



Annual Assessment Report Template: Learning

Academic Year: 2015-2016

Date of Report Submission: July 2016
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I. Abstract

College student-athletes face unique challenges that include high demands on their time and energy. Although the time demands are significant, finding ways to enhance their professional growth through career development programming is critical. Transitioning from student-athlete roles to professional roles in a career choice outside of sports is inevitable for most collegiate athletes. However, according to Harrison and Lawrence (2004), "many student-athletes who must terminate their participation experience adverse affects simply because making the transition from an athletic career to a new one can be extremely difficult" (p. 486). Therefore, career development initiatives, like many provided by Athletic Academic Advising (AAA), are essential to helping student-athletes make positive transitions to the real world through their preparedness and practice. One such event is Mock Interview Night. This experience is designed to provide student-athletes with a 'mock' professional interview to help them prepare for their future professions.

This assessment examined the career preparedness of student-athletes as a result of their student-athlete and AAA programming experience culminating with Mock Interview Night. In particular, expert interviewers from a profession similar to the goals of the student-athlete interviewee directly assessed 12 characteristics that examine the extent to which student-athletes are prepared for graduate school or entry level careers upon graduation. Similarly, student-athletes were indirectly assessed by asking how their student-athlete experience helped prepare them for professional interviews. Results indicate 55% of student-athletes were rated as 'meets expectations' or above in all categories, and 100% of students received a score that indicates that they meet or exceed overall expectations of career readiness. The data shows areas for improvement with individual student-athletes as well as categories that can be improved by specific life skills programming. Overall, however, the assessment revealed student-athletes are able to successfully articulate transferable skills learned in athletics and life skills programming that can be applied to future careers. In addition, student-athletes indicate their participation as student-athletes helped prepare them for future professional interviews.

II. Assessment Question

“To what extent are student-athletes prepared for graduate school/career upon graduation?”

III. Learning Outcome Assessed

Departmental Learning Outcome Statement

Student-athletes who engage in Athletic Academic Advising’s Life Skills programs and services will apply the leadership and teamwork skills learned through athletic involvement to their academic, personal, and professional lives.

Programmatic Learning Outcome Statement

Student-athletes who utilize Athletic Academic Advising’s Life Skills programs and services will be prepared for the world of work or graduate school and serve as leaders in their communities.

IV. Introduction & Context

University Context

This Mock Interview Night assessment is connected to DePaul University’s Vision Twenty18 goals specifically through objective 1a: “Focus the entire university community on student learning and success,” by strengthening the student experience and expanding learning support services. Mock Interview Night is offered to DePaul’s Third Year student-athletes and connects to this objective by explicitly providing programming that expands connections between curricular and co-curricular programs while also augmenting career advising.

One *Divisional Learning Outcome* includes student-athletes gaining *Intellectual Skills and Practical Competence* surrounding career development. Practice and understanding of such skills is critical to this learning outcome. By providing unique career events such as the Mock Interview Night, DePaul student-athletes are more prepared for their professional lives upon completion of their collegiate careers. Additionally, having opportunities to practice skills throughout their time at DePaul in events like media training day, etiquette education dinner, and other career workshops helps enhance their career preparedness. Likewise, Mock Interview Night underscores this practical application. In short, AAA conducts these interviews with junior student-athletes twice a year to give them an opportunity to go through a somewhat formal interview process with an expert interviewer in their field of study.

Lastly, since student-athletes may have limited opportunities to augment career skills through on or off campus employment and internships, it is important that career workshops such as the ones listed above are provided to allow student-athletes to practice and improve upon their professional skillset. The intent of Mock Interview Night, therefore, is to provide a chance for student-athletes to practice articulating and

performing the transferable skills they have gained through their participation as students and athletes as to be more prepared for their future professional endeavors, consequently growing their overall career confidence.

Supporting Scholarship

Student-athletes are often a diversely unique population on college campuses. The pressures they face on and off the playing field impact their collegiate experiences. One unique area where student-athletes face challenges is in their career development processes. According to Carodine, Almond and Gratto (2001), support programs that are holistic in nature and encourage a variety of services to assist the unique needs of student-athletes are critical to the student-athlete experience. Furthermore, Etzel, Ferrante, and Pinkney (1996) suggest that such holistic programming include areas of personal, career and academic development. In addition, according to Navarro (2015) student-athletes often rely on the support of services inside athletic departments to meet their developmental needs, including career counseling. Finally, Navarro (2015) states “student-athletes face both internal (i.e., role conflict) and external (i.e., academic clustering) challenges during college and as they craft lifelong career plans. This, in turn, presents a greater need for strong academic and student affairs support for student-athletes, which requires a perspective with a critical understanding of how to best assist student-athletes as they prepare for life after sports in a competitive job market” (p. 367). Lastly, according to Burns, Jasinski, Dunn, and Fletcher (2013), “with regard to career development, athletes are more likely than non-athletes to face problems with career maturity, the clarity of educational plans, and adjustment to college” (p. 162). Unfortunately, student-athletes career development self-efficacy (CDSE) is lower than their non-student-athlete contemporaries because of the numerous commitments with which they are involved. Burns et al. (2013), suggest, “fortunately, CDSE is malleable and can be increased by workshops specifically developed to help students” (p. 162). Because student-athletes may have limited chances to enhance career skills through on or off campus employment and internships, it is imperative that career workshops are provided allowing student-athletes to expand their professional skillset. The intention of Mock Interview Night is to provide opportunity for student-athletes to practice articulating the transferable skills they have garnered in athletics and school into their future professional roles, consequently increasing their overall career confidence.

V. Data Collection & Methodology

Data Collection

Data was collected via surveys from both the assigned interviewers and the student-athletes to directly and indirectly assess the actual learning and perceived learning regarding transferable skills as they relate to athletics and potential career choice and readiness across multiple levels.

- To directly assess learning outcomes, methods employed included expert mock interviewers completing a survey to evaluate the student-athlete participants

- performance on 12 criteria potentially required as a post-undergraduate seeking a career or graduate degree. These rankings included three categories: Needs Improvement (NI), Meets Expectations (ME), and Exceeds Expectations (EE).
- The specific methods used to measure student learning indirectly included a qualitative survey for the student-athletes that asked specifically “How has your student-athlete experience helped you be ready to interview for internships and jobs?”
 - All junior student-athletes who participated in Mock Interview Night were assessed by expert interviewers. 41 student-athletes participated over 2 sessions, 25 student-athletes in Winter Quarter 2016 and 16 student-athletes in Spring Quarter 2016.
 - See survey for student-athletes in appendix A and survey for interviewers in appendix B.

Data Analysis

- Interviewer survey responses for each of the 12 categories were tabulated and analyzed by AAA.
- The data for the number of categories where students met or exceeded expectations was calculated.
- The designation (NI, ME, and EE) were assigned a numerical value in order to make the data quantitative.
 - a. NI = 0
 - b. ME = 1
 - c. EE = 2
- The average value for each category was analyzed. The data for winter and spring participants as well as a combined result for all participants were assessed.
- The average score across all categories was also calculated for each individual participant. One survey was left blank and the participant was not added to the final data.
- An average, a score greater than or equal to 1.0 indicates that either the student-athlete or the category would qualify as Meets Expectations. A score less than 1.0 would qualify as Needs Improvement, and a score equal to 2 would qualify as Exceeds Expectations.
- The total number of participants included in the final data was $n = 40$.
- Qualitative data was analyzed by examining the responses of the student-athletes participation and highlighting themes that emerged surrounding areas where student-athletes specifically spoke of preparedness in their answers.

Participant Consent

By filling out the evaluations forms, students and interviewers agreed to participate in the assessment. This was verbally articulated prior to the event. The students and interviewers had the option to not participate in the survey by not returning the evaluation to AAA.

In addition to gaining consent, once completed, evaluations were kept in a locked office cabinet and a password locked computer.

VI. Data & Results

- 41 student-athletes in their 3rd year participated in this assessment.
- For the direct quantitative assessment from the interviewers, the total number of student-athletes interviewed was 41, of which 40 were evaluated for a response rate of 97.6%. In regards to the qualitative assessment, of the 41 student-athletes who participated in the event, 39 answered the qualitative question about their transferable skills, for a response rate of 95.1%.
- While 39 of the student-athletes responded to the qualitative survey question, three themes emerged exemplifying how their student-athlete experience has prepared them for future careers or graduate school. These three themes are: Thriving under pressure, teamwork, and communication skills. Examples from these three themes include the following quotes:
 - My experience as a student-athlete helped me be ready for internships or jobs by “preparing me to deal with stressful situations and excel.”
 - My experience as a student-athlete helped me be ready for internships or jobs by “teaching me the values of teamwork, trial and error, resilience and time management.”
 - My experience as a student-athlete helped me be ready for internships or jobs by “helping me learn to work with a diverse group of people through communication with teammates and coaches.”

Program Level Learning Outcome	Department Level Learning Outcome	Number of Students Assessed	Number of Students with Meets Expectations designation or above in ALL categories
Student-athletes who utilize AAA’s Life Skills programs and services will be prepared for the world of work or graduate school and serve as leaders in their communities.	Student-athletes who engage in Athletic Academic Advising’s Life Skills programs and services will apply the leadership and teamwork skills learned through athletic involvement to their academic, personal, and professional lives.	40	22

VII. Discussion & Interpretation of Results

Evidence from this assessment indicates that the programmatic learning outcome of student-athletes who utilize Athletic Academic Advising's Life Skills programs and services will be prepared for the world of work or graduate school and serve as leaders in their communities is occurring. Quantitative and qualitative evaluation suggests that student-athletes are becoming more prepared, through practice situations like Mock Interview Night, for their future careers as a result of their experiences as student-athletes. Furthermore, they are able to apply these transferable skills to potential career situations in a Mock Interview situation.

- As a result of qualitative analysis, three themes emerged exemplifying the impact of their student-athlete experience on career readiness. These skills include: Thriving under pressure (15), teamwork (10) and communication skills (10). Examples from these three themes include the following quotes:
 - 1) Thriving under pressure — My experience as a student-athlete helped me be ready for internships or jobs because “I know how to deal with nervousness and calm myself down; I know how to approach interviews because I’ve learned how to succeed in pressure situations” (student-athlete response).
 - 2) Team Work— My experience as a student-athlete helped me be ready for internships or jobs because “it has given me skills such as teamwork and leadership abilities that will be great for employers and help immensely when I enter the work place” (student-athlete response).
 - 3) Communication— My experience as a student-athlete helped me be ready for internships or jobs because “I can articulate what I am trying to say and I am not afraid of communicating to a superior – lessons I learned from practice and communicating with my coaches” (student-athlete response).
- Quantitative analysis also proved to be important. Key findings include the following:
 - Overall, the most categories a participant was evaluated by the interviewer as ME or better was 12, the most possible, while the lowest was 10 showing every participant (100%) who was evaluated achieved ME or better in at least 10 (83.3%) of the 12 possible categories.
 - 22 (55%) achieved ME or better in all 12 categories, 14 (35%) in 11 categories and 4 (10%) in 10 categories.
 - Average overall score for participants was 1.52 or between ME and EE.
 - The highest average participant score was 2 or EE and the lowest was 1.08 or above ME. Every participant (100%) had an average score of at least 1 or ME overall.
 - The highest average category score was 1.9 (Facial Expressions) and the lowest category scores, were 1.1 (Asking Questions and Closing the Interview). Every category (100%) scored on average at least 1 or ME overall.

- Overall, student-athletes grade the program as positive with 38 (97.5%) of student-athletes ranking the overall program grade as an A and 1 (2.5%) as a B.
- Likewise, all of the student-athletes surveyed found this experience beneficial, and all but one student thought Mock Interview Night should continue to be required for all student-athletes in their 3rd year, accounting for 38 (97.5%) of all juniors surveyed.
- Direct results also indicate 36 (90%) of student-athletes are rated by interviewers as ME or above on their ability to articulate transferable skills learned in athletics can be applied to future careers.

As a result of this assessment, AAA reaffirmed that Mock Interview Night is an important component of Life Skills programming. Mock Interview night is not only beneficial in giving student-athletes practice for interviews post college, but it also assesses a variety of life skills that student-athletes have been introduced to and used through Life Skills programming in AAA during their entire college tenure. However, because there are a small number of junior student athletes, it is difficult to generalize broadly about outcomes of this assessment. In addition, direct assessment measurements were not explained thoroughly to interviewers ahead of time as a result of project timing and understanding of proposed assessment. Despite these limitations, this project validates the need for continued career development programming for student-athletes on college campuses.

As student-athletes are a part of the larger student body, continued support of their career needs, and all students' career needs, is important for Student Affairs educators. Likewise, the continued need for connection to and partnership with various areas like the Career Center can provide support for developing career competence amongst a variety of students, including student-athletes. Finally, continued encouragement from Athletic Coaches and administrators, as well as AAA advisors for our student-athletes to attend career events and practice career and life skills will enable confidence building that is an invaluable part of career development in University settings like DePaul.

VIII. Recommendations and Plans for Action

Recommendations

Career development is an important component of the college experience for all students, including student-athletes. Continuing to partner with the Career Center and other departments that help students reach their full potentials on and off the field of play is critical to Life Skills programming in AAA specifically and the University overall. Additionally, AAA will maintain a new presence on LinkedIn by introducing a "DePaul Student-Athletes and Alumni Group," to further assist in engaging student-athletes in their career endeavors as they connect with a wide array of potential employers.

Action Plan

36 (90%) of the interviewer evaluated student-athletes successfully articulated their transferable skills while 40 (100%) successfully demonstrated they at least met expectations in regards to the interview process. In addition, only 32 (80%) of students successfully demonstrated that they at least met expectations in the Asking Questions and Closing the Interview categories. In order to improve in these areas, AAA is partnering with the Career Center to put on a series of workshops that address the process for preparing for job/graduate school applications, research of specific positions, interview preparation, and overall initial career development.

Although time is the major barrier for programming, finding unique and creative ways to reach those students who still need assistance in this area will continue to be an important component of AAA's career development programming. Action plans will include encouraging Team Coaches to help reassure student-athletes of the importance of participation in multiple career development events, such as the Sophomore Career Day, as recommended by the Athletic Department and AAA. More exposure to practice can help student-athletes continue to develop their interview and career preparedness skills. Continued partnerships between the Career Center, AAA and Athletics beginning in the fall quarter 2016 can help continue the strong foundation we are trying to build for our student-athletes transition from college to the real world.

Sharing the results

Results of this assessment will be shared with the Department of Student Affairs and the Athletic Department via dialogue in meetings and a poster board presentation.

Appendix A

Name: _____

Mock Interview Review

Overall Program Grade: A_____ B_____ C_____ D_____ F_____

Did your interviewer provide you with feedback on your résumé and interviewing skills?

Yes No

Did you find this experience beneficial?

Yes No

Is this something you think should be mandatory for all juniors?

Yes No

What was most helpful?

Are there any topics you wish to have covered in future Life Skills Programs?

Yes No If Yes, what topics:

What could AAA do to improve the program?

Did participation in Mock Interviews help you practice articulating the transferable skills you have learned as a student-athlete (transferable skills = skills you have learned as a student-athlete that apply to other areas of life - i.e. team work, time management, leadership etc.)?

Yes No If Yes, how/which skills:

What career development activities have you participated in that helped you prepare for your mock interview?

How has your student-athlete experience helped you be ready to interview for internships and jobs?

Mock Interview Critique Sheet

Interviewer: _____ Interviewee: _____ Date: _____	
Rating Key - NI: Needs Improvement, ME: Meets Expectations, EE: Exceeds Expectations	
IMAGE & APPEARANCE	Additional comments...
NI: _____ casual/athletic/inappropriate attire, not well groomed	
ME: _____ business casual attire, well groomed	
EE: _____ business attire, well groomed	
ENERGY	Additional comments...
NI: _____ lacks energy and enthusiasm	
ME: _____ expresses optimism and energy in initial greeting	
EE: _____ greets the interviewer by name	
HANDSHAKE	Additional comments...
NI: _____ does not shake interviewer's hand	
ME: _____ lets interviewer initiate handshake	
EE: _____ offers a solid handshake	
POSTURE	Additional comments...
NI: _____ closed position (arms crossed), slouching in chair	
ME: _____ sits squarely in chair, open position (arms are not crossed)	
EE: _____ open position (arms are not crossed), leans slightly forward to demonstrate interest	
FACIAL EXPRESSIONS	Additional comments...
NI: _____ lacks facial expressions, no/minimal eye contact, does not smile	
ME: _____ uses neutral facial expressions, maintains good eye contact	
EE: _____ maintains good eye contact, facial expressions match social cues	
DEMEANOR	Additional comments...
NI: _____ lacks openness and receptiveness, excessive shifting/fidgeting	
ME: _____ demonstrates openness and receptiveness; calm with moments of tension	
EE: _____ demonstrates openness, interest and enthusiasm; relaxed, confident and attentive	
VERBAL COMMUNICATION	Additional comments...
NI: _____ answers questions with mostly yes/no OR does not directly answer questions	
ME: _____ answers succinctly with few examples	
EE: _____ answers succinctly with thoughtful personal examples, speaks clearly and distinctly	
AWARENESS OF CAREER FIELD	Additional comments...
NI: _____ unable to articulate career interests and preparation	
ME: _____ demonstrates interest and general understanding of the desired career field	
EE: _____ demonstrates specific career goals and understanding of the desired career field	
SELF-AWARENESS	Additional comments...
NI: _____ unable to articulate personal motivation for career endeavors	
ME: _____ articulates surface level motivation, but lacks insight or career goal orientedness	
EE: _____ articulates deep motivation that links academic major to broader career goals	
ASKING QUESTIONS	Additional comments...
NI: _____ does not ask questions of the interviewer	
ME: _____ asks questions that primarily clarify aspects of the career field	
EE: _____ asks in-depth questions that elicit further conversation relevant to career	
ARTICULATION OF TRANSFERABLE ATHLETIC SKILLS	Additional comments...
NI: _____ no mention of transferable skills or mentioned in name only	
ME: _____ articulates skills learned via student-athlete experience and relates to career	
EE: _____ provides specific examples of using transferable skills in real world situations	
CLOSING THE INTERVIEW	Additional comments...
NI: _____ does not inquire about time frame or next steps; does not thank the interviewer	
ME: _____ inquires about timeframe/next steps; thanks interviewer	
EE: _____ inquires about timeframe/next steps; thanks interviewer by name; acquires appropriate contact information for follow-up	
BASED ON AN OVERALL IMPRESSION OF YOUR INTERVIEW	Additional comments...
NI: _____ You need more practice and preparation before going on job interviews.	
ME: _____ You may get the job, but you haven't edged out the competition yet!	
EE: _____ You're hired!	

References

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