

The term 'student-athlete' has been used for decades by the National Collegiate Athletic Association referring to the members of college athletic teams. The term was first brought about in 1964 by Walter Byers, the NCAA's first executive president, during a period of time where the fact that college athletes weren't being paid compensation for their work was being questioned.

The argument to pay college athletes has risen up again in recent years, and for good reason. Despite a NCAA regulation that only 20 hours of in-season practice is allowed per week, athletes from every Division I sport report averaging over 30 hours of practice a week. 52% of Division I football players spend at least six hours per day at practice. Yet, they aren't allowed to make any money off of their efforts because they are considered 'amateurs' by the NCAA. So, where does all the money go? The NCAA itself. Jerseys with players numbers, commercials with players in it, even video games that include players do not allow said players to make money despite the fact that their likenesses are used in all of these.

I find this completely unfair. In the current economy, one of the biggest arguments among the workforce is the level of the national minimum wage. The lowest level of legal pay for an employee ranges anywhere from \$8 to \$15 depending on the city or state you are in. However, no matter what the minimum wage is, it seems to be ignored that one of the biggest businesses in America gives absolutely zero opportunity for their employees to make money.

The argument made by many that the players can get jobs outside of sports to make money is invalid as well. As a rebuttal to this claim, I again reference the amount of time spent on the field. When spending 40 hours on the field each week in addition to the time spent in the classroom, doing homework and sleeping, only around 10% of the hours, sometimes even less, are available for these 19-22 year olds to have free time. They shouldn't be expected to spend their 2-3 free hours per day working a second job (because yes, being a college athlete is a job), and even if they do work during their free time, those measly hours won't make them enough money to make a living anyways. While colleges refer to athletics as an 'amateur extra-curricular activity', in 2014, Northwestern University's football team, led by quarterback Kain Colter, took this issue to the National Labor Relations Board, who proceeded to declare athletes 'employees of the university'. In other words, they declared that being a college athlete is a job. People get paid for jobs, and being a college athlete isn't just any job. A study performed by Drexel University and an organization led by Player's Association President Ramogi Huma declared the yearly value of the average college football player to be around \$120,000, nearly the same amount as the average software architect. In contrast, the average athletic scholarship, examined in the same study, is worth around \$23,000. Turns out, that provided 'free education' they always speak of to defend scholarships isn't so worth it after all.