

I spoke to Laura Ryman this afternoon (3/3/16) and inquired as to how to submit my proposal without having fully completed my thesis. She instructed me to attach a word document with my proposal in addition to the online application. Please let me know if I need to submit any additional information at this time.

Abstract/summary of the work

The project reflects the results of a Qualtrics survey sent to academic support staff members employed at member institutions from the American Athletic Conference, the Atlantic Coast Conference, the Big South Conference, and the Colonial Athletic Association. This survey aims to better understand the functions of these professionals at their respective institutions as well as the student-athletes they support in their roles.

Goals for the work

This paper aims to better understand those individuals who work to promote academic success and integrity at various Division I institutions including their job titles, disciplines of study, and the challenges and pressures they face in carrying out their job duties. Survey questions also serve to shed light onto how these professionals view the level of academic achievement and commitment of the athletes they work with. Responses will be compared amongst the four conferences in order to illuminate any differences that may exist at Division I institutions of varying levels.

Brief statement regarding the relevance of the work

The academic commitment of student-athletes is often portrayed in a negative light. This negative perception is only exacerbated by media stories portraying academically fraudulent practices utilized by a small subset of student-athletes. This study intends to add to the current literature focused around the academic resources available to student-athletes by focusing on the professional employed at various institutions who aid student-athletes in balancing their academic and athletic pursuits. This specific sample will also provide comparison of academic support departments as they differ amongst varying sub-levels within Division I athletics.

Summary of the work will be presented and preferred format (e.g. poster, panel, exhibit)

I plan to present my data via a poster presentation. This poster will include visual representations of the responses gathered from the Qualtrics survey as well as a summary of all significant results. This poster will be completed once my data analysis is finalized.

Faculty Advisor Information

My thesis committee chair is Dr. Diane Wilcox from the Learning, Technology & Leadership Education Program within the College of Education.