Chief Financial Officer or Comptroller.

<sup>131</sup> Lawrence, Mullin, et al., 2009, p. 45

<sup>132</sup> Lawrence, Mullin, et al., 2009, p. 45

<sup>133</sup> Castañeda, 2004

<sup>134</sup> NJCAA, 2020



# ATHLETIC BUDGET CONSTRUCTION FOR AN NJCAA ATHLETIC PROGRAM

## Why is this important to me as a community college executive leader?

1. Fiscal oversight of athletics is an important role of the executive leader who oversees the athletic department. With a budget as large and diverse as that of a community college athletic department, the potential for fiscal inefficiency or malfeasance exists. The executive leader should be one of the checks and balances against these issues.
2. Executive leaders need a good working understanding of the athletic budget, because they may be asked to justify spending and make potential cuts in the athletic budget when the fiscal situation at the institution gets tight.
3. Executive leaders will want to be effective when assisting in institutional fundraising activities involving a potential donor who may be interested in a donation dedicated to the athletic department.

A new executive leader should understand the construct of an athletic department budget. While not every community college athletic budget is constructed in the same manner, these general categories will provide new executive leaders with a conversational starting point for an athletic budget conversation with the athletic director and the chief financial officer at their institution.<sup>195</sup>

### Athletic Department Main Office Expenses

- Salaries and benefits for all athletic department general staff, including the athletic director and administrative assistants
- Office supplies and expenses, including postage, copying, and office equipment
- Travel expenses for athletic office personnel, including the athletic director
- Dues, including NJCAA, region, conference, and professional organizations
- Awards for players, coaches, and teams,

including awards for presentation to the recipients and awards or publicity of them used for display in the facilities (e.g., banners, photographs, or murals)

- Computer hardware and software costs for athletic department main office personnel
- Athletic department gear and clothing for the main office and other units of the athletic department (excluding teams)
- Professional development costs for athletic main office personnel

### Medical Department Expenses

- Salaries and benefits or contractual arrangements for all trainers and doctors
- Training and medical supplies for trainers and doctors for injury prevention and rehabilitation
- Training and medical equipment
- Training and medical facility expenses, including maintenance, cleaning, rentals, or

- other expenses
- Expenses for drug testing program
- Travel expenses for trainers or doctors
- Computer hardware and software costs for medical personnel
- Medical insurance costs

**Strength and Conditioning Department Expenses**

- Salaries and benefits or contractual arrangements for all strength and conditioning personnel
- Travel expenses for strength and conditioning personnel
- Strength and conditioning supplies
- Strength and conditioning equipment
- Strength and conditioning facility expenses, including maintenance, cleaning, rentals, or other expenses
- Professional development costs for strength and conditioning personnel
- Computer hardware and software costs for strength and conditioning personnel

**Academic Support Department Expenses**

- Salaries and benefits or contractual arrangements for all academic support personnel
- Travel expenses for academic support personnel
- Academic support supplies
- Academic support equipment
- Academic support facility expenses, including maintenance, cleaning, or other expenses
- Professional development costs for academic support personnel
- Computer hardware and software costs for academic support personnel

**Sports Information Department Expenses**

- Salaries and benefits or contractual arrangements for all sports information personnel
- Sports information contractual services for marketing, graphics, and photography
- Web and social media related expenses
- Travel expenses for sports information personnel
- Professional development costs for sports information personnel
- Computer hardware and software costs for sports information personnel
- Live streaming, video, and audio costs for game broadcasts

**Athletic Facilities Department Expenses**

- Salaries and benefits or contractual arrangements for all facilities personnel
- Facilities maintenance equipment and rentals, including those for mowing, painting, cleaning, and more
- Facilities maintenance supplies, including fertilizer, paint, cleaning products, and more
- Professional development costs for facilities personnel
- Computer hardware and software costs for facilities personnel

**Event Management Department Expenses**

- Salaries and benefits or contractual arrangements for all event management personnel
- Event management equipment and rentals, including ticket sales, signs, crowd control, publicity, concession stand, and more
- Security-related costs for events
- Game official costs and hospitality
- Hospitality for opposing team personnel, VIPs, and college personnel
- Event management supplies, including concession products, tickets, printing, and publicity
- Professional development costs for event management personnel
- Computer hardware and software costs for event management personnel

**Team costs**

- Salaries and benefits or contractual arrangements for all team personnel
- Team equipment and maintenance of that equipment, including practice and game equipment
- All player clothing and playing gear, including game and practice items
- All team personnel clothing and gear, including game and practice items
- All team travel-related expenses, including lodging, transportation costs, meal expenses, and travel-related equipment and services
- All team recruiting expenses, including those for team personnel travel, recruiting visits, contest watching, recruiting services, and more
- All postseason competition expenses
- All grant-in-aid expenses
- Professional development costs for team personnel
- Computer hardware and software costs for team personnel
- Sport office supplies

**For more information:**

1. Diede, M. (2005). *Junior college and community college athletic capitalism and the work of athletic trainers* (No. 3161671) [Doctoral dissertation, University of Arizona], ProQuest Dissertations Publishing. <https://www.proquest.com/openview/49a221c263c5600261cfc1cad7aa7bea/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>

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<sup>136</sup> Diede, 2005

# FINANCIAL MODEL FOR AN NJCAA ATHLETIC PROGRAM

## Why is this important to me as a community college executive leader?

1. Executive leaders need to know how their institution will evaluate the fiscal reality of their athletic department.
2. Understanding the fiscal calculation for the athletic department allows the executive leader to make strategic budget alterations to components of the calculation in order to change its outcomes.
3. Understanding this calculation allows executive leaders to strengthen strategic planning as the fiscal situation of the institution changes.

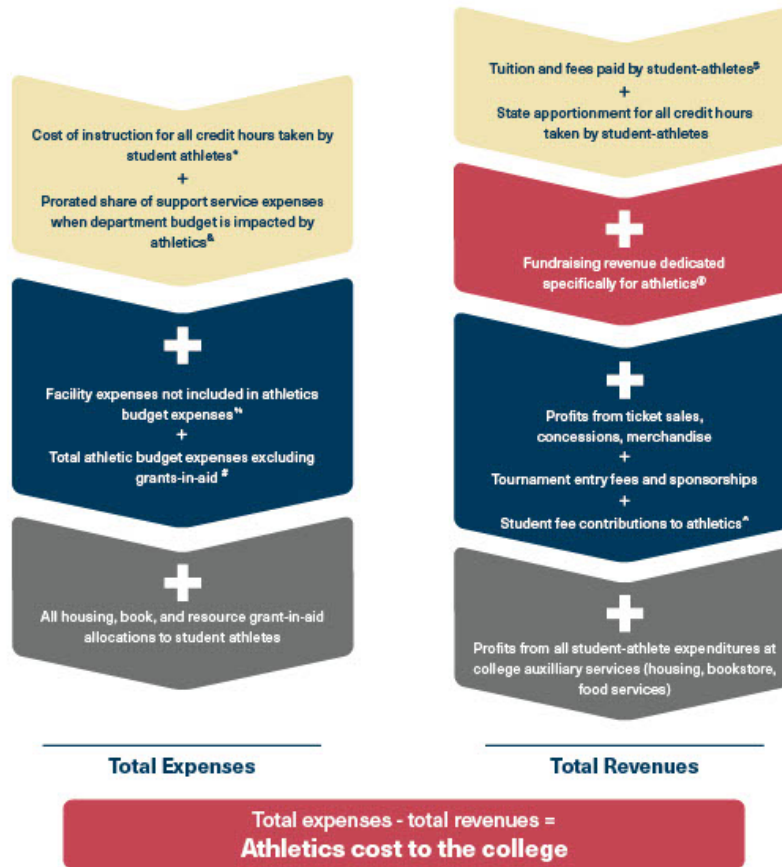
Calculating the true cost (or profit) of a community college athletic program is not as easy as it may seem. A lot of detailed calculation and nuance are required to get the calculation correct for an institution. There is significant institutional variation in the funding mechanisms and expense constructs that can make the cost or profit calculations vary widely by institution. Recent studies in the literature have come to very different conclusions about whether community college athletics is a revenue generator for the community college. One scholar studying community college budgets in 2004, Castañeda, concluded that community college athletics would likely be a revenue generator for community colleges when state funding levels for student-athletes were factored in.<sup>126</sup> Another researcher in 2009, Horton, concluded that "According to the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA) 2006 survey, approximately 49 percent (212) of the 430 National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) member institutions reported either a financial loss or no positive financial gain (total revenues net total athletic expenses) in 2006. Of the remaining 218 institutions surveyed, 23 percent

(101) earned revenues at or above \$25,000, while only 4 percent (18) earned revenues at or above \$150,000."<sup>127</sup>

Many of these studies use very blunt financial metrics, such as the tuition cost per credit hour to determine expenses and revenues. These have been commonly used in the literature because it is easy to find standardized versions across multiple institutions for these metrics. Unfortunately, these metrics do not produce the most accurate of models to determine the fiscal reality of a community college athletic enterprise. For example, the tuition amount per credit hour is not the amount that it costs the college to produce that hour of instruction. That cost per credit hour includes many sunken costs that are not related to the cost of the athletic program.

Below, a more nuanced model is presented that an executive leader could use to truly ascertain the fiscal realities of their current athletic department or for starting an athletic department. With some detailed work by the athletic director and the chief financial officer of the institution, it can be used to give a more accurate picture of the "true cost of athletics" to an executive leader.

## Community College Athletic Financial Analysis Model



### Key for Financial Model

- \$** - This includes all financial aid, grants, and non-athletic scholarship dollars paid towards the student account balances
- \*** - Calculated by taking all academic instructional department costs multiplied by (number of student-athlete hours/total institutional credit hours). Does not include support department costs, only teaching departments. To produce the most accurate version of this calculation, exclude all high cost programs from these calculations that student-athletes do not have the opportunity to participate in while they are athletes (such as health professions programs with clinical obligations or career and technical programs that may not be options for student-athletes until they are finished playing due to time conflicts.) Exclude both the costs and institutional credit hours from the calculations.
- @** - Can be donation directly to athletic department, donation to athletics through the college foundation, fundraising done by athletic department, or profits from athletic camps and clinics.
- &** - Calculated by taking all applicable department budgets (expenses-revenues)<sup>g</sup> \* student-athlete credit hours/total institutional credit hours). Departments included in calculations only if answer to this question is yes-"If athletics were removed/added would it require staffing or resource changes to the department budget?" This might include everything from counseling services, academic advising, to tutoring and many others.
- #** - Should include expenses for concessions and merchandise sold by athletic department plus all event management expenses.
- %** - Only include if college would not incur the expense if it did not have athletics. This might include pro-rated calculations for campus utilities, janitorial services, maintenance, grounds work, etc.
- ^** - To prevent a small double counting error, only the student activity fees that are earmarked for athletics paid by non-student athletes should be used here.

Therefore, it is advisable that every community college undertake this more detailed and accurate analysis of the financial reality of their athletic department. With this analysis, a community college executive leadership team will know the true costs for adding a team or the true savings when contemplating cutting a program. Even if a com-

munity college is content not making any changes to its current athletic offerings at the moment, it would be advantageous to complete this type of analysis sooner rather than later in case the fiscal picture of the institution turns bleak and the athletic department is once again under the financial microscope.

**For more information:**

1. Castañeda, C. (2004). *A national overview of intercollegiate athletics at public community colleges* (No. 3144975) [Doctoral dissertation, University of North Texas], ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.
2. Mullin, C. M., Baime, D. S., & Honeyman, D. S. (2015). *Community college finance: A guide for institutional leaders*. John Wiley & Sons.



<sup>136</sup> Alexander, 2009

<sup>137</sup> Horton, 2009, p. 15

# SPORT ADDITION OR DELETION

## Why is this important to me as a community college executive leader?

1. Given the controversial nature of these decisions, the entire executive leadership group should be knowledgeable about these issues so they can have thorough debate about the pros and cons of each decision.
2. The intense polarization these decisions can produce requires an executive leader with an extensive understanding of the issues before speaking to stakeholders.
3. These decisions are nuanced and require a depth of knowledge to understand.

Adding an athletic department to a community college that does not have one or adding additional sports to an existing athletic program is a complex financial and logistical decision that conjures many strong opinions among the constituent groups of the college. Adding to or deleting from the existing sports in an athletic department is also a complex decision that, in many cases, can generate highly charged pro and con feelings, both inside an institution and with external stakeholders. Ending entire athletic programs at a community college can be an incredibly difficult decision that is a highly emotional and public decision with long-lasting and unforeseen consequences. Executive leaders, especially new ones, should be very careful and deliberative with these decisions. There are contrasting studies in the literature, as discussed earlier, as to whether community college athletic departments are likely to be a revenue generator for the institution or a loss.

Historically, athletic programs are one of the most common components of a community college operation looked to by executive leaders when they feel the need to shrink the institution. One experienced college administrator related, "In my 18 years as a community college faculty member, basketball coach, athletics director, de-

partment chair, and academic dean, I've learned that athletics programs are always on the table. Inevitably, there are those among the faculty and administration who view them as a luxury, not as a function central to the core mission of the institution. When budgets are tight, as they usually are, and administrators are looking for a little extra cash, their steely-eyed gaze turns naturally towards athletics."<sup>128</sup> There are some important lessons from the literature that an executive leader should consider before deciding to add or eliminate an athletic department or a sport:

- There will be many stakeholders or constituency groups that have a keen interest in the decision. "An institution seeking to add or eliminate an athletic program or teams needs first to prepare a plan that is transparent to stakeholders. The plan should clearly communicate how addition or elimination of the program complements the core ideologies of the institution. This communication should emphasize how offering athletics aligns with the institution's mission and purpose."<sup>129</sup> These stakeholder groups might be internal or external to the institution. Internal stakeholder groups could contain current students, faculty and staff, current team members and their parents, athletic

department employees including the current coaches and administrators, the college foundation, and the governing board. External stakeholders with a strong interest in the decision include alumni of that team, the local business community, athletic boosters, college donors, fans in the community, prospective students, district high school programs, local athletic clubs in that sport, and civic organizations such as the chamber of commerce or the convention and visitors bureau. Careful consideration of the effects on each of these groups and their reactions to the decisions should be considered when relevant to the situation.

- "Given the impact a major change in athletics can have on the institution, formal approval should come from the highest authority possible, in most cases a governing board."<sup>140</sup> These elected/appointed officials are the representatives of many of the constituency groups named in the previous point. Changes to the athletic department can be very public, and these officials are likely to be the ones taking the brunt of strong feelings from whichever constituencies are upset with the decision. Depending on the political connections of the concerned individuals, executive leaders need the full support of the governing board for these athletic decisions.
- Extensive and detailed financial work should be done in either case—addition or subtraction of sports or programs—to truly understand the financial ramifications of the decisions. Every state and community college is different in how its funding model plays out. There is little agreement on this subject in the literature. The financial cost information in the literature is not entirely definitive. "Athletics may be a net income producer for public community colleges. Intercollegiate athletics appears to result in a net financial loss for public community colleges because

expenses exceed revenues. Nationally, when state reimbursement per full-time student is considered, the total income per student-athlete exceeded the cost by \$376 per student. This net benefit does not include the revenue to the college from enrolling other students who may come to participate in drill team, band, or cheerleading. Colleges also benefit from having athletes live in the residence halls and take part in the food service plan, lowering the marginal cost for all students on campus. However, a state-level analysis provides mixed evidence with only 25 of 42 states showing a greater reimbursement per athlete than cost per athlete."<sup>141</sup> Careful calculations of actual savings or costs must be done with an honest and accurate assessment of resources saved in the case of deletions.

- There are benefits and liabilities of community college athletics that are hard to quantify. These intangible costs and benefits should be carefully considered in the decision-making process for athletic addition or deletions. Examples of these unquantifiable benefits include college media coverage and name recognition, student engagement and culture benefits, and diversity considerations.<sup>142</sup>
- A detailed analysis of the enrollment and student success metrics for the college's student-athletes needs to be factored into all athletic addition or deletion decisions.
- Creative revenue options should be explored in these decisions. "Athletic programs may be supported by several sources, among them the traditional revenue streams of state government, local government, and student fees. However, creating new entrepreneurial revenue sources is becoming a requirement to keep pace with escalating operational costs."<sup>143</sup> In some cases, the savings from sport subtractions are not as large as they



may seem, and, conversely, the costs for additions might not be as great as one thinks. There sometimes are hidden funding sources that can be leveraged. "Examining the impact of athletics on the local economy, one community college administrator observed that student-athletes rent housing from the community and patronize local businesses

(Keenum interview, 2008). This results in additional economic impact on the locale, which ultimately benefits the institution and community."<sup>144</sup> These benefiting members of the local economy might have a vested interest in supplementing community college revenue to ensure their business operations remain lucrative.

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<sup>138</sup> Jenkins, 2006, p. 1

<sup>139</sup> Lawrence, Mullin, et al., 2009, pp. 42-43

<sup>140</sup> Lawrence, Mullin, et al., 2009, p. 43

<sup>141</sup> Castañeda, 2004, p. 138

<sup>142</sup> Horton, 2009

<sup>143</sup> Lawrence, Mullin, et al., 2009, p. 44

<sup>144</sup> Lawrence, Mullin, et al., 2009, p. 42

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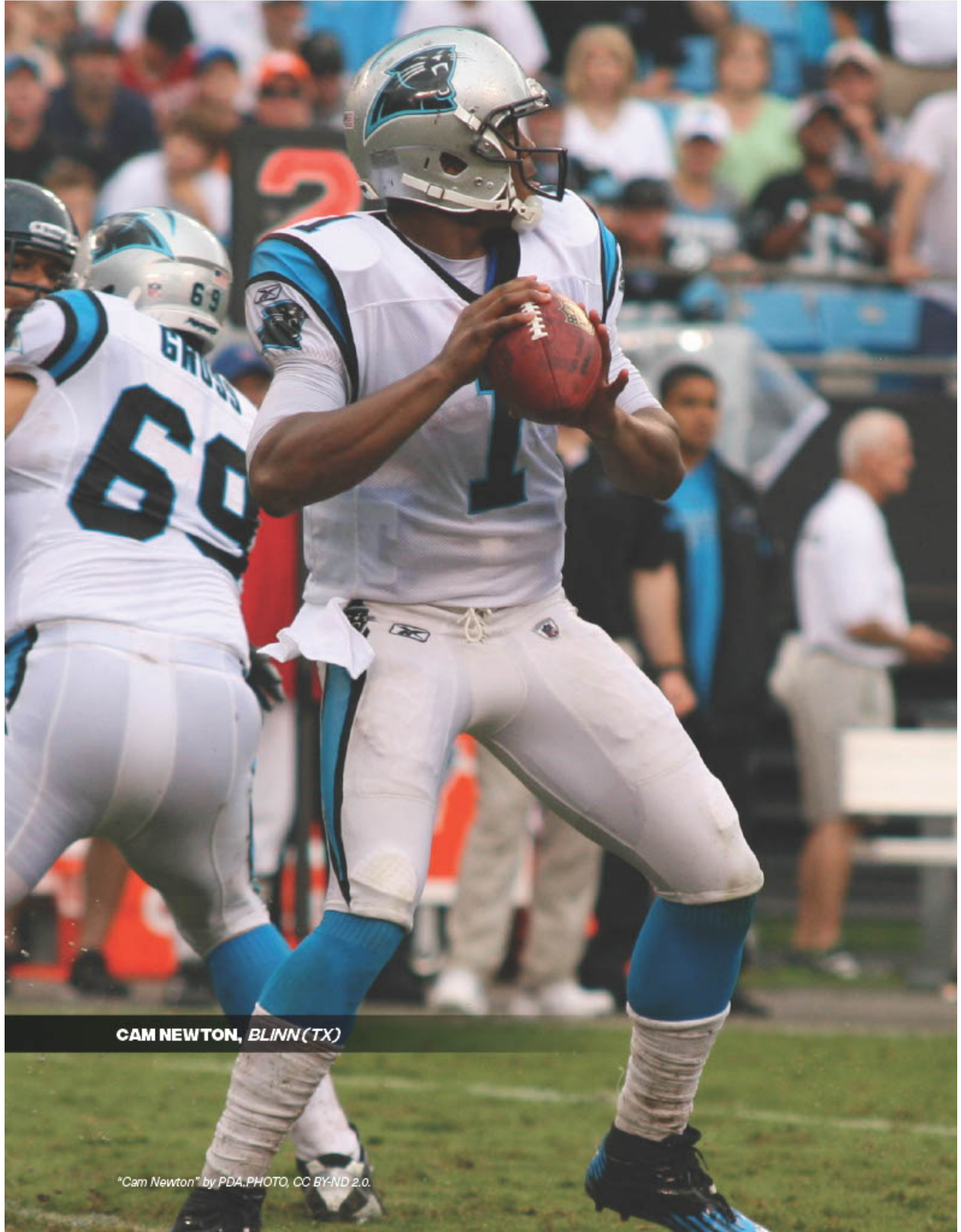
# 21 GREAT NJCAA ALUMNI<sup>145</sup>

- Spencer Haywood** Trinidad St. (CO) – USA Men’s Basketball Gold Medal (GM)
- Larry Brown** Dodge City (KS) – NFL Most Valuable Player (MVP)
- Roger Staubach** New Mexico Military (NM) – NFL Superbowl MVP
- Bob McAdoo** Vincennes (IN) – NBA Rookie of the Year (ROY)
- Jim Craig** Massasoit (MA) – USA Hockey Gold Medal & “Miracle on Ice”
- Mike Rozier** Coffeyville (KS) – NCAA Football Heisman Trophy
- Spud Webb** Midland (TX) – NBA Slam Dunk Champion
- Mitch Richmond** Moberly (MO) – NBA ROY
- Larry Johnson** Odessa (TX) – NBA #1 Pick & ROY
- Kirby Puckett** Triton (IL) – MLB ALCS MVP & Hall of Fame
- Sheryl Swoopes** South Plains (TX) – USA Women’s Basketball GM & WNBA MVP
- Crystl Bustos** Palm Beach (FL) – USA Softball GM (2x)
- Albert Pujols** MCC-Maple Woods (MO) – MLB ROY & 600 Home Runs & National League MVP (3x)
- Curt Schilling** Yavapai (AZ) – MLB World Series MVP
- Deion Branch** Jones County (MS) – NFL Superbowl MVP
- Cam Newton** Blinn (TX) – NCAA Football Heisman Trophy & NFL ROY & MVP
- Bryce Harper** Southern Nevada (NV) – MLB # 1 Pick & MVP
- Jim Thome** Illinois Central (IL) – MLB Hall of Fame & 600+ MLB Home Runs
- Danielle Adams** Jefferson (MO) NCAA Women’s Basketball Tournament MVP
- Bubba Watson** Faulkner State (AL) – Masters Championship (2x)
- Kevin Kiermaier** Parkland (IL) – MLB Platinum Glove & 3 Gold Gloves

**BRYCE HARPER, SOUTHERN NEVADA (NV)**

<sup>145</sup> NJCAA, 2018

*“Bryce Harper - Washington Nationals” by Matthew Straubmuller is marked with CC BY 2.0.*



**CAM NEWTON, BLINN(TX)**

*\*Cam Newton" by PDA.PHOTO, CC BY-ND 2.0.*

## CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

### INTRODUCTION

There are many preparation manuals for new college presidents that have hundreds of pages covering a multitude of different skills and understandings that new presidents must have as they transition to their new jobs. These manuals often paint with a broad brush and cover everything from A to Z in the presidential “must knows.” An excerpt from Valeau and Raby (2021), a recent version of one of these guides, offers the following:

Embarking on a career as a community college president demands that aspirants be committed to bold and courageous leadership. It demands that aspirants have the competencies to lead an institution through its ups and downs while striving for greatness. Community college presidents are expected to be visionaries, innovators, and builders of people, programs, services, and students. They are required to manage the college or district affairs and work cooperatively and communicate effectively with all constituents. Issues of the day related to budgeting and financing, curricular and student services planning, fundraising, student life, community needs and business and industry needs all fall with the role’s scope. (p. 7)

This guidance is important, and no doubt provides prospective and new presidents with great understanding of many topics. This segment of community college leadership literature has been well-developed. A new executive leader can take these pieces of the existing literature and use them to hone their career full of experiences into a robust resumé, demonstrating aptitude for great success in an executive leadership position. But certainly, there will be gaps in any new executive leader’s experiences, past duties, and educational opportunities, leaving them less prepared for certain aspects of their job.

## **IMPLICATIONS OF THIS PRODUCT**

Knowledge of community college athletics is often one of these gaps for many new community college executive leaders. A scan of these preparation guides reveals little, if any, consideration of community college athletics. Community college athletics can be one of the largest single departmental budgets existing in the college. It has a structure and a mode of operations very different from any other in the college. It likely has very different constituent groups in terms of philosophies, education, motivation, and performance compared with other areas of the college.

This current product is not designed to be one of those broad, all-encompassing works, but rather fills a void within them. It is the intention of this product to help new executive leaders begin to fill a gap, to provide a basic introduction to community college athletics as they transition into their new roles. This product can start conversations between the new executive leader and members of their institutional teams who play a role in the athletic operation. These team members can help contextualize the new leader's understanding of the athletic program at that particular institution. The new leader can then perform an initial evaluation of the athletic program they have inherited and begin to provide leadership and vision for their athletic program. The hope is that, after reading this product, the new executive leader will be entering those conversations from a level of understanding that is much greater than before they interacted with this product. Further, the product is intended to shape a thought process and organizational structure for the new executive leader to go out and seek the most relevant, immediate information they need to begin to fill in their athletic knowledge gap.



## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE WORK**

As noted in the literature review section of this dissertation, the breadth and depth of research on community college athletics is in need of bolstering. The author hopes that this product plays an important role of invigorating research about community college athletics by academic practitioners who understand the nuances of athletics at the community college level. Further research is needed regarding athletics in the scope of some rapidly changing contexts within community colleges. A deeper level of understanding will allow leaders to make more specific and informed decisions regarding their athletic department as they gain experience and time in their positions. Future research needs can be categorized into the following areas: community college leadership and athletics, institutional enrollment relationships and strategies regarding community college athletics, financial aspects of community college athletics, new contextual factors for community college athletics, and additional audiences.

### **LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE ATHLETICS**

Mitchell Williams and Kevin Pennington have led teams conducting research efforts into the intersection between community college athletics and presidential leadership (Williams et al., 2008; Williams & Pennington, 2006). However, their work focused on only six states, it was conducted more than a decade ago when the athletic and community college contexts were drastically different than they are today, and other executive-level leaders were not included in their work. Also, many institutions have changed leadership since that point in time. Their work focused predominantly on the data quantifying presidential perceptions of

community college athletics. It did not correlate these perceptions to the success rates of athletic and academic accomplishment at the institutions these presidents led. This research needs to be extended to understand what impact the philosophies, practices, and actions of executive leadership have on the success of the athletic program and its student athletes. It is through these types of data that executive leaders will have a better understanding of how to adjust their philosophies, practices, and actions to produce the optimal athletic program for their institutional context.

#### ENROLLMENT

The national declines in community college enrollment over the last decade have been noteworthy, with precipitous declines occurring within some states. As a result, there has been an explosion of community colleges focusing, within both the institutional and academic communities, on enrollment, as evidenced by many community colleges joining their 4-year counterparts in subscribing to the burgeoning field of strategic enrollment management. Unfortunately, the current impact of athletics on community college enrollment, and the strategic possibilities for including athletics in a community college's enrollment management strategy, are woefully under-researched. In the seminal works of Bob Bontrager and Bruce Clemetsen (2009), such as *Applying SEM at the Community College*, there is no substantive mention of athletics.

For a new community college executive leader to understand the potential impact of community college athletics on enrollment, the literature needs to be updated on the student athlete's college choice motivation and student-athlete participation demographics. Important

works by Nichols (2014), Knight (2012), and Ashburn (2007) are now approaching a decade or more since being completed. Both the enrollment and athletic contexts have changed dramatically since these works were published. Four-year universities are enrolling more students than ever who historically were community college bound. Who are the current student athletes participating in community college athletics? What are the current motivations and goals for athletes looking at community college athletics? What opportunities for growth in enrollment exist for community colleges regarding athletics? These are a few of the questions that new community college executive leaders will want to have researched in the near future in order to better lead their community colleges and the athletic enterprises contained within them.

There are 4-year colleges, many private, NCAA Division II, NCAA Division III, or National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) institutions that are exploring models that attempt to provide significant enrollment growth for their institutions through athletic expansion. These institutions, such as Lindenwood University in Missouri, are sponsoring upwards of 20 varsity sports in order to boost enrollment and, subsequently, to positively impact the financial contributions of the athletic department to the institution's bottom line. A few community colleges, such as Iowa Central College, have begun to explore this type of model as well. Significant research needs to be conducted at both the 4-year and community college levels to understand the enrollment strategies and implications of these models in order to determine their usefulness for community colleges in the future.

Related to the enrollment and athletic participation research opportunities just discussed is a need for additional research on the topic of diversity as it relates to community

college athletics. A limited, but dated, amount of literature exists on these topics (Harper, 2009; Horton, 2009, 2015; Mendoza et al., 2012). Community college executive leaders would be well served to have additional research data on the diversity benefits of intercollegiate athletics, trends in athletic participation, and their related impacts on diversity for their institutions. Many institutions have these data for their specific situations, but understanding how these trends are playing out regionally and by sport across the country will allow for better decision making related to strategic enrollment management plan improvements for their institution, for athletic funding decisions, and for sport elimination or addition decisions.

#### FINANCIAL RESEARCH

There is an extensive body of research about a vast array of NCAA athletic financial topics. A review of the literature for similar research on community college athletic financial topics does not produce the same breadth and depth. The return on investment (ROI) literature is inconsistent and dated at best. Castañeda (2004), Bush et al. (2009), and Lawrence et al. (2009) provide basic information and general research regarding the financial costs and returns for community college athletic programs, but there is very little detail that can be used by executive leaders in evaluating their own programs at their institutions. This product provides a model that can be used for individual institutions to review their own ROI for their athletic program. Considerable research should be conducted to expand on the work of previous research projects and to evaluate the model put forth in this product formally, potentially providing improvements to its construct.

Additionally, research should be conducted on the individual budget components introduced in this current research product. Each of these budgetary areas should be studied financially to determine which constructs of each component produce the best ROI model for that component within the community college athletic context. For example, research could be conducted on the financial ROI on different types of academic support service models or coaching pay models and which contextual variables alter the ROI calculations. Also, research on the fundraising being done for community college athletics, both formally by institutional foundations and informally by booster clubs, athletic departments, and teams, is needed. Information of this nature would allow executive leaders at community colleges to have greater information with which to conduct detailed athletic program reviews and to make efficient athletic budget allocations. Pinpointed financial research of this nature also would allow executive leaders to make more informed decisions about potential budget adjustments needed to improve performance on success metrics, as well as what level of fiduciary oversight was needed by the executive leaders to make sure institutional spending for athletics was in line with the philosophies and fiscal policies of the institution.

#### NEW CONTEXTUAL FACTORS FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE ATHLETICS

##### *Name, Image, and Likeness*

In the fall of 2019, California was the first state to pass a law allowing college athletes to create endorsement deals to profit from their name, image, and likeness (NIL) (Murphy, 2021). This law stood firmly in opposition to the amateurism rules created by the NCAA, NAIA, and the NJCAA. In December of 2020, the U.S. Supreme Court decided to hear the appeal from the 9th

Circuit ruling in the “Alston v. NCAA antitrust lawsuit. While not directly related to NIL rules, the Supreme Court’s decision in this case could impact how much control the NCAA has in defining amateurism in the future” (Murphy, 2021). When it became apparent in the spring of 2021 that no federal NIL law was likely, after several failed attempts to get such a law through Congress were made, individual states began to take it upon themselves to follow California’s lead and pass state NIL laws. These laws made it illegal for the NCAA, NAIA, and NJCAA to block collegiate athletes in their states from making NIL endorsement deals that earned them revenues based on their status as student athletes. Currently, 27 states have passed NIL laws, with several more having NIL bills pending in their state legislatures. Many of these states made their bills effective as early as July 1, 2021 (Murphy, 2021).

NIL laws will make it permissible under NJCAA rules for community college student athletes to receive compensation for such things as doing a commercial for a business, recording a message for a fan, influencing behavior on social media, making appearances, selling merchandise, signing with an agent to help them navigate these endorsement opportunities, and several other endorsements opportunities. Community colleges could now be responsible for training student athletes on taking advantage of these opportunities legally, filing the correct contract and tax paperwork, reporting their endorsement opportunities to their colleges, not infringing upon college-owned trademarks and logos during these opportunities, and building their individual brands. Community colleges certainly will need to train student athletes on how to take advantage of these opportunities within the NJCAA rules. Employees of the institution also will need training on how to interact with these opportunities legally without risking the student-athlete’s eligibility or institutional sanction from the NJCAA.

It is not overstated to conjecture that this is the most significant development in collegiate athletics, causing member colleges the most amount of work, since athletic scholarships were made legal and compliance work regarding scholarships was thrust upon institutions. A significant amount of research and information will be needed by executive leaders once the ramifications of these new NIL laws are fully understood, and before community colleges are required to create NIL policies and procedures ensuring they function legally and in the best interest of their student athletes. A subsequent edition of a product like the one created for this research will undoubtedly need to contain significant material on NIL laws. These laws and their implications are simply too new to be included in this version.

### *Transfer Issues*

Another issue that could fundamentally alter the landscape and construct of collegiate athletics is the transfer student athletes. In the summer of 2021, thousands of NCAA athletes entered the NCAA transfer portal, with many switching colleges (Weaver, 2021). This unprecedented transfer volume had profound impacts on recruiting, roster management, and team stability. Athletes changed venues for what appeared to be better opportunities for themselves or for no apparent reason at all. The roster instability and the potentially profound impact on the already seemingly never-ending recruiting cycle for college athletics will need close study and research in the coming years. This has been exclusively an NCAA issue so far, but in the future the NCAA impact might trickle down to community colleges or the transfer culture might encroach on the NJCAA.

There is another side of the transfer issue that community college executive leaders will need to monitor closely. Weaver (2021) quotes Jeff Hansen of *247Sports*:

“That’s true in some cases, but I think the transfer portal has also convinced college coaches that it’s easier to ask players to move on from their program. When you look at the number of players who enter the portal and don’t find a new home, it’s hard not to wonder if many of those players didn’t have a choice to enter their name into the transfer portal.” How do administrators know if athletes are being run out of the program? (para. 7)

If the transfer culture in the NCAA makes its way to the community college athletic landscape, community college executive leaders will need to stay vigilant for coaches using the transfer culture to disguise pushing players who are not working out in their program away from their institution. Additional research will need to be commissioned to study the potential impacts of transfer on community college athletics. Best practices in oversight will need to be identified and maintained by community college executive leaders.

#### ADDITIONAL AUDIENCES

The intended audience for this product is the executive leaders of NJCAA member institutions and those considering membership in the NJCAA. The members of the governing boards at these institutions may benefit from a version of this product as well. Although this product in its current form could be used by these elected and appointed officials, a revised version that discusses the role of the trustee in community college athletics and more detailed governance sections would be advisable for this audience.

The material in this product was written within the construct of the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) and its member institutions, athletic offerings, and student athletes. While there certainly are similarities that exist between the NJCAA and its constituent groups and the other two community college athletic associations and their constituencies, significant differences also exist. These differences are important enough that a guide of this



nature should be created for executive leaders at community colleges who are members of the California Community College Athletic Association (CCCAA) and the Northwest Athletic Conference (NWAC).

## **CONCLUSION**

This product is intended to add to the body of leadership preparation tools that exist for new community college executive leaders. As the tenures of current presidents and vice presidents in community colleges get shorter, and transitions of these leaders become more frequent within community colleges, it is likely that more and more new leaders will have little to no experience administering community college athletics. Athletics at the community college level likely makes up a significant portion of an institution's budget, can be one of the most visible departments in the entire institution, and provides some of the most high-profile opportunities for failures in leadership. Given these contextual realities, new community college executive leaders need support as they attempt to get up to speed on the athletic portions of their new responsibilities. This briefing tool provides them with a construct for their preparation strategy for community college athletics, through baseline information, suggestions for additional knowledge acquisition on relevant subjects, and frameworks for conversations with the appropriate members of their institutions.

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