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An Analysis of Racially Inequitable Outcomes in College Sports at The University of Tulsa

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Applied Policy Project

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TULSA

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my grandma, Sylvia Light Cottrell. Your service to country and community is unmatched. Thank you for instilling in me the value of education. I hope this would have made you proud.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank University of Tulsa President Brad Carson for the opportunity to work on a project that means an immense amount to me. I would also like to thank Professor Andy Pennock for his mentorship within and outside of the APP process. You helped make this the best project it could be. Thank you to WNBA and organizational leadership superstar Jocelyn Willoughby and education and mental health policy superstar Allisa Coles for keeping me accountable and being a sounding board when I was lost. Last, but certainly not least, thank you to my wonderful wife Valery Schneider. I cannot believe we went to graduate school together. There is no one else in the world that I would want to have this experience with. I would do it again in a heartbeat.

DISCLAIMER

The author conducted this study as part of the program of professional education at the Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, University of Virginia. This paper is submitted in partial fulfillment of the course requirements for the Master of Public Policy degree. The judgements and conclusions are solely those of the author, and are not necessarily endorsed by the Batten School, by the University of Virginia, or by any other agency.

HONOR STATEMENT

On my honor as a University of Virginia student, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this assignment.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NCAA Division I intercollegiate athletics are a multibillion-dollar industry from which many stakeholders generate revenue. Despite this, student-athletes were forbidden to profit from their athletic ability in any way prior to the 2021-2022 school year. As such, their scholarship and the degree that results from it served as payment. For the majority of student-athletes, those that are not household names, this is still the case. Student-athletes that generate the majority of revenue for universities, football and men's basketball players, tend to be people of color, are overrepresented in athletic departments nationwide, and graduate at lower rates than their white peers.

The University of Tulsa is no exception to this nationwide problem. While comprising less than half of the student population, people of color make up about 65 percent of student-athletes. Furthermore, revenue-generating student-athletes of color graduate at a rate about 14 percent lower than white student-athletes that play the same sports.

This analysis assesses three policy alternatives for how The University of Tulsa should address the gap in [graduation](#) rates for revenue-generating student-athletes of color and their white peers:

- Maintain the Current Policy
- Create a community-based mentorship program for student-athletes
- Develop and offer a new Block II course focusing on attributional retraining

The criteria to evaluate policy alternatives are (1) effectiveness, (2) equity, (3) cost, (4) cost-effectiveness, (5) administrative feasibility, and (6) political feasibility.

My recommendation is to create and offer a new introductory psychology Block II course that focuses on attributional retraining and has a substantial experiential learning component. This alternative is expected to increase the overall graduation success rate by about six percentage points on average. While it is more expensive over 15 years and slightly less cost effective, this alternative rates highly on equity, administrative feasibility, and political feasibility. This also allows student-athletes to engage with an intervention that improves their likelihood of graduating while taking a course that is required for their degree.

Next steps include identifying a professor to develop and teach the course. The course should be developed in the summer before the fall in which it is first taught. Athletics administration and student-athlete services should ensure the proper student-athletes are enrolled in this course.

KEY ACRONYMS

AR: Attributional Retraining
FBS: Football Bowl Subdivision
FGR: Federal Graduation Rate
GPA: Grade Point Average
GSR: Graduation Success Rate
HSG: High School Grades
NCAA: National Collegiate Athletic Association
OASiS: Office of Academic and Student Services
PAC: Perceived Academic Control
SA: Student-Athlete
SAOC: Student-Athlete of Color
TU: The University of Tulsa

KEY TERMS

Graduation Success Rate: a six-year measure of graduation rates for student-athletes that accounts for student-athletes that transfer into and out of an institution

Group of Five: the five smaller conferences that compete in the NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (American Athletic Conference, Conference USA, Mid-American Conference, Mountain West Conference, Sun Belt Conference)

Member Institution: a university that is governed by the NCAA with regard to athletic competition

NCAA: the governing body that regulates competition and student-athletes for college sports at more than 1,000 North American universities

Power Five: the five larger conferences that compete in the NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (Atlantic Coast Conference, Big Ten Conference, Big 12 Conference, Pac-12 Conference, Southeastern Conference)

Revenue-Generating Sports: football and men's basketball

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INTRODUCTION

Today, college athletics is a multibillion-dollar industry from which several stakeholders profit amply. Lucrative television contracts from regular season broadcasting rights and large events like bowl games, March Madness, and the College World series earn the NCAA, athletic conferences, and universities millions of dollars each year. Sporting goods companies like Nike, Adidas, and Under Armour provide teams with athletic apparel and equipment through multimillion dollar contracts and result in significant exposure and profits through these partnerships (Duffy, 2020). Coaches, particularly those in football and men's basketball, are paid handsomely for their efforts. In fact, in 2019, head football coaches at universities were the highest paid public employees in 40 states (Stebbins, 2020).

Despite the billions of dollars that change hands within the industry, the labor force in college athletics is made up of unpaid student-athletes who are typically between the ages of eighteen and twenty-two. In exchange for their efforts, many, but not all, student-athletes are provided with athletic scholarships that partially or fully cover their tuition and other expenses like room and board. Alarmingly, despite the risk of injury and vastly increased responsibilities compared to the rest of the non-student-athlete population, student-athletes are not provided with long-term healthcare and scholarships are not guaranteed from year-to-year (Baker, 2021). While scholarships are the de facto payment for their labor, the long-term and ultimate payoff for most student-athletes is a college degree and the future outcomes that stem from it.

Beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, student-athletes are able to profit from their own name, image, and likeness (NIL) through a new NCAA rule (Brutlag Hosick, 2021). For the purposes of this policy analysis, I will largely ignore NIL for two reasons. First, there is not yet sufficient data to analyze the effect of this rule on graduation rates. Second, NIL is likely to largely affect elite student-athletes in elite athletics programs. President Carson does not believe that NIL will have a major impact on his university's athletic department.

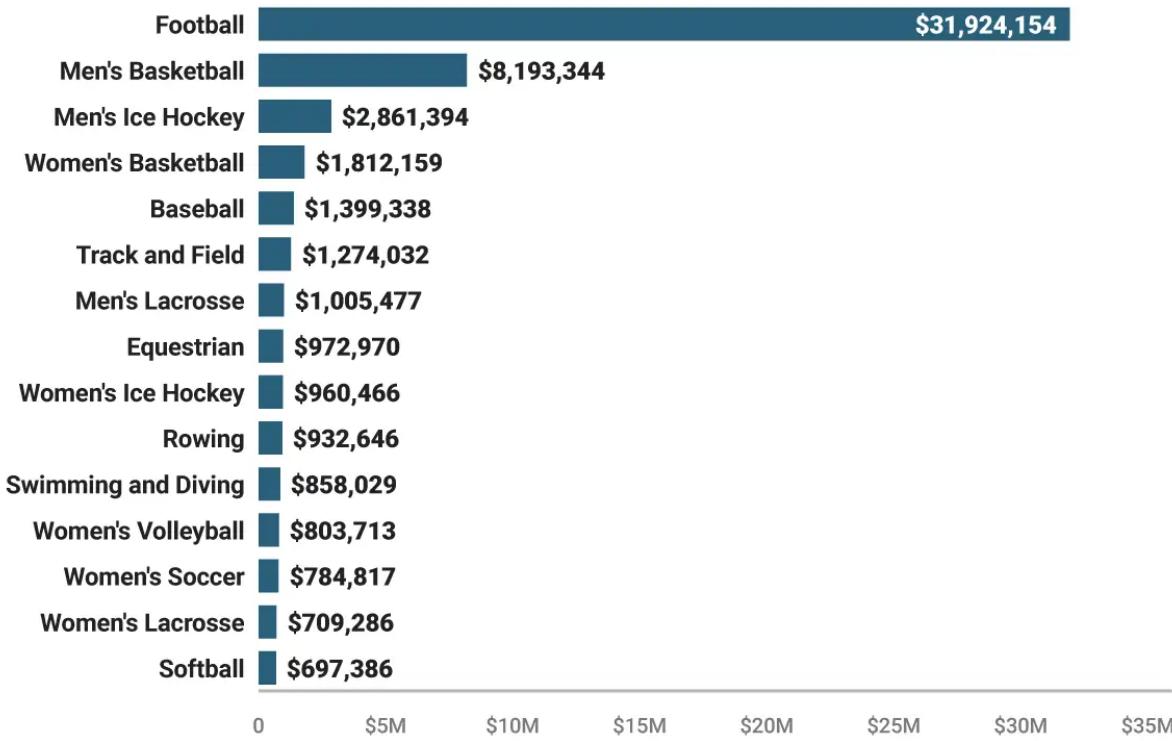
The college athletics industry as a whole may be large. However, there are limited opportunities for universities to profit directly from the teams that they field. Football and men's basketball are typically the only two sports within a university's athletic department that generate significant revenue and turn a profit (Nudelman & Gaines, 2017). This means that these two sports essentially subsidize all other sports. Some of these other sports are "country club sports" with high financial barriers to entry and a disproportionately large share of white, upper middle class athletes (Morrison, 2021).

Figure 1 shows the average revenue generation by NCAA sport for almost all 130 Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) universities.

Figure 1

SPORTS CHART OF THE DAY

NCAA AVERAGE REVENUE BY SPORT



SOURCE: Department of Education based on average revenue from 127 FBS schools

BUSINESS INSIDER

Source: *Business Insider*

On its face, the two most popular college sports funding the entire department may not seem problematic. In fact, this is a common practice in the corporate world. Companies use the profits from their most successful product lines to fund other projects that end up being financially unsuccessful or successful to a much lesser extent. From a financial perspective, ultimately, college sports are entertainment products. However, race plays a key role in college athletic participation nationwide. People of color are tremendously overrepresented in college sports. Student-athletes of color make up about 63 percent and 77 percent of Division I football and men's basketball team respectively. White student-athletes make up about 56 percent of all Division I student-athletes (NCAA, 2020). According to Harper (2018), among the 65 Power Five universities, black men comprise about 55 percent of football and men's basketball teams but less than three percent of total undergraduate enrollment.

Despite being the overwhelming majority on these teams, and therefore accounting for the majority of athletic department's profits, student-athletes of color in these sports graduate at much lower rates than their white peers (Baker, 2021; Lapchick, 2020). The reporting of graduation outputs of student-athletes is a priority for universities and the NCAA. This is captured by metrics like graduation success rate (GSR) which, put simply, is a measure of the percentage of student-athletes who graduate within six years of beginning their college careers.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Overall, the GSR for student-athletes of color lags behind their white counterparts at The University of Tulsa (TU). Student-athletes of color make up just over half of the current student-athlete population counted towards the GSR but about seventy-five and almost ninety percent of football and men's basketball players respectively, the two sports that produce the lion's share of athletic revenue for the university (The University of Tulsa, 2021). While they disproportionately generate revenue for the university, too few student-athletes of color in these sports are reaping the ultimate benefit of graduation compared to their white counterparts.

CLIENT PROFILE

TU is a private, research university located in Tulsa, Oklahoma with connections to the Presbyterian Church. During the 2020-2021 school year, total enrollment was about 3,900 students with about 2,800 undergraduate students and 1,100 graduate students (The University of Tulsa, 2020a). TU currently fields 15 NCAA Division I sports teams, six men's teams and nine women's teams.¹ These teams compete primarily in the American Athletic Conference, one of the mid-sized Division I FBS conferences known as the Group of Five (The University of Tulsa, n.d.-c).

TU is the smallest school, in terms of enrollment, to field a Division I FBS football team. This contributes significantly to great financial strain on the athletic department and university. Consequently, the athletic department consistently reports financial losses each year. Like most universities, TU relies heavily on the football and men's basketball programs to generate revenue for the athletic department and essentially subsidize other, non-revenue generating sports.

Athletics do have some greater value to university than the revenue that they generate. They can provide a college degree to many students who otherwise would not have had the opportunity to attend a major university, especially a private institution. TU's position as a small, private school with big, Division I sports provides a unique college experience for its students that cannot be matched by many institutions. Athletics also indirectly help the university to fulfill its mission. Some of this value comes from the marginal fulfillment of the university's mission through graduating student-athletes. TU's mission statement:

We are a student-centered research university that cultivates interconnected learning experiences to explore complex ideas and create new knowledge in a spirit of free inquiry. Guided by our commitment to diversity, equity, and service, we prepare individuals to make meaningful contributions to our campus, our community, and our world.

Source: The University of Tulsa

Athletics allows a more diverse group of students to attend the university. As such a small school, student-athletes may be the school's highest profile students and generate much of engagement and interaction with the greater Tulsa community and the world.

¹ See a list of all sports teams in Appendix A.

THE NATIONAL PROBLEM

College athletics opens the door to educational opportunities for thousands of young people each year. While greater access to higher education is a good thing, some of these student-athletes have little chance of ultimately graduating (Vogel et al., 2019). The combination of collegiate athletics and academics create enormous stressors that most students in the general student population do not experience. Being a college athlete is logically difficult, and time management is crucial. Student-athletes are required to actively participate in practice, strength and conditioning, team meetings, travel, media obligations, and competitions on the athletics side. The academic demands of attending classes, completing homework and readings, taking exams, and completing projects are present as well. On top of this, physical fatigue and the mental stress from factors like the risk of injury are serious, potentially unseen, stressors.

These stressors and other baseline factors, outlined below, affect the graduation rates for subgroups of student-athletes differently. While they are not the only subgroup of interest, black males are highly overrepresented in athletic departments nationwide when compared to a university's overall student body. Because of this, there is an abundance of research about their backgrounds, graduation rates, and outcomes. For example, black male student-athletes are five percent less likely to graduate than other black students and 21 percent less likely to graduate than all students (Harper, 2018).

There are several factors that contribute to lower graduation rates among student-athletes of color. First, some college athletes are unprepared or underprepared for college. Many are recruited as high school juniors and seniors based almost solely on their athletic ability, not academic competency. This is particularly true in revenue-generating sports. Vogel et al. (2019) coined the term "athlete-students" to describe these recruits. Athlete-students are more likely to be people of color and less likely to graduate than their peers in other sports who are more adequately prepared for college and recruited based on both athletic and academic abilities.

Furthermore, Allison et al. (2018) found that, on average, black football players come from larger, more densely populated hometowns where residents are about 40 percent less likely to have a high school diploma, 30 percent more likely to live below the poverty line, 10 percent more likely to be unemployed, earn 20 percent less per capita, and have 20 percent lower household and family incomes than white football players. All of these differences were statistically significant at the 90 percent level at minimum. To compound the problem, educational opportunities and quality are typically worse in low-income areas (Duncombe, 2017). This could leave many black

football players less prepared for the demands of college academics, on average, than their white counterparts.

There are several academic support services readily available to student-athletes on most college campus across America. These services are meant to increase academic success and may include academic advising, tutoring, required study time, career advising, and mentorship (Gaston-Gayles, 2003). However, these services may not meet the needs of every student-athlete equitably. If they did, graduation rates would likely be more uniform across race, gender, and sport.

Impacts

This section will explore the direct costs, externalities, and opportunity costs that arise from lower graduation rates among student-athletes of color in revenue generating sports.

Direct costs

A full athletic scholarship does not cover every cost a student-athlete faces over the course of the school year, most notably some expenses required to properly attend school. The National College Players Association found that the average out-of-pocket education-related expenses for an FBS student-athlete with a full scholarship was about \$3,900 during the 2009-2010 school year in 2020 dollars.² These expenses ranged from about \$1,100 to \$7,300 in 2020 dollars depending on the school (Ramogi & Staurowsky, 2011).³ Some of these costs are taken on by student-athletes from low-income backgrounds whose opportunity to attend college came largely or entirely from athletics.

Externalities

There are two interesting and important questions related to externalities. First, what is the value of a college degree? Second, what is the value of having played college sports in terms of post-graduation outcomes?

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (2019), the median annual income for 25- to 34-year-olds with a bachelor's degree is \$55,700. Some college but

² See Appendix B, part a for 2020 value calculations.

³ See Appendix B, part a for 2020 value calculations.

no degree equates to \$39,700. This difference of \$16,000 per year widens when race is taken into consideration. The net present value of this difference in earnings over that 10-year age range is equivalent to more than half of the current median home price in the Tulsa metropolitan area (Greater Tulsa Association of REALTORS, 2022).⁴

Playing varsity sports in college is associated with positive long-term outcomes when compared to non-athletes. Varsity collegiate athletics require substantial time and mental dedication to excel, are incredibly selective in terms of participation, and can instill transferrable time management and leadership skills. Sauer et al. (2013) found that male student-athletes trailed their non-athlete peers in starting salary and salary five years after graduation. However, former athletes began to earn more in salary 10 years after graduation. Female student-athletes' salaries outpaced non-athlete females in starting salary and salaries five- and 10-years post-graduation.

Opportunity Costs

The largest and potentially most important cost related to graduation rate disparities is the opportunity cost of a student-athlete's time. Instead of attending college, high schoolers can go straight into the workforce following graduation. Assuming the average 18-year-old high school graduate earns between \$7.25 per hour, the federal minimum wage, and \$15.00 per hour, the self-imposed minimum wage set by companies like Target, Costco, and Amazon, the net present value of the opportunity cost of attending college is approximately between \$51,000 and \$105,000 over four years (Smith, 2021).⁵ This also assumes full-time employment at these wage rates.

Summary

Attending some college and not graduating can have serious ramifications for student-athletes. First, athletic scholarships may not cover the full cost of attendance, leading some to take on debt to cover additional expenses with little ability to pay them off. Second, those with a college degree earn, on average, \$16,000 more annually than those with some college but no degree. Finally, college attendance has large opportunity costs, specifically the money that could be earned by immediately entering the workforce after high school graduation. Due to these costs, if graduation is not possible or likely, not attending college in the first place may lead to better long-term outcomes.

⁴ See Appendix B, part b for net present value calculations.

⁵ See Appendix B, part c for net present value calculations.

Graduation Success Rate

The NCAA's member institutions officially measure student-athlete graduation rates with a metric called GSR. While it may be well intentioned, GSR has its limitations and has drawn substantial criticism concerning its efficacy, equity, and accuracy. Despite the validity of this criticism, this policy analysis will use GSR as its main outcome of interest because it is the measure that athletic department compliance offices must report to the NCAA on an annual basis.

Definition

GSR measures the percentage of student-athletes who graduate within six years of beginning their college career. GSR differs from the Federal Graduation Rate (FGR) in two ways. First, GSR holds institutions accountable for the graduation of student-athletes who transfer into their school. Second, GSR does not penalize student-athletes who transfer to another institution while academically eligible to play sports (NCAA, n.d.). Therefore, student-athletes who transfer in or out of the university are considered in this measure. The full GSR calculation formula is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Graduates:

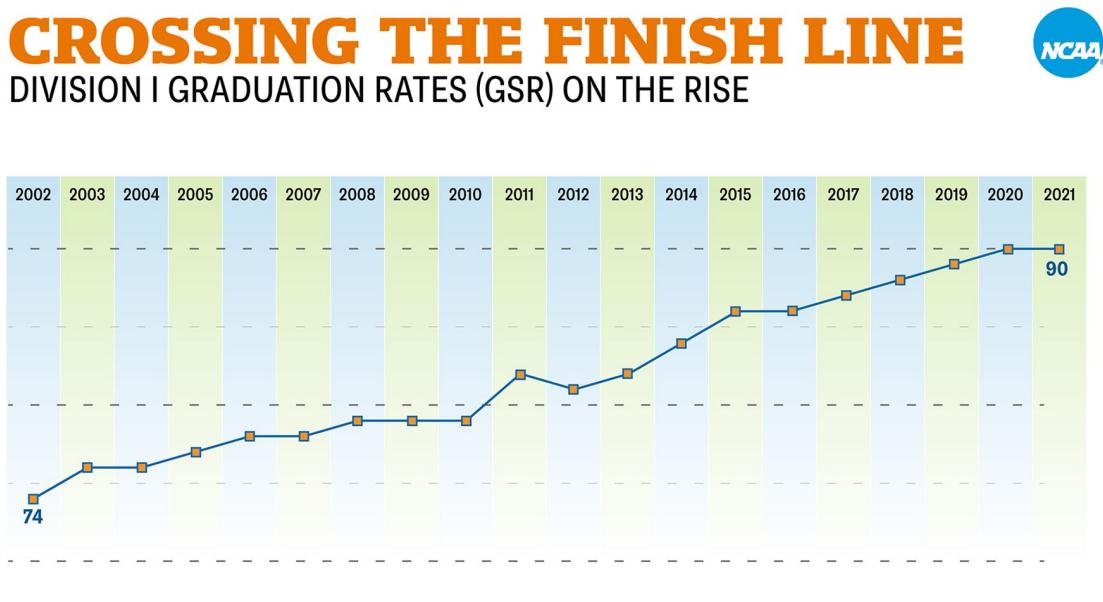
$$GSR = \frac{[Non-Scholarship\ Student-Athletes\ if\ Institution/Team\ Does\ not\ offer\ Athletics\ Aid]}{\left([Enrolled:\right. \\ \left. \begin{array}{l} [First-Time,\ Full-Time] \\ Fall\ Freshmen \\ on\ Athletics\ Aid \\ + \\ [2-\ and\ 4-Year] \\ Transfers\ on \\ Athletics\ Aid \\ + \\ [January] \\ Enrollees\ on \\ Athletics\ Aid \\ + \\ Non-Scholarship \\ Student-Athletes\ if \\ Institution/Team \\ Does\ not\ Offer \\ Athletics\ Aid \end{array} \right) - \left([Excluded:\right. \\ \left. \begin{array}{l} [First-Time,\ Full-Time] \\ Fall\ Freshmen \\ on\ Athletics\ Aid \\ + \\ [2-\ and\ 4-Year] \\ Transfers\ on \\ Athletics\ Aid \\ + \\ [January] \\ Enrollees\ on \\ Athletics\ Aid \\ + \\ Non-Scholarship \\ Student-Athletes\ if \\ Institution/Team \\ Does\ not\ Offer \\ Athletics\ Aid \end{array} \right) - \left([Left\ Eligible:\right. \\ \left. \begin{array}{l} [First-Time,\ Full-Time] \\ Fall\ Freshmen \\ on\ Athletics\ Aid \\ + \\ [2-\ and\ 4-Year] \\ Transfers\ on \\ Athletics\ Aid \\ + \\ [January] \\ Enrollees\ on \\ Athletics\ Aid \\ + \\ Non-Scholarship \\ Student-Athletes\ if \\ Institution/Team \\ Does\ not\ Offer \\ Athletics\ Aid \end{array} \right)}$$

Source: NCAA Research

Limitations and Criticism

The GSR was introduced by the NCAA in 2003 in response to cries from university presidents concerning consistently low FGRs among football and men's basketball players (NCAA, n.d.). Figure 3 shows that the overall GSR of student-athletes has steadily risen since its inception. Gerry et al. (2017) argue that GSR exaggerates graduation rates when compared to the federal rate. This is mainly due to the way that transfer student-athletes (in and out) are counted in this metric. Eckard (2020) found that GSR may inflate graduation rates by as much as 20 percentage points.

Figure 3



Source: NCAA

Interestingly, the NCAA does make public calculations or graduation data for football and men's basketball, the two sports the GSR was created to account for. This has created concerns about the equity and transparency of the GSR.

Finally, GSR only includes student-athletes that receives some form of athletics aid (NCAA, n.d.). This is likely to cause bias in this measurement. The bias may be such that athletics aid helps student-athletes graduate, meaning that not counting non-scholarship student-athletes overestimates the graduation rate of all student-athletes. On the other hand, it may be the case that non-scholarship student-athletes may be better prepared for college, and not counting them toward the GSR underestimates the graduation rate of all student-athletes.

THE PROBLEM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TULSA

At the inception of this project, President Carson had two major concerns about TU's athletic department. First, the university does not forgo sports despite the fact that the department loses money each year. This is likely due to the accounting method called transfer-price accounting that many college athletic departments use to report revenues and costs (Schwarz, 2015). Second, the university is considering adding three new sports to the athletic department's portfolio. These two positions seem to be in opposition. Unfortunately, these concerns are largely business problems, not policy issues. However, ultimately, private universities are essentially non-governmental organizations that provide education, a societally beneficial good. Until recently, a diploma and the benefits that it entails were student-athletes' main form of payment for their services. This is still the case for student-athletes who are not superstars at elite programs.

For the purpose of this analysis, all races and ethnicities not categorized as "white" are included in students and student-athletes of color.⁶ This was done intentionally with the knowledge that this is likely reductionist. However, it is not possible to get more specific than what the NCAA or federal government provides, particularly for the "non-resident alien" and "two or more races" categories, because the data is not more granular. This likely alters specific calculations slightly. Because these two groups have relatively high graduation rates, the trends described below still hold.

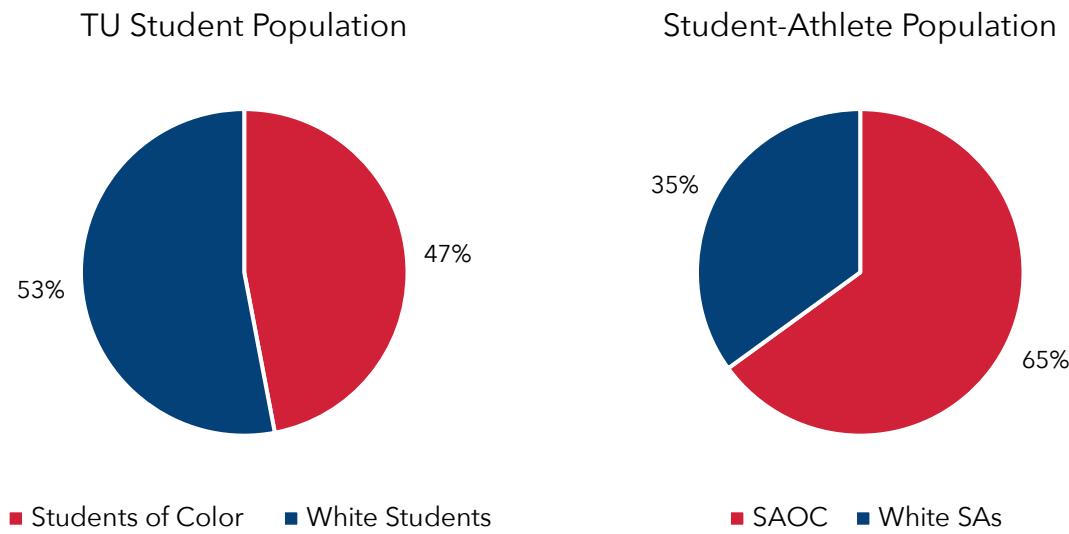
During the 2020-2021 academic year, there were 2,816 undergraduate students and 365 baccalaureate-seeking student-athletes at TU. Shares of students and student-athletes are calculated using these values. In the most recent reporting, there are 287 student-athletes counted toward the university's GSR (The University of Tulsa, 2021). This is because there is a six-year reporting window for GSR. Graduation rates are estimated using only this population. Because exact number of students of each race are not provided, these rates must be estimated rather than precisely calculated.

People of color are overrepresented in TU's athletic department. Students of color make up about 47 percent of the total student body at TU. Student-athletes of color comprise more than 65 percent of student-athletes. This overrepresentation can be seen in Figure 4. Furthermore, black students make up about seven percent of the total student population and about 28 percent of student-athletes. Black men comprise

⁶ These race and ethnicities include American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Non-Resident Alien, Two or More Races, and Unknown.

about four percent of total students at TU and make up more than 20 percent of student-athletes.

Figure 4

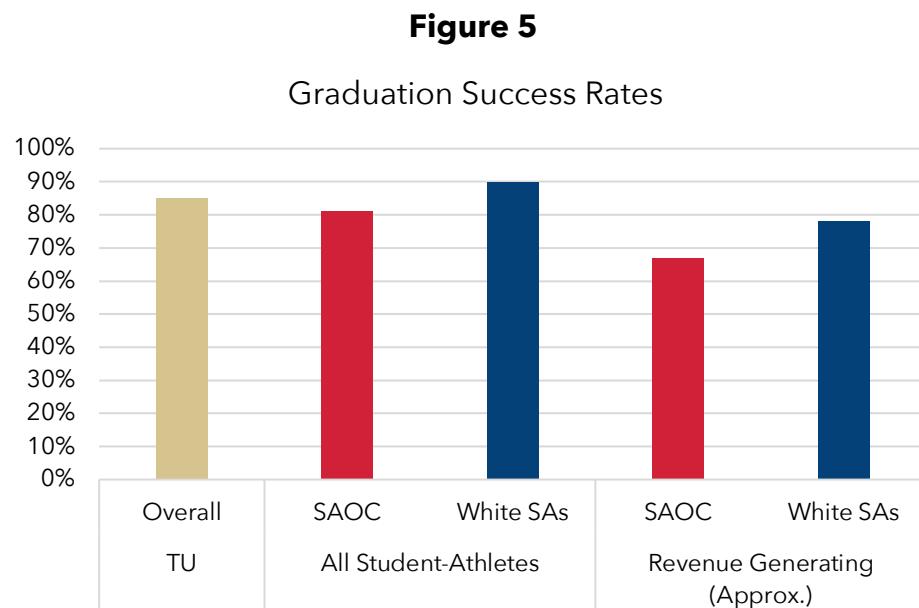


Source: The University of Tulsa

Student-athletes of color primarily generate revenue within the athletic department. Student-athletes of color make up about three-fourths and seven-eighths of the football and men's basketball teams respectively. Black student-athletes make up the majority of these teams. They comprise about half of football players and three-fourths of men's basketball players. Given that TU already has the two greatest revenue generating sports in college athletics, adding three non-revenue sports is likely to exacerbate the loss that the athletic department reports each year and lead to greater subsidization of non-revenue sports by the football and men's basketball programs and, therefore, their players (Nudelman & Gaines, 2017).

The current overall GSR at TU is 85 percent. The GSR for white student-athletes is 90 percent and about 81 percent for student-athletes of color. The GSR for the football and men's basketball programs is 69 percent and 75 percent respectively. White football players graduate at a rate of about 77 percent, while football players of color graduate at a rate of about 66 percent. The difference in men's basketball is even more stark. While all white men's basketball players graduated within the six-year time horizon of the GSR, only about 71 percent of men's basketball players of color graduated in this same timeframe. Black student-athletes have lower GSRs of 68 percent and 70 percent for football and men's basketball respectively. Hispanic football players have a much lower rate at only 25 percent. Figure 5 shows this disparity

in graduation rates. From this graph, it is evident that these revenue-producing student-athletes of color are much less likely to graduate than their white and non-revenue-producing peers.



Source: The University of Tulsa

As outlined in previous sections, this is a nationwide issue and is not specific to TU. However, President Carson is interested in reevaluating the situation at the university for which he is responsible. As president, he has the ultimate authority to set the university's agenda and strategy and facilitate change at TU.

The Policy Window

TU is uniquely equipped to tackle this problem right now for two key reasons. First, there is significant move toward player rights and equity in college sports. With the creation of NIL rules, the general public may think that student-athletes now have the opportunity to be paid adequately for the services that they provide to their university. However, this is not the case. NIL will likely only affect the biggest names in college sports. For the majority of student-athletes, the degree that they ultimately earn will be most impactful, long-term benefit of playing college sports. Although small, as a FBS Division I university, TU has a platform to make change in the college athletics landscape.

Second, President Carson is not the prototypical university president. He has extensive, non-academic leadership experience that gives legitimacy to the social change that he

wants for his university and for the greater American higher education landscape. He is a former Rhodes Scholar, U.S. Representative, naval intelligence officer, Under Secretary of the Army, General Counsel of the Army, Acting Under Secretary of Defense, and professor of public policy. President Carson and the other leadership at TU are able to act as catalysts for meaningful societal change in higher education.

EXISTING EVIDENCE

"High impact experiences" can have a significant effect on graduation rates for college students who are less likely than the average student to graduate. These experiences include experiential learning, cooperative internships, and faculty engagement through research projects and mentorship programs. Using these techniques, Grand Valley State University increased its graduation rate from 50 percent to about 60 percent over five years from 2005 to 2010 (Plotkowski & Joseph, 2011). While this example may not be causal or completely exogenous, it provides a framework to build on and identifies promising policy alternatives.

Because graduation typically has at least a four-year lead time, the effect of an intervention on graduation rates is difficult and expensive to study. Therefore, there is much more evidence on outcomes like exam performance, course completion, and cumulative grade point average (GPA). I was able to identify some interventions where graduation was a main outcome of interest. The existing evidence analyzed in this section focuses on high-touch, and therefore hopefully high impact, interventions from previous studies and other contexts.

Mentorship Programs

Mentorship traces its origins back to Ancient Greece with the character of Mentor in Homer's *The Odyssey* (Manna, 2020). Given that this story is over 3,000 years old, mentorship has undoubtedly evolved Odysseus's epic journey. Although mentorship is not a hard science, the literature shows that a strong mentor-mentee relationship can have a strong, positive impact on a student's academic and future outcomes.

A one-year study examined the effects of mentorship for at-risk college students based on ethnic categories with low average retention rates. Mentors were matched with mentees either based on gender or ethnicity. The outcomes of interest were cumulative GPA, dropout rate, and graduation rate. Interestingly, there was no significant effect of mentorship when the mentor was based on gender. However, the results were statistically significant when the mentor and mentee were the same ethnicity. Overall, the program increased cumulative GPA by about two percent, graduation rate by about 12 percent, and decreased dropout rate by about 14 percent. When the ethnicity of the mentor and mentee matched, the results were even greater. Cumulative GPA increased by more than four percent and graduation rate increased by almost 20 percent (Campbell & Campbell, 2007).

With the intention of strengthening social support for incoming students, another study matched students from the freshman registration block with mentors at a major state university. This was meant to be a representative sample of the student body. Students who participated in the mentorship program were more likely to persist with college enrollment and more likely to ultimately graduate. Students who participated in the mentorship program were about 25 percent more likely to graduate on average. Black students in the program were more likely to persist but less likely to graduate than the average. Black students in the program were about 40 percent less likely to graduate than the average student. Those not in the program were about 50 percent less likely to graduate (Mangold et al., 2002).

Comeaux (2010) matched first year revenue-generating student-athletes with faculty mentors over the course of one academic year, from Fall 2006 to Spring 2007. Student-athletes were asked to self-rate how their perceived their role within the university as "student first," "student-athlete balance," or "athlete first" at the beginning and end of the school year. Qualitative results show that as a result of this mentorship program, student-athletes began to think of themselves more as students. "Student first" increased from zero percent to about 20 percent, "student-athlete balance" increased by about 25 percent, and "athlete first" fell by almost 40 percent. While these results are promising, it is important to note that burden of time and effort for this kind of faculty mentorship program disproportionately falls on professors of color (June, 2015).

In a qualitative study, Douglas (2017) explored the role of mentorship for five male, African American graduates of predominantly white institutions. Several themes emerged among the study's participants. First, mentors helped to fill the void of a male role model during their time in college. Participants were inspired to be able to see a leader that looked like them that could provide them with support and direction. Second, mentors acted as an essential source of guidance for the participants during their time in college. They were a resource for life-related questions and concerns and support toward career goals. Two participants said that their mentor was "essential to their personal success" and was "the reason [they] graduated college." Finally, all participants maintained their relationship with their mentor after graduation. In fact, at the time of the study, all five participants were attempting to pay it forward by acting as mentors themselves.

This may provide some evidence that the role of a mentor cannot be fully measured empirically, and therefore, the causal estimates from the qualitative studies above may

underestimate the impact that mentorship has on certain subgroups, particularly black men.

Attribution-Based Motivation Treatment

Attributional retraining (AR) is an intervention based on Weiner's (1972, 1985, 2012) attribution theory of motivation and emotion. This theory states that it is maladaptive to attribute negative outcomes to internal, stable, and uncontrollable factors. AR aims to reframe students' beliefs about successes and failures by attributing them to external, unstable, and controllable factors. This framing encourages achievement, rather than hindering it. AR is a common motivational treatment used to help unprepared or underprepared students make the transition from high school to college (Kallenbach & Zafft, n.d.). Student-athletes may be particularly susceptible to difficulties during this transition (Purdy, 1983). As stated previously, student-athletes who are recruited with little or no consideration of academics are less likely to graduate. Additionally, Division I athletics and university-level coursework impose greater logistical and intellectual effort than at the high school level.

There is not abundant evidence to suggest that AR has a direct impact on graduation rates. However, the evidence points to better outcomes in terms of exam grades, course grades and completion, and GPA. There is significant evidence of these effects in student-athletes and non-student-athletes. Ultimately, improvements at each step in the academic process should lead to an improvement in degree completion.

Parker et al. (2016, 2018) studied the effect of an attribution-based motivational treatment on groups of student-athletes in two online introductory psychology courses. The first study was geared toward student-athletes with low perceived academic control (PAC). Put another way, these were student-athletes who strongly attributed their failures to internal, stable, and uncontrollable factors at baseline. The second study focused on student-athletes with high perceived stress. Because of these perceived deficits, these student-athletes were considered high risk to fail or withdraw from the course.

In each study, student-athletes were given a pre-treatment midterm exam to establish a baseline. Surveys about PAC or perceived stress were administered when the midterm grades were returned. Treated student-athletes then watched a narrated video after the midterm exam. The video encouraged them to attribute poor performance to external, unstable, and controllable factors. These student-athletes were then asked to complete a writing assignment summarizing the main points of the

video and applying them to their own lives. All student-athletes then completed the final exam and the course. Finally, all student-athletes completed the questionnaire about PAC or perceived stress again.

In the first study, treated low PAC student-athletes outperformed their control group counterparts greatly. Researchers found that the AR treatment facilitated an increase in students' perceived success in the course and improved post-treatment exam performance by almost twelve percent, a nearly two-letter grade increase. Student-athletes who received the treatment outperformed non-AR student-athletes by more than six percent on final course grades, almost a full letter grade. Finally, treated student-athletes were more than 60 percent less likely to withdraw from the course. In the second study, the AR treatment "facilitated performance" in high stress student-athletes and similar results were found for post-treatment exam scores.

Much smaller and statistically insignificant effects were identified in high PAC and low stress student-athletes. Based on the average profile of a football or men's basketball player of color and the way they are recruited, these young men are more likely to fall into the low PAC and/or high stress categories. These studies show that the outcomes for students who are at the highest risk for either course failure or withdrawal, and therefore not graduating, can be improved through attribution-based motivational treatment.

Although online courses may not be a common mode of instruction at major universities, this method may still facilitate academic success for student-athletes. Much of what has made these 18- and 19-year-olds successful to this point has been an inherent talent for a sport. It is, therefore, understandable that may ascribe these new academic struggles to something inherent within them as well. AR can help break that harmful thought process and enable success in the classroom.

In a study not specific to student-athletes, Perry et al. (2010) examined the effect of AR on first year college students in an introductory psychology course at a research university. All students were given a pre-treatment exam and were placed into one of three buckets based on their performance: low, average, and high performing. The AR treatment was administered in three stages over one hour. First, the causal research activation stage tasked students to initiate attributional thinking about their success and failure based on the feedback from the pre-treatment exam. Second, the attribution induction stage was a 10-minute video that asked students to attribute controllable causal attributions as reasons for poor performance. Finally, the attribution

consolidation phase included two tasks performed by the students to cement the concepts from the video about the reasons for success and failure.

Post-treatment, low and average performing students saw about a 20 percent increase in exam performance, a six percent increase in course grade, and a 12 percent increase in their GPA compared to the control group. High performing students saw positive, statistically insignificant results in all three outcome categories. Again, AR was shown to have a significant effect on the highest risk students.

Finally, Hamm et al. (Hamm et al., 2020) examined the effects of AR on science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) students. Almost half of undergraduate STEM majors in the United States do not graduate. The methodology for this experiment was almost identical to the 2010 Perry et al. study. However, instead of being separated by pre-treatment exam performance, subjects were separated into two groups: those with low high school grades (HSG) and those with high HSG. Among those with low HSG, treated students graduated at a rate 30 percent higher than the non-treatment group within eight years of starting college. Among all students that did graduate, treated students were able to do so in about two fewer years than the control group. In the high HSG group, a statistically significant treatment effect was not detected. These rates were only slightly lower for six-year graduation rates, the same timeframe as the GSR.

Overall, AR does have a positive effect on student's academic outcomes. Equally importantly, these effects tend to be greatest in the students that need the most academic support. This motivational treatment meets students where they are and teaches them how to improve their thinking, rather than trying to change who they are as a person.

Experiential Learning

Experiential learning (EL) is "the process of learning by doing." The theory behind EL is that by participating in hands-on activities in an educational setting, students will be better able to better use the learned skills and knowledge in real-world applications (Kent State University, n.d.). This method is common in medical education and in trade training programs like HVAC maintenance and automotive repair.

In a qualitative study, researchers found that undergraduate students at California State University, Northridge that participated in EL courses were more likely to graduate in four years or fewer. This rate was almost four times the university's average and about

double the national average. Six-year graduation rates, the same timeframe as GSR, were even higher (Bradberry & De Maio, 2019).

Coffey and Davis (2019) explored how student-athletes respond to experiential learning courses. They identified that much of sports is learning by doing. A basketball player learns to shoot free throws at a higher rate by tweaking their form and simply repetitively shooting free throws. Many former student-athletes learned some of the intangible skills that they currently use in the workplace through playing collegiate sports. Therefore, it seems reasonable that this could be an effective way to teach student-athletes academic material and concepts.

Summary

High touch interventions can have a significant effect on the success of college students and ultimately can increase their graduation rates. This is particularly true for the students that may need the most support at baseline. Attributional retraining, experiential learning, and mentorship programs all have the potential to improve the rate at which revenue-generating student-athletes of color graduate.

POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1: Status Quo

TU provides its student-athletes academic support via the Office of Academic and Student Services (OASiS). OASiS has seven full-time employees on its staff and is tasked with promoting “student-athlete academic achievement, community responsibility, and personal accountability.” Part-time roles include tutors, mentors, attendance monitors, and study hall monitors.

The academic services offered to student-athletes include monitoring of academic progress in accordance with NCAA rules, academic assessments, supervised study hall, tutoring, academic mentoring, programs that prepare student-athletes for the transition to college, and sports psychology skills. Non-academic services include student-athlete development in the form of career and professional development, personal development, community outreach, and the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee that provides input to the athletic department about decisions that affect student-athletes (The University of Tulsa, n.d.-a).

Alternative 2: Tulsa Engagement Athletic Mentorship Program

Currently, OASiS employs part-time employees called academic mentors. However, these positions are not what one may typically think of when hearing the term “mentor.” While they do help teach key academic skills such as time management, organization, and study habits, they are not an integral part of student-athletes’ non-academic life and personal development (The University of Tulsa, n.d.-a). The Tulsa Engagement Athletic Mentorship Program (TEAM) will be designed to partner student-athletes with mentors from the greater Tulsa community and TU alumni to foster community engagement and the development of professional and life skills that will help inside and outside the classroom. This program will be modeled after Belmont University’s Athletic Mentoring Program (Belmont Bruins, 2021).

At the beginning of each school year, prospective mentors and student-athletes will attend a “mentor fair” to meet one another. In the following weeks, prospective mentors will provide detailed information to the university about their job, career, professional associations, extracurricular interests, hobbies, etc. Student-athletes will fill out a survey detailing what they are looking for in a mentor, their career aspirations, and any other personal information that they desire. Based on these surveys, mentors

and mentees will be matched in a way that gives student-athletes their best chance of success and graduation.

Prospective mentors must commit to:

- A full year of mentorship with the option to continue with the same mentee for the duration of their time at TU
- Guide the mentee towards the career they are interested in
- Meet with their mentee at least once per month
- Strict adherence to NCAA rules
- Confidentiality as to their mentee's academic and personal history

All TU student-athletes would be required to participate in this program during their first year at the university, whether that is their freshman year or the first year after they transfer to TU. Some student-athletes selected based on need will be required to continue in the program after their first year. All student-athletes may elect to stay in the program for as many years as they choose.

Alternative 3: New Experiential Learning Block II Course

Many majors at TU require at least one course denoted as "Block II: Historical & Socials Interpretation." As the name implies, the courses offered in this block are foundational and cover a variety of social sciences. Introductory courses in Psychology are currently among the options that students can choose to fulfill this requirement. These courses are typically taken during a student's first or second year at TU.

The university administration, athletic department, and psychology department will collaboratively design a new Block II course that addresses lower GSR rates among the targeted population through experiential learning. This course would focus on the theory and practice of attributional retraining. This concept will teach students to shift the attribution of their successes and failures from internal to external factors and reward the learning and progress that attain through their educational journey. Instruction and readings should focus on the understanding these concepts and how they operate. Assignments and activities should make space for students to apply these concepts to their current situation at TU.

Although potentially difficult to anticipate, the professor that ultimately teaches this course should not have a predisposition against student-athletes. Based on her university biography, Professor Lisa Cromer may be an appropriate candidate to teach this course. She is a clinical psychologist, and her research interest of reliance to trauma

and adversity and teaching interest of applied sports psychology align well with the purpose of this course. Alternatively, this may be an opportunity for an adjunct professor.

Because the university cannot, by NCAA rule, create or offer a course solely for student-athletes, the class will be open to all TU students. However, a significant number of seats in each section of the class should be reserved for student-athletes. Because they are often so siloed in the athletic facilities and with friends that are fellow student-athletes, ideally, this mix of students would further help student-athletes to be a part of the culture of the university as a whole. As a policy, at-risk student-athletes, particularly football and men's basketball players, should be encouraged by coaches and advisors in the OASiS office to take this course to fulfill their Block II requirement.

CRITERIA

The above alternatives will be evaluated on the following criteria.

Effectiveness

The NCAA and its member institutions use GSR as a measure of graduation success for student-athletes. Importantly, GSP has a six-year time horizon for reporting. This means that the most recent 2021 data comes from the class that entered college during the 2014-2015 school year. The full effects of a policy or intervention implemented during the 2022-2023 school year would fully be realized in the 2029 reporting data. Effectiveness will be measured by the anticipated percentage point increase in GSR. The GSR from the most recent report is 85 percent at TU.

Equity

Equity and a desire for more equitable outcomes are at the heart of this policy problem. Likely, each alternative above will increase the GSR for student-athletes across the board. However, that is not necessarily the intent. These alternatives are specifically targeted at raising the GSR for student-athletes of color and particularly those in revenue generating sports.

The aphorism “a rising tide lifts all boats” provides an appropriate metaphor in this case. While all boats may rise, there are certain boats that are of more specific concern to this problem. Any eventually recommended alternative would raise these boats more than the others, generating more equitable graduation outcomes. Each alternative will receive an equity rating of low, medium, or high. Alternatives that disproportionately raise the GSR for the groups in question will be awarded a higher equity rating. To determine this, the subgroups in the existing evidence will be assigned to real world subgroups of student-athletes. The estimated change in outcome and GSR will be analyzed for different subgroups of student-athletes.

Cost

The cost of each alternative will be estimated using financial data from a variety of sources. Costs will be measure as net present value over the course of their implementation. Pure cost is a particularly important factor because the athletic department currently loses money each year based on the accounting methods used.

Cost-Effectiveness

A cost-effectiveness analysis compares the relative cost per unit of outcome for different alternatives. In this case, the measure of cost-effectiveness is the cost to graduate each additional student-athlete for each alternative. This analysis will provide a standard metric by which to measure the efficiency of the money spent on each alternative.

Administrative Feasibility

Administrative feasibility will assess the university's ability to execute each alternative in terms of non-monetary resources. The three main resources considered will be time, human capital, and facilities. Each alternative will receive a rating of low, medium, or high for administrative feasibility.

Political Feasibility

Political feasibility will assess the political appetite for each alternative within the current climate nationally and at the university. With legislation like NIL and recent student-athlete activism, the college athletics landscape is rapidly becoming more student-athlete-centric and equity-focused (Blinder & Witz, 2020; Cliburn, 2021).

The State of Oklahoma is generally considered to be a conservative state. The University of Virginia's Center for Politics ranked Oklahoma as the fifteenth most Republican-friendly state in the country, tied with Tennessee and Wisconsin (Jacobson, 2022). Tulsa County is no exception with about 57 percent of voters voting to reelect Republican Donald Trump in the 2020 presidential election. This is, however, a lower share than the around two-thirds to three-fourths majority voting for President Trump in surrounding counties (Politico, 2021).

This is not necessarily indicative of the political climate at TU. While TU may still lean conservative, universities are often more liberal than the communities that they inhabit (Najmabadi & Knott, 2016). Based on an evaluation of these three factors, each alternative will receive a rating of low, medium, or high for political feasibility.

EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1: Status Quo

Effectiveness: The current policy is unlikely to have any effect on student-athletes' GSR. While GSR may vary from year to year, that variation is likely not a function of something controllable or identifiable in terms of a policy within the university, the athletic department, or OASiS. This variation is likely due to some randomness.

Equity: This alternative receives a low equity rating because the status quo is not likely to change outcomes for student-athletes as a whole or for any subset of student athletes.

Cost: Because this does not change the current policy, the anticipated additional cost of this alternative is zero.

Cost-Effectiveness: Cost effectiveness cannot be calculated for this alternative because there is no expected change in GSR and zero cost associated with the status quo.

Administrative Feasibility: Administrative feasibility for the status quo is high. TU does not have to make any staffing or facility changes to continue to implement the current policy.

Political Feasibility: Political feasibility for the status quo is medium. While the current policy does address policies that affect student-athletes and their rights with the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, it does not actively confront the equity of outputs and outcomes. TU will likely need to make changes to keep up with the rest of the industry.

Additionally, football and men's basketball will continue to subsidize a large share of the thirteen remaining sports. If the university plans to add up to three new (likely non-revenue generating) sports to its athletic department in the coming years, the subsidization problem will only worsen. The status quo does not address the potential outcry and criticism that adding more sports may generate.

Despite all of this, the TU's overall GSR was 85 percent during the last reporting cycle (The University of Tulsa, 2021). This is only four percentage points lower than the national NCAA Division I average (NCAA, 2021). This shows that the status quo does have some efficacy towards getting the average student-athletes through to

graduation. Considering this, there may be considerable support for the current policy and pushback on significant policy changes.

Option 2: Tulsa Engagement Athletic Mentorship Program

Effectiveness: A student-athlete community mentorship program is estimated to increase TU's GSR by about five to ten percentage points. Assuming over the lifetime of the program the effect is the average of this range, the GSR should increase by 7.44 percentage points.⁷

Equity: This alternative receives a medium equity score. The quantitative literature shows that the effects on the overall sample in the studies are much greater than for black students. These effects do increase for students of color when they are matched with a mentor of the same race or ethnicity. Without more information about potential mentors, these matches cannot be guaranteed.

However, the qualitative literature paints a different picture. Research subjects in these studies said their mentors were invaluable to their success while in college and helped propel them to graduation. This evidence suggests that the quantitative evidence undervalues mentorship for male college students of color.

Cost: The development of a mentorship program should take the equivalent of two months by two OASiS or university staff members. The total development cost is \$16,666.67. Evaluating this mentorship program over 15 years, the net present value of the budgetary costs of this alternative is \$384,442.77. The total net present value of this alternative is \$401,109.44.⁸

Cost-Effectiveness: Over the lifetime of this alternative, the mentorship program costs \$2,062.56 per additional student-athlete graduated.⁹

Administrative Feasibility: This alternative receives a low rating for administrative feasibility. A mentorship program would likely need to be administered by OASiS. This department already has a small staff, and adding another program would stretch this staff even further.

⁷ These calculations are found in Appendix C.

⁸ These calculations are found in Appendix C.

⁹ These calculations are found in Appendix C.

Additionally, Tulsa is a mid-sized city and TU is a small university in terms of population and enrollment respectively. Given these size constraints, fully staffing a one-on-one mentorship program with community members and alumni may present challenges.

This alternative, however, does not require a significant commitment of time or facilities from the university. Aside from the initial mentor fair and a few potential program events throughout the school year, much of the time responsibility falls on the mentors and student-athletes themselves.

Political Feasibility: Political feasibility for a community-based mentorship program for student-athletes is high. This alternative actively supports the missions of the university and the athletic department. TU aims to “prepare individuals to make meaningful contributions to... [the] community (The University of Tulsa, n.d.-b). The athletic department’s mission statement’s, Loyal Always True, second pillar makes giving back to the City of Tulsa the department’s “number one priority” (The University of Tulsa, 2020b).

Furthermore, this alternative does not overtly state the issue it is aimed at remedying. This may help to dampen a considerable amount of political disagreement or backlash that may come as a result of an equity-focused policy at a fairly conservative university.

Option 3: Experiential Learning

Effectiveness: This alternative is expected increase TU’s overall GSR by between about two and ten percentage points. Assuming over the lifetime of the course the effect is the average of the worst- and best-case scenarios, the GSR should increase by 6.12 percentage points.¹⁰

Equity: This alternative receives a high equity score. The literature shows that AR treatments are most effective for the lowest performing and highest risk students and these effects decrease as the student increases in PAC and decreases in stress level. Calculations show that for three different kinds of student-athletes (low, average, and high academic performers), this course should increase GSR by about 12 percentage points for low academic performers, six percentage points for average academic performers, and have positive but negligible effect on high academic performers.¹¹

¹⁰ These calculations are found in Appendix C.

¹¹ These calculations are found in Appendix C.

Cost: Development of this Block II psychology course should take place in the summer before the first fall semester in which it is taught. The development team should consist of an assistant or associate professor, a senior supervising professor, and an academic staff member for support. The total development cost is \$37,398.56. A professor will teach two section of this course each semester. They will be supported by two graders each semester. Evaluating this course over 15 years, the net present value of a professor's salary for this course is \$497,547.13. The total net present value of this course is \$534,945.69.¹²

Cost-Effectiveness: Over the lifetime of this alternative, this course costs \$3,343.96 per additional student-athlete graduated.¹³

This estimate does not include any increase in graduation rate that may result from taking this course for non-student athletes. Presumably, TU has a small population of non-student-athletes that could be classified as high risk for not graduating. This course and the AR treatment it provides should positively impact the graduation rate for these students as well.

Administrative Feasibility: Administrative feasibility for a new Block II course focusing on attributional retraining is high. This alternative does not require a new infrastructure to be created or new or additional facilities. It does, however, require TU to either hire a professor or lecturer or reassign a current faculty member to teach this course. Aside from the cost of this, this process may require significant time.

Political Feasibility: Political feasibility for this alternative is medium. On average, this course should help students who take it with the transition from high school to college. As noted previously, this transition, especially to an elite private university, may be particularly difficult for some students.

This alternative removes the onus to develop and implement a new policy from the athletic department and OASiS and places it on the academic side of the university and the psychology department. If the psychology department is not keen on creating a new course or using some of its resources to support the graduation of student-athletes, this alternative may receive pushback from the academic side of the university.

¹² These calculations are found in Appendix C.

¹³ These calculations are found in Appendix C.

OUTCOMES MATRIX

Figure 6 provides an overview of how the alternatives compare to one another based on each of the evaluative criteria.

Figure 6

	Effectiveness	Equity	Cost	Cost Effectiveness	Feasibility	
					Administrative	Political
Status Quo	N/A	Low	\$0	-	High	Medium
TEAM Program	7.5 percentage points	Medium	\$400,000	\$2,100 per student-athlete	Low	High
Block II Course	6 percentage points	High	\$535,000	\$3,350 per student-athlete	High	Medium

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the evaluation of the alternatives, I recommend that TU create a new experiential learning Block II course that focuses on attributional retraining. While this alternative is slightly less effective, more costly, and less cost effective than the mentorship program, it has significantly fewer barriers in terms of administrative feasibility. New courses are developed and taught each year at universities. Therefore, the infrastructure is already in place to create and teach new courses. I have serious concerns about the ability to create a new mentorship program and fully staff it with high quality mentors. Furthermore, the attributional retraining course is highly equitable. Studies show that attributional retraining has positive effects, on average, for many different subgroups. However, the effects are greatest for the subgroups that are most at risk for not completing their degree. This course does not create an additional demand on student-athletes' time. Almost every major at TU requires at least one Block II course as a part of its curriculum. This alternative provides student-athletes with the opportunity to take a required course and participate in an intervention that should increase their likelihood of graduating at the same time. Finally, if the university were to reassigned a professor to teach this course, the instructional, financial costs for this course would be net zero.

IMPLEMENTATION

This Block II course should be taught for the first time in Fall 2023. This policy should come from the President's Office and be framed as a way to support TU's most vulnerable students with their transition from high school to college and ultimately through to graduation.

In order to teach this course, the university and psychology department will first need to develop the course syllabus. In Summer 2023, the department chair and university administration should select a professor to develop and teach this course and a more senior professor to oversee its development. An academic services staff member should be part of the development team to provide administrative support. This will require two months of summer pay for the instructor and one month for the supervising professor. The staff member will have their duties reallocated to this project for the equivalent of one month. The course should be principally based on attribution theory, created by Dr. Bernard Weiner. A key component will be the outside of class activities (homework) that allow students to apply attributional retraining to their own lives.

Once the course is fully developed, the registrar should list the course and allow students to add it to their course schedules. The class should be a larger, lecture-style course with a significant number of seats available. Two sections of the class should be taught per semester. A substantial share of seats, about half, in each section should be reserved for student-athletes. Academically at-risk football and men's basketball players should be **strongly** encouraged to take this course to fulfill their Block II requirement. Other student-athletes should be encouraged to take this course as well.

There may be pushback from the psychology department or the professor that is tapped to teach this course. To alleviate pushback from the department, the university could offer to pay for a portion of the eventual instructor's salary as to lessen the impact on the psychology department's budget. If the university and department cannot identify a professor to teach the course, an outside hire with expertise in attribution theory or sports psychology could be brought in to develop and teach the class.

The athletic department and OASiS may take issue with this course if it interferes with the services that they provide to student-athletes or, worse, it has the opposite than intended effect on student-athlete achievement and graduation rates. OASiS should be fully informed of the creation and intention behind the addition of this class. Furthermore, OASiS and psychology department academic staff could work together to incorporate AR into their services in a creative and discrete manner.

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APPENDIX A: LIST OF SPORTS PROGRAMS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TULSA

Men's Sports

Basketball
Cross Country
Football
Soccer
Tennis
Track & Field

Women's Sports

Basketball
Cross Country
Golf
Rowing
Soccer
Softball
Tennis
Track & Field
Volleyball

APPENDIX B: IMPACT CALCULATIONS

- a. CPI₂₀₀₉: 214.565
CPI₂₀₁₀: 218.076
CPI_{avg2009-2010}: 216.3205
CPI₂₀₂₀: 258.844

$$P_x = P_y \left(\frac{CPI_x}{CPI_y} \right)$$

2009-2010	2020
\$3,222	\$3,855.37
\$952	\$1,139.14
\$6,127	\$7,331.42

- b. Future value: \$16,000
Discount rate: 7%¹⁴
Years: 10

$$NPV = \sum \frac{FV}{(1+r)^t}$$

$$NPV = \$112,377.30$$

- c. Future value range: \$15,080-31,200
Discount rate: 7%
Years: 4

$$NPV = \$51,079.15 - 105,680.99$$

¹⁴ Office of Budget and Management standard

APPENDIX C: EVALUATION CALCULATIONS

Mentorship Program

Effectiveness

- Increase in graduation rates for at risk students
 - 12 percent overall, 20 percent when ethnicity matched (Campbell & Campbell, 2007)
- Increase in graduation rates for general student population
 - 25 percent overall, 23 percent for black students (Mangold et al., 2002)
- Assumptions
 - Effect of mentorship on GSR will likely be smaller due to more extreme demands on student-athletes' time (~50 percent)

Current GSR = 85 percent

<u>Low</u>	<u>High</u>
$12\% \times 0.5 = 6\%$	$23\% \times 0.5 = 11.5\%$
$0.06 = \frac{x - 85}{85}$	$0.115 = \frac{x - 85}{85}$
5.1 = x - 85	9.775 = x - 85
90.1 = x	94.775 = x

Effect = 5.1 to 9.775 percentage points

Average effect = **7.44 percentage points**

Equity

- Larger effect on all students than on black students
- Highly effective when the ethnicity of mentor and mentee match
 - At this point, there is little way to guarantee this
- Qualitative evidence suggests that the studies included in this analysis may undervalue mentorship for male college students of color

Equity rating: **Medium**

Costs

- Assumptions
 - Half of one full-time staff member's (\$50,000) responsibility should be to act as Program Coordinator
 - Program development will require Two staff members over two months
 - About 91 new mentors per year ($\sim \frac{365 \text{ SAs}}{4 \text{ classes}}$)
 - Program cost will be evaluated over 15 years
 - Discount Rate = 7%

$$\text{Program Development} = \$50,000 \times 2 \times \frac{2}{12} = \$16,666.67$$

<u>Annual Costs</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Program Coordinator	\$25,000
Background Checks	$\$57.25 \times 91 = \$5,209.75$ (Oklahoma DoE, n.d.)
Marketing and Outreach	\$3,000
Mentor Fair	\$1,000
Mentor Orientation	\$3,000
Program Dinner	\$5,000
Total	\$42,209.75

$$NPV = \sum \frac{FV}{(1 + r)^t}$$

$$NPV = \$384,442.77$$

$$\text{Total Cost} = 384,442.77 + 16,666.67 = \$401,109.44$$

Cost-Effectiveness

Effect: 7.44 percentage points

$$NPV = \sum \frac{FV}{(1+r)^t}$$

NPV = 67.76 percentage points

$$\text{Cost Effectiveness} = \frac{\$401,109.44}{67.76 \text{ percentage points}} = \$5,919.56 \text{ per percentage point}$$

N_{GSR} = 287

$$\text{Student-athletes per percentage point} = \frac{287 \text{ SAs}}{100 \text{ percentage points}} = 2.87$$

$$\text{Cost Effectiveness} = \frac{\$5,919.56 \text{ per percentage point}}{2.87 \text{ SAs}} = \$2,062.56 \text{ per student-athletes}$$

Block II Course

Effectiveness

- Course completion 6 percent higher for low PAC students
 - ~50 percent low PAC, ~50 percent high PAC
- Graduation rate 30 percent higher for low HSG students (Hamm et al., 2020)
 - ~50 percent low HSG, ~50 percent high HSG
- Positive, negligible effect on high PAC and HSG students
- Assumptions
 - Effect of AR on GSR smaller than above effects (-20 percent)
 - Graduation most closely related to course completion
 - Percent of at-risk student the same as above (50 percent)

Current GSR = 85 percent

<u>Low</u> $6\% \times 0.5 \times 0.8 = 2.4\%$ $0.024 = \frac{x - 85}{85}$ 2.04 = x - 85 87.04 = x	<u>High</u> $30\% \times 0.5 \times 0.8 = 12\%$ $0.12 = \frac{x - 85}{85}$ 10.2 = x - 85 95.2 = x
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Effect = 2.04 to 10.2 percentage points

Average effect = **6.12 percentage points**

Equity

- Assumptions
 - One-third of student-athlete population fall into each bucket below
 - Low performers: $\frac{2}{3}$ of effect
 - Medium performers: $\frac{1}{3}$ of effect
 - High performers: positive, statistically insignificant effect

<u>Low</u> 12.24 percentage points	<u>Medium</u> 6.12 percentage points	<u>High</u> Positive, negligible effect
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Equity rating: **High**

Costs

- Assumptions
 - Two sections taught per semester
 - Average staff member salary = \$50,000 paid on a 12-month basis
 - Faculty are paid on 9-month contracts
 - Teaching one 3 credit hour sections of a course account for one-eighth of a professor's responsibilities (The University of Tulsa, 2019)
 - This equates to one-eighth of a professor's salary
 - Course development during summer with a three-member team
 - Asst. to Assoc. Professor: 2 months
 - Supervising Professor: 1 month
 - Staff Support: 1 month
 - Two graders needed
 - \$20 per hour
 - 10 hours per week for 14-week semester
 - Program cost will be evaluated over 15 years
 - Discount Rate = 7%

<u>Cost</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2020</u>
Avg. TU Asst. Professor	\$83,864	\$86,436
Avg. TU Assoc. Professor	\$84,679	\$87,276
Avg. TU Professor	\$121,645	\$125,375

(Chronicle Data, 2018)

$$CPI_{2018} = 251.1$$

$$CPI_{2020} = 258.8$$

$$\text{Course Development} = \frac{2}{9} \times \frac{87,276+86,436}{2} + \frac{1}{9} \times 125,375 + \frac{1}{12} \times 50,000 = \$37,398.56$$

$$\text{Annual teaching costs} = \frac{4}{8} \times \frac{87,276+86,436}{2} + 2 \times 2 \times 14 \times 10 \times 20 = \$54,628$$

$$NPV = \sum \frac{FV}{(1+r)^t}$$

$$NPV = \$497,547.13$$

$$\text{Total Cost} = 497,547.13 + 37,398.56 = \$534,945.69$$

Cost-Effectiveness

Effect: 6.12 percentage points

$$NPV = \sum \frac{FV}{(1 + r)^t}$$

NPV = 55.74 percentage points

$$\text{Cost Effectiveness} = \frac{\$534,945.69}{55.74 \text{ percentage points}} = \$9,597.16 \text{ per percentage point}$$

N_{GSR} = 287

$$\text{Student-athletes per percentage point} = \frac{287 \text{ SAs}}{100 \text{ percentage points}} = 2.87$$

$$\text{Cost Effectiveness} = \frac{\$9,597.16 \text{ per percentage point}}{2.87 \text{ SAs}} = \$3,343.96 \text{ per student-athletes}$$