Student Athletes and the First Year Experience

Colleen Campbell
Director, Student Athlete Support Services

Michael Puma
Co-Director, Messina Living Learning Program

2018 FYE CONFERENCE * SAN ANTONIO
Session Overview

- Welcome and Learning Outcomes
- Stereotypes versus Reality
- Research on College Student Athletes
- Opportunities and Challenges of Integrating Student Athletes into First Year Experience Initiatives
- Our Messina experience
- Powerful Partnerships – Next Steps for Your Campus
- Case Studies
Learning Outcomes

Participants will….

- Learn about the theoretical models that guide our work with student athletes.
- Understand the competing commitments of student-athletes in their academic and athletic identities.
- Consider the opportunities and challenges of integrating student-athletes into first year experience initiatives.
- Identify key stakeholders that may help student-athletes become more fully involved in service, academic clubs other student based activities.
- Recognize and disrupt stereotypes of student athletes when speaking with colleagues and students.
Stereotypes

The Reality

WE CAME HERE TO WORK NOT PLAY

GRIND ALL DAY EVERY DAY!!

OH, YOUR A REGULAR STUDENT COMPLAINING ABOUT HOW TIRED YOU ARE FROM CLASS AND HOMEWORK?

PLEASE, TELL ME MORE I'M ONLY A STUDENT ATHLETE

BUT IT TOOK GUTS, IT TOOK AN ATTITUDE THAT’S ALL IT TAKES. THAT’S ALL IT TAKES TO BE SUCCESSFUL IS AN ATTITUDE.

KEEP CALM AND FIND YOUR ATHLETIC TRAINER
Common Challenges for Student Athletes (Quaye & Harper, 2014)

• **Balance**
  • In a national study of student athlete experiences in college, a little more than half of student athletes reported that they did not spend as much time on academics as they would have liked and 80% of them indicated athletic participation as the top reason (Potuto & O’Hanlon, 2006).

• **Academic Performance**
  • Student athletes as a whole graduate at higher rates than students in the general population, success in graduation rates is not consistent across gender, race/ethnicity, and sport

• **Divide between Athletics and Higher Education**
  • Interaction with peers other than teammates was significant and mattered most for students in sports other than football and men’s basketball (non-revenue sports)
Frameworks

Self Efficacy Theory (Bandura, 1977)

- An individual’s belief about his or her ability to complete a task successfully
- Student Athletes may find it difficult to transfer skills and efficacy beliefs between their athletic and academic domains

Student Involvement Theory (Astin, 1999)

- The amount of physical and psychological energy that students devote to the academic experience.
- Athletes will spend more time on practice and competition
- Athletes may be pulled away from campus culture and interactions with faculty and peers.
Conceptual Model for College Student Athlete Success (Comeaux & Harrison, 2011)

FIGURE 1. Model for college student-athlete academic success.
LOYOLA UNIVERSITY MARYLAND

STRONG TRUTHS, WELL LIVED

- Founded in 1852
- Mission: Inspire students to learn, lead, and serve in a diverse and changing world
- Average class size: 20
- Student-to-faculty ratio: 12:1
- First-year to sophomore retention rate: 88%
- Full-time faculty: 350
- Undergraduates: 4,004
#7 in NCAA Division I (out of 351 schools)

LOYOLA

Academic Excellence

#1 in Patriot League

Tied for 13 consecutive years Loyola has ranked in the top-25

98% student-athlete graduation success rate

#1 in
Why *Messina*?

- Connects to Loyola’s Jesuit tradition
- Reaffirms our commitment to undergraduate education and the liberal arts
Messina
Program Overview

Universal Implementation
- 4 themes
- 70-75 seminars per semester
- 80 faculty members
- 40-50 administrators
- 80-90 peer leaders
- 30 RAs
- 1000+ students

Living-Learning Aim/Goals
(Consistent with Undergraduate Educational Aims, Student Development Learning Outcomes and College Values Statement)
On the Journey to Universal Implementation

- **Fall 2006**: Living-Learning Strategic Plan Working Group
- **January 2012**: Report Submitted to Campus Community
- **September 2012**: Living-Learning Initiative is Named Messina
- **Fall 2012**: Workshops & Preparations Begin
- **Fall 2015**: Messina Becomes Universal for FY Students
- **Fall 2010**: Aims and Structure of Program are Approved
- **Fall 2008**: Strategic Plan Endorsed by BOT & Loyola Conference
- **Fall 2013**: Messina Begins for 1/3 of the FY Class
- **Spring 2008**: Recommendations
- **Spring 2011**: Student Development & Faculty Co-Directors Hired
- **April 2012**: Faculty/Administrator Participation Interest
- **Summer 2011**: Survey of Campus
- **Summer 2012**: 2013 Faculty/Administrator Participants Confirmed
- **Spring 2013**: Recruitment for 2014-2015 Faculty & Administrators
- **Fall 2014**: Messina Expands to 2/3 of the FY Class
- **Late April 2012**: Living-Learning Applications Available
**Messina Learning Outcomes**

**Jesuit Mission and Values**
- Develop habits of discernment and reflection in the Ignatian tradition.
- Explore and articulate the values and principles involved in their personal decision-making.

**Critical Understanding**
- Develop habits of reading, writing and intellectual conversation that support academic excellence and engagement.
- Demonstrate increased knowledge and use of campus resources that aid critical thinking.

**Connections to Loyola Community**
- Establish healthy, mutually beneficial and respectful relationships with others including faculty, administrators, staff and peers.
- Demonstrate a sense of belonging to the community at Loyola University both in and out of the classroom.

**Integrated Learning**
- Integrate multiple sources of knowledge gained through various disciplinary lenses, texts, instruction, out of class experiences and personal reflection to offer a perspective on the interdisciplinary theme of the community.
Transitioning from optional participation to universal participation in FYE

• Pilot Year (Honors Program) - small number of student-athletes

• Phase-In Years – Up to 2/3 of first-year students enrolled in Messina
  • Small number of student-athletes
  • Hesitant coaches/fear of the unknown

• Full first year class- all student-athletes
  • New Insights into day-to-day experience
  • Navigating tension points

• Second full year
  • Intentional orientation for incoming student-athletes
Immediate Concerns from Athletics

• Time commitment
• Practice times, class schedules
  • 50% of first-year student athletes have a conflict with their course pairing
• Spring enrichment
• Weekend and evening activities
• The “Living” component
Quaye & Harper (2014) Strategies for Engagement

• Assessment
• Peer Interaction
  • Messina (16 member “team”); “Evergreen” student peer leader
• Collaboration with Student Affairs
  • SASS reports to Student Development (less than 10% in DI athletics)
• Live on Campus
  • Messina themes- same building/floor as classmates
• Faculty/ Administrator Interaction
  • Messina faculty; Messina Mentor;
  • Coach for a day; Games that student-athletes invite their favorite professor.
Partnerships

▪ Who are the stakeholders on your campus?
▪ How have conflicts between Athletics, Student Affairs and Academic Affairs been handled in the past?
  ▪ Has this been a positive or negative experience?
▪ What is the relationship between Athletics and Residential Life?
▪ Will FYE plans be considered an add-on or do they replace something in the curriculum?
▪ How do we prevent placing student athletes in the middle of competing policies and expectations?
Case Study

Lisa and Alexis are members of the Women’s soccer team. They are first-year students enrolled in a first-year philosophy seminar. On Saturday mornings, the team gets together for breakfast. This has been a tradition and is not connected to practice – unless it is a game day. The class will be taking a trip to a local farmers market and museum. The trip is intended to enrich the class experience and attendance is expected. The students, who have only been on the team for a few weeks are also expected to attend breakfast. What should the student do?
Case Study

Tyler is a first-year Honors student who is also on the crew team. Tyler is finding it hard to balance early morning workouts and his course load. He approaches you about dropping the Honors program for the spring semester. This would also pull him away from his first-year classmates who participated in a living learning program together during the fall semester.

How would you advise Tyler?
Case Study

A faculty member contacts you with concerns about a Jeremiah, a men’s basketball player who has arrived 10 minutes late to class at least once a week for the last six weeks. Jeremiah claims that practice often runs late. What should the faculty member do?
Case Study

A Resident Assistant fills you in on a roommate conflict between two members of the swim team living in an apartment in a living learning community. They no longer want to live together but the coach is insistent that all of their athletes have roommates who are teammates so they keep a consistent schedule and “don’t get caught up in trouble.” What suggestions do you have for the Resident Assistant?
How do you convey expectations for partnerships?

The Five Habits of the Heart (Palmer, 2011)

- We must understand that we are all in this together.
- We must develop an appreciation of the value of “otherness”
- We must cultivate the ability to hold tension in life-giving ways.
- We must generate a sense of personal voice and agency.
- We must strengthen our capacity to create community.
THANK YOU!

- Michael Puma, Co-Director of Messina  
  mpuma@loyola.edu

- Colleen Campbell, Student Athlete Support Services  
  cccampbell@loyola.edu

- Messina First-Year Program  
  messina@loyola.edu  
  www.loyola.edu/messina  
  410-617-2669

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Works Cited


