

Analysis of Graduation Rates

Introduction

The Academic Integrity subcommittee analyzed the six-year graduation rates of student-athletes by gender, race, and sports teams for the years 2005, 2006, and 2007. The subcommittee compared these graduation rates to the graduation rates of the general student body for those years. A chart is provided that compares the graduation rates of each subgroup to the rate for the general student body. This chart reports not only the simple graduation percentages, but also the percentages that result when we apply NCAA's complex GSR formula (which, as will become apparent, produces a rosier picture).

In 2005, the overall student body rate was 95%, while the rate for student-athletes was 91%. When the Graduation Success Rate ("GSR") data are used, we find that student-athletes graduated at a rate of 94%--a rate only slightly lower than the rate for the overall student body. In 2006, the middle year in the three-year period of concern, the general student body graduation rate was 94% and the student-athlete rate was 89% (rising to 93% for the GSR data). That middle year dip 89% is below the trend for the three-year period, reflects the fact that a higher than normal number of athletes turned pro, and also that some left the university to train for, and participate, in the 2004 Olympic games. In 2007, both the general student body and student-athletes graduated at the rate of 95%.

In analyzing the subgroups, the subcommittee concluded that there were no deficiencies where the graduation rates were 90% or higher. Therefore, the subcommittee's analysis focused upon subgroups that fell below a 90% graduation rate. The chart highlights, in yellow, all of the six-year graduation rates for subgroups that were under 90%. In examining these sub 90% rates, it should be noted that some of the subgroups were comprised of small numbers of students, making the percentages in question striking, and perhaps of anecdotal interest, but not a basis for valid statistical inferences.

Female Student-Athletes

In 2005, the six-year graduation rate for female student-athletes was 85%, 10% lower than the general student body rate that year. However the GSR percentage rises to 95%, equal to that for the general student population. In 2006, the six-year rate was 88% for females, 6 percentage points compared to 94% for the general population, a 6% difference. But the GSR percentage for that year was 94%, the same percentage as that for general student population. In 2007, the six-year rate rose to 96%, one percentage *higher* than that for general student body. The three-year trend in graduation rates for female student-athletes was thus a positive one.

Baseball

In 2005, baseball had a six-year graduation rate of 86%, 9% lower than the general student body rate of 95%. Again, the GSR for that year rises to 93%, just two percent lower than the general student body. In 2006, baseball's graduation rate dropped to 75%, a 19% deficit.

However, baseball had only four athletes in the cohort for that year, one of whom did not graduate—hence the 75% statistic. In 2007 baseball had a 100% six-year graduation rate. Thus the three-year trend for the six-year graduation rate for baseball dipped in 2006, rebounded in 2007, with that the overall GSR remaining steady.

Men's Basketball

In 2006, men's basketball had a six-year graduation rate of only 40% (marked in dark pink on the chart). Although this rate is alarmingly low, it is based on a cohort of only five students athletes, two of whom turned pro, which is unusual for a cohort at Stanford. (The highlighted entry for 2006, when statistics are broken down by race, reflects this same unusually high rate of basket ball team members turning pro). In 2005 and 2007, by contrast, the six-year graduation rate was 100%.

Men's "Other Sports"

In 2005, the six-year graduation rate for men's other sports was 89%, 6% less than the general student body rate. The GSR percentage, however, rose to 94%. The following two years, the six-year GSR held steady at 100%.

Women's Basketball

In 2005, women's basketball, the GSR for the six-year period was 100%. The 2006 cohort in women's basketball had only a single member, and she did not graduate—which constituted a 0% rate, a disappointing outcome for that student athlete but obviously not a real basis for statistical inference. In 2007, the six-year rate was 80% (reflecting a cohort of 5, of whom four graduated)--15% lower than the general student rate of 95%, but again not a statistically meaningful difference. The GSR raised the percentage to 93%, just two percent shy of the 95% for the general student body. (The chart shows that when analyzing women's basketball by race, in both 2006 and 2007, the GSR for African-American student athletes was 100%.)

Women's Track

In 2005, the women's track six-year graduation rate was 80% (4 of 5 student-athletes), which again was 15% below the general rate of 95%. Moreover, the GSR for 2005 was 100%, accounting for that one non-graduating track athlete. In 2007, the six-year graduation rate was 75%, (3 of 4 in the relevant cohort). The failure of this one student to graduate is also reflected in the stat for women's track when the data are broken down by race.

Women's "Other Sports"

In 2005, while the six-year graduation rate for women's "other sports" was 84%--11 percentage points lower than the general student population rate--the GSR for that year was 95%, equal to that for the general student population. When the 2005 "deficiency" is analyzed in the chart by race, we see a six-year rate of 100% for Asian student-athletes, a 94% rate for Whites, and a 0% rate for Blacks (shown in pink on the chart)—the 0% figure reflecting the outcome for a single individual (which the GSR formula raises for the latter "cohort" to 80%.)

In 2006, the six-year rate was 89%, 5% lower than the general rate of 94%. The GSR rises to 93%, just one percentage point shy of that for the general student body. In the chart, the percentage for Asian and Hispanic student-athletes (50% and 0% respectively) are highlighted in pink. Again however, it should be noted that these sample sizes are small--- just four Asian student-athletes and one Hispanic—and the GSR rises to 80% for Asians and 86% for Hispanics. In light of the small sample sizes, these statistics do not constitute an immediate basis for concern (although they perhaps merit monitoring over the next few years).

In 2007, the overall six-year graduation rate for women in this “other sport” category was 100%. Thus, for the three-year period, the graduation rates women’s other sports shod a positive trend.

Asian /Pacific Islander Student-Athletes

In 2005, the six-year graduation rate for Asian/PI student-athletes was 86% (reflecting one non-graduating student-athlete in the cohort of 7) -- 9% lower than the rate of 95% for the general student body. The GSR formula raises this figure to 90%, just 5% shy of that for the general population. In 2006, there was not a sufficient number of Asians to be analyzed. In 2007, the six-year graduation rate was 100%. (Here and elsewhere astute readers might point out that we don’t mention anything about smallness of cohorts when the percentage of grads is an even 100%!))

Black Student-Athletes

In 2007, the six-year graduation rate was a disappointing 69% (9 from a cohort of 13) for Black student-athletes, fully 26 percentage points lower than the 95% rate for the general student body and 17 percentage points lower than the rate for Black students overall. The GSR, however, lifted the percentage for this group of student-athletes to 86%. Further analysis revealed that of the four who did not graduate, three were football players who turned pro in their junior years. It is reassuring to note that in 2005 and 2006, the six-year graduation rates for Black student-athletes were 94% and 92%, respectively.

White Student-Athletes

In 2005, the six-year graduation rate for white student-athletes was 89%, 6% below the rate of 95% for the general student population. However the GSR for this group was 95% — equal to that for the general student population. Furthermore, the six-year graduation rates for 2006 and 2007 were 91% and 99%, respectively, reflecting a welcome upward trend.

Conclusion

The Academic Integrity Subcommittee was pleased to learn that the overall graduation rates of our student-athletes are high, and generally getting higher. The statistics that we have reviewed demonstrate DAPER’s commitment to the academic success of our student-athletes, as Stanford continues to maintain a broad and strong nationally recognized, program that provides opportunities to a diverse group of remarkable young men and women.