SUBSTANCE ABUSE, GAMBLING AND HAZING --
AN EXPLORATION OF EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS WITHIN
FOOTBALL BOWL SUBDIVISION (FBS) INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

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ABSTRACT

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Problematic behaviors such as alcohol abuse, illegal drugs and personal issues are prevalent among college students across the country. The rate of occurrence, particularly for alcohol consumption, is even higher among student-athletes at the Division I level compared to both non-athlete students and lower division athletes.

After surveying 118 Division I Football Bowl Subdivision athletic directors, 52 (44 percent) responses from athletic directors and other high ranking athletic department personnel showed that alcohol abuse, illegal drugs – primarily marijuana – and personal problems (academics, time management, etc.) were thought to be the most severe issues plaguing student-athletes, far exceeding issues such as agents, gambling, hazing and performance enhancing drugs.

A number of athletic departments responded with information on the programs in place to reduce the prevalence of said problems. The NCAA’s CHAMPS/Life Skills program was referred to most often, while other, original programs were submitted from a number of institutions. Although research points to the idea that Division I student-athletes are exposed to the most preventative programming they remain the biggest offenders when it comes to alcohol and drug use.

A number of programs highlighted within this study addressed personal problems, an issue that was in the same realm as alcohol abuse and drug use according to athletic department responses. Also, while programs combating agents, alcohol, gambling, hazing, illegal drugs and performance enhancing drugs may not be effective on their own, combined with others they may be found to be extremely effective.
To Mary Adams, my loving and outspoken grandmother.
I would like to thank Dr. Erianne Weight, Dr. Ray Schneider, Dr. Barbara Henry, Kate Achter, Mary Ellen Gillespie and Greg Christopher for their time and assistance throughout this process.
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INTRODUCTION

The college years involve “greater personal freedom and independence, increased involvement in intimate relationships, and freedom from the responsibilities that marriage, family life, and the workplace typically entail” (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2002, p. 18). Students also deal with a number of firsts when they start college. In addition to moving to a new residence in a new town, they are required to live with new people, prepare their own meals and pay their own bills. College students face new challenges in the classroom and must attempt to ignore the deviant and destructive behaviors and temptations pulling at them from all directions.

In addition to the new challenges faced by first-year college students, student-athletes, particularly at the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) level, are faced with a new coach, teammates, travel, increased levels of competition, and they are pushed harder mentally, physically and emotionally than they have previously experienced. In exchange for their hours of work in the classroom, weight room, media room and on the playing surface, many are rewarded with academic scholarships that may, depending on the sport and the circumstances, cover some or all of the costs of tuition, books, fees, room and board.

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of athletic directors at the Division I FBS level regarding the problems and destructive behaviors that student-athletes encounter, and the programs available at each institution to combat these issues.
CHAPTER I. LITERATURE REVIEW

Part I: Big Business

Intercollegiate athletics is big business, particularly within Division I-A football. Now officially known as the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) level opposed to Division I-A, the FBS consists of 120 teams from 11 conferences, including the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), the Big East, the Big Ten, the Big XII, Conference USA, the Mid-American Conference (MAC), the Mountain West Conference (MWC), the Pacific-10, the Sun Belt Conference (SBC), the Southeastern Conference (SEC) and the Western Athletic Conference (WAC), along with several independent schools, including Army, Navy and Notre Dame (“College Football Teams,” 2010).

In 2008, more than 43 million fans attended 1,475 FBS football games, an average of nearly 30,000 people per contest. Four teams (Michigan - 108,571, Penn State - 108,254, Ohio State - 104,976 and Tennessee - 104,448) averaged more than 100,000 fans per game (Trosclair, 2009). That average equates to roughly the entire population of cities such as Burbank, California, Green Bay, Wisconsin, and Ann Arbor, Michigan, the home of the Michigan Wolverines (Brinkhoff, 2009).

In 2009, at traditional powerhouse Ohio State, the Buckeyes played seven home games in front of more than 700,000 total fans (“Ohio State Cumulative Season,” 2009). At $63 per ticket, gate revenue alone totaled more than $44 million, and that number did not include parking fees, food sales and merchandise (“Ohio State Football,” 2009). Three years earlier, in 2006, Ohio State football produced $60.8 million in total revenue (Wieberg & Whiteside, 2007).

Television contracts provide another major stream of revenue within college athletics, particularly for college football teams in the “power conferences” which include the ACC, Big East, Big Ten, Big XII, Pac-10 and SEC. In 2007, the SEC distributed $89.5 million between its
12 member institutions (Woolsey, 2008). Bowl Championship Series games, including the Fiesta Bowl, Orange Bowl, Rose Bowl, Sugar Bowl, and the national championship game, pay out as much as $17 million apiece. Recently, cable television sports giant ESPN purchased the rights to broadcast SEC football for 15 seasons at a price tag of $2 billion (Woolsey, 2008).

College coaches today are commanding enormous salaries unlike ever before. At the University of Texas, head football coach Mack Brown recently signed a contract extension that will pay him no less than $5 million per season (Haurwitz, 2009). While Brown is the highest compensated coach in any collegiate sport, the margin is small. Coaches like Urban Meyer (Florida football coach), John Calipari (Kentucky men’s basketball), Nick Saban (Alabama football) and Bob Stoops (Oklahoma football), among others, are being paid approximately $4 million each season (“Brown to Receive,” 2009).

All of the above leads to increased revenue, additional exposure and benefits for colleges and universities. A majority of the effort put forth to secure these benefits comes from intercollegiate students-athletes, many of whom are as young as 18. At every institution in the country student-athletes are faced with difficult decisions and the potential for trouble, and every student-athlete deals with those decisions in a different manner. The following pages explore a number of the issues that are perceived by the general public to be the largest concerns for student-athletes at the Division I FBS level.
Part II: Student-Athlete Problems and Destructive Behaviors

Alcohol

“I used to tell my buddies, ‘You [guys] have to get drunk to act a fool. I can act a fool without drinking a drop,’” said Roy Williams, University of North Carolina’s men’s basketball coach and winner of two national championships (Pickeral, 2009, p. 1).

It is a generally accepted fact that alcohol abuse is a prevalent practice at nearly every college and university across the country. Defined by Hanson (2009) as consuming five drinks for males and four drinks for females during one experience, problematic drinking has been shown to be more extreme within student-athletes.

A study conducted by Doumas, Turrisi, and Wright (2006) found that student-athletes consume approximately 30 percent more alcohol than their non-athlete peers. It has also been shown that consumption patterns are higher in student-athletes at the Division I level (78 percent) compared to those at Division II (76 percent) and Division III (67.5 percent) (Brenner & Swanik, 2007).

Why are Division I athletes more prone to drink alcohol than lower division athletes and their non-athlete peers within the same collegiate settings at Division I institutions? Research suggests a wide-ranging supply of answers. Stainback (1997) theorized that increased travel to other cities and settings put athletes in higher risk environments. He also believed that due to success and increased exposure through the media and other outlets, athletes encounter settings where alcohol is more common and is regarded as a type of reward or badge of honor. Martens, O’Connor, and Beck (2006) added excessive time demands, pressures to live up to expectations and social isolation (where they feel different and unrelated to typical students) as three additional causes behind the higher consumption levels in athletes.
A number of sources cite environment for the partial cause of alcohol abuse. It has been found that “students living in substance-free dorms experienced fewer secondhand effects than students living in unrestricted housing,” and that at primarily commuter institutions the consumption of alcohol among all students is less (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2002, p. 24).

Illegal Drugs

Drug usage, particularly marijuana, is prevalent throughout the United States and college athletics is no exception. Although the numbers may be improving, without question, drugs remain a major problem. In a 1997 NCAA survey, nearly 30 percent of student-athletes admitted to marijuana use within the previous year. By 2005, the same study was conducted by the NCAA and the usage rate was found to be down to 20 percent (DeHass, 2006).

Another study found that “66 percent of users started [using marijuana] in high school, 12 percent started during their freshman year of college and six percent after their freshman year in college” (College Athletes and Alcohol,” 2008, p. 2). Within student-athlete populations, 63 percent said they used recreationally or socially and 35 percent reported using because it made them feel good. Of non-users, 37 percent said it was because they were concerned about the health effects while 15 percent simply did not want to and 11 percent found it to be against their religious or moral beliefs (“College Athletes and Alcohol,” 2008). In 2006 the NCAA found that “almost 30 percent of student-athletes stated that one or more times they performed poorly in practice or a game due to drinking or drug use” (DeHass, 2006, p. 7).

Other drugs, such as cocaine, have also been found to be used among student-athletes. However, cocaine use has dropped significantly. In 1989 the rate among athletes was five
percent. Sixteen years later, in 2005, it had fallen to two percent (“College Athletes and Alcohol, 2008).

The numbers are showing improvement, however, with one in every five student-athletes still using marijuana, the number remains too high. By those statistics, it means that on a football team consisting of 85 scholarship players, approximately 17 are marijuana users, which equates to more than 77 percent of all prospective offensive and defensive starters, and nearly two players are cocaine users.

The NCAA’s Stance on Alcohol and Illegal Drugs

Despite drinking more heavily than other students, athletes report greater exposure to alcohol prevention efforts (Nelson & Wechsler, 2001). When it comes to alcohol, tobacco and drugs, the NCAA has established a set of minimum guidelines and levels of educational programs that each athletic department should follow and conduct at least once per semester. “Each athletic department should have a written policy on alcohol, tobacco and others drugs. This policy should include a statement on recruitment activities, drug testing, discipline, counseling or treatment options” (“NCAA Minimum Guidelines,” 2010). The NCAA states that a number of things should be done, including:

1. Review/develop individual team drug and alcohol policies
2. Review the athletic department’s drug and alcohol policy
3. Review the institutional drug and alcohol policy
4. Review conference drug and alcohol policy
5. Review institutional or conference drug-testing programs (if any)
6. Review NCAA alcohol, tobacco and drug testing policy including tobacco ban, list of banned drugs and testing protocol

7. View the NCAA drug-education and drug-testing video

8. Discuss nutritional supplements and their inherent risk


**Hazing**

Often hazing is thought to be a rite of passage to join a club, a fraternity or sorority, or an athletic team, and most of the time it is harmless enough. However, at times, hazing goes too far. People are humiliated, abused, injured, or even killed. A major concern about hazing is the fact that it is difficult to define. What one person believes is an act of hazing another may not. At Alfred University in New York, researchers have documented that approximately 750,000 high school athletes are victims of hazing each year (Weir, 2003).

Norman Pollard, the director of counseling and student development at Alfred said, “One of the things we find is that teammates who perpetrate the hazing are the ones who suffered it the years before, and they want to make it much more dangerous to validate their experience” (Weir, 2003, p. 1). While it was found that one in every eight athletes reported being hazed (12.5 percent), those at Alfred believe that the number actually being “required to participate in dangerous or humiliating activities that fit the description of hazing” was 80 percent, an enormous discrepancy (Weir, 2003, p. 2). Combining with the topic of alcohol, NCAA findings from 2006 showed that nearly half of all incidents of hazing involved the consumption of alcohol (DeHass, 2006).
Performance Enhancing Drugs (PEDs)

In the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s, Major League Baseball did not have a policy on steroids. Anabolic steroid use was thought to be running rampant as players were massively increasing in size. In 1989, an NCAA study found that five percent of student-athletes were using steroids, yet the number of football players juicing was at nearly 10 percent. Sixteen years later, the same study found the number had fallen to just one percent of all athletes and two percent within football (“College Athletes and Alcohol,” 2008).

Still, that number is “more than triple the national rate by non-student athletes” (“College Athletes and Alcohol,” 2008, p. 2). In 2001, more than half of steroid consumers reported using in order to improve their athletic performance while others said they used in order to recover from an injury (DeHass, 2006).

Agents

Sports agents are finding new ways to interact with student-athletes, often through social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. As a result, coaches are angry because agents are doing it behind their backs and because of the potentially harmful repercussions these interactions have for student-athletes. But the agents are not technically doing anything wrong. According to the NCAA and the NBA, as long as there is no written agreement or money changing hands, agents are free to form relationships with student-athletes (Katz, 2009). Because there are so many agents registered that want to break into the business, at times they provide bad information to student-athletes in order to acquire them as clients. “Every year, 300 players are told they are going in the first round of the NBA draft and there are only 29 picks” (Rovell, 2004, p. 1).
**Gambling**

With the advent of the internet, online wagering sites and the general ease of accessibility when it comes to betting, gambling is a problem that has exploded in recent years. Gambling has become legalized in a number of states and is much more accepted and talked about within the media (Darden & Rockey, 2006). The NCAA now believes that “bookies” of the student variety are walking around every college and university throughout the country. In 1996, a staff member in the NCAA’s Indianapolis based headquarters was prompted to “look into gambling and agent issues on a full-time basis” (Saum, 1999, p. 1).

The research has uncovered staggering statistics. At the University of Cincinnati, a study involving Division I football and basketball programs found that “25 percent [of student-athletes] reported that they gambled on college sports events other than their own ... four percent admitted that they wagered on games in which they had played and three of the athletes say they changed the outcome...” (Saum, 1999, p. 2). Another study revealed that “over five percent of male student-athletes provided inside information for gambling purposes, bet on a game in which they participated, or accepted money for performing poorly in a game” (Cross & Vollano, 1999, p. 2).

Numbers vary slightly, however, research indicates that anywhere from 66 to 72 percent (Darden & Rockey, 2006) of all student-athletes “have gambled in some way since entering college” (Cross & Vollano, 1999, p. 1). The percentage of male only student-athletes is higher still, reaching about 80 percent (Cross & Vollano, 1999).
CHAPTER II. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

The theoretical foundation of this study is based upon a portion of Albert Bandura’s (1977) work involving social learning theory. He stated, “Learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous, if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do” (Bandura, 1977, p. 22). Bandura believed that observation through modeling is primarily how human behaviors are learned. People watch others, they pick up on new behaviors, words, mannerisms and actions. Later, those experiences serve as a guide to their own behavior (Bandura, 1977).

More than two decades later, in 1999, Jeanne Ormrod expounded upon social learning theory, explaining, “Social learning theorists propose that most learning takes place not through trial and error but instead through watching the behavior of other individuals (models)” (Ormrod, 1999, p. 116). To fit Ormrod’s point, Bandura believed that models often bring us in because they appear to provide some sort of benefit, whether it be success, power, or any additional wanted quality (Crain, 1992).

Social learning theory says that in a social setting, people learn vast amounts through observation and imitation (Ormrod, 1999). Student-athletes often come from all corners of the country and, at times, the world. Often they will do what is needed in order to fall in line with the crowd and the social norms that exist around them in order to be accepted. These beliefs fit the idea that the environment, the culture, the social norms and the people around students and student-athletes on collegiate campuses largely contribute to the positive activities, but also the destructive activities that occur. If you provide student-athletes with more positive options, limit their exposure, impose tougher penalties and genuinely change the culture, social learning theory
suggests that you will change the behavior. These ideas will be talked about in greater detail within the discussion section.
CHAPTER III. METHODS

This research was conducted through the use of a survey. This method was chosen because the survey is “advantageous when the research goal is to describe the incidence or prevalence of a phenomenon or when it is to be predictive about certain outcomes” (Yin, 2003, p. 6).

Data collected via the survey included both quantitative and qualitative data. Survey information included identifying and ranking the most common problems and destructive behaviors that student-athletes are faced with at each respective institution. The survey instrument provided a list of items to be ranked, including agents, alcohol abuse, gambling, hazing, illegal drugs and performance enhancing drugs. A choice, as well as space, was included for “other” problems that may be worth noting within specific athletic departments that was not included in the original choices. (The survey in its entirety is included in Appendix A.)

Each institution was asked to provide information about any programs that are in place in order to reduce the amount of incidents among student-athletes. The question was intentionally left very broad and respondents were encouraged to single out specific websites, brochures, etc.

The survey was sent via the United States Postal Service to the entire population of 118 athletic directors at the Division I FBS level. Two of the 120 FBS schools did not receive the survey because at the time the position of athletic director was in a state of change.

The initial response rate was 35.5 percent (42 out of 118). Follow-up e-mails were sent to the institutions that did not initially respond and an additional 10 (8.4 percent) surveys were collected. In total, the response rate was 44 percent (52 out of 118). Responses included 26 (50 percent) from BCS institutions and 26 (50 percent) from non-BCS institutions. The window of
possible response was left open for approximately 10 weeks, from the end of December, 2009 until the beginning of March, 2010.

It was suggested that responses should come directly from the athletic director, however, the option was put in place for the survey to be passed along to another senior administrator very familiar with the issues addressed within the questions. As a result, 32 (61.5 percent) replies were directly from athletic directors while 20 (38.5 percent) answers arrived from senior, associate and assistant athletic directors, along with a number of people working within student services. Due to the demanding, highly visible and rigorous schedules of those within this hard to reach population, the survey questions, in terms of quantity and length, were kept to a minimum with hopes of eliciting a larger and sufficient response.

The survey’s validity was a concern, thus before piloting the instrument its content was reviewed by a panel of experts, including two sport management professors, a vice-president of academic services, a former student-athlete at the FBS level, an FBS assistant athletic director and an FBS athletic director. A number of schools responded with the names of specific programs which were then able to be located via direct websites and on school specific websites. Several others responded with hard copy information through traditional mail.

This research has been conducted through the use of a multiple embedded case study with the use of a survey. Descriptive statistics were generated for results within the survey. In addition, an open-ended question was used in an effort to uncover additional data associated with the attitudes expressed by athletic department responses.
CHAPTER IV. RESULTS

Question I:

*Using the list (agents, alcohol abuse, gambling, hazing, illegal drugs, “other(s)” and performance enhancing drugs), please rank the problems that student-athletes at your school face, with No. 1 being the biggest problem.*

In total, problems ranged from No. 1 through No. 10 because some responses included a multitude of “other” issues. Alcohol abuse was clearly defined as the largest problem facing student-athletes. It received a total of 30 No. 1 line votes whereas nothing else received more than nine votes on the No. 1 line. Illegal drugs, primarily marijuana, were found to be the second largest problem, with half (22 out of 44) of all responses being placed on the No. 2 line, while also collecting six No. 1 answers.

The “others” category ranked third in athletic director perceptions of problems facing student-athletes and included a large number of items, 23 to be exact, with the largest frequency coming from issues including academic dishonesty and attendance, and student-athlete struggles regarding time management, nutrition, stress, mental health and personal issues. The remaining destructive activities -- agents, gambling, PEDs and hazing -- ranked fourth through seventh, respectively. However, they were all very close to each other in terms of scoring and were considered to be much less of a problem than illegal drugs and alcohol abuse. It should be noted that in question one, the problem rankings do not equal the frequency.
Question II:

On a scale of 1-10 (10 being the most), please circle the number that best describes the severity of each problem facing student-athletes at your school.

This time using a Likert scale, the “others” category prevailed by a miniscule margin over alcohol abuse as the biggest problem in the minds of athletic directors and others within athletic departments around the country. The “others” category received 42 responses on a number of issues, highlighted by personal issues, time management, social networking websites, academics and nutrition.

Second place went to alcohol abuse, followed closely by illegal drugs. Again, after the top three there was a substantial gap before the four remaining categories -- gambling, PEDs, agents and hazing – emerged. However, they were in a different order from the first question. Agents changed the most in the rankings, going from the fourth position to the sixth position.

TABLE 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problematic Behavior</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Alcohol Abuse</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>1.45</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Illegal Drugs</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. “Others”</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>2.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Agents</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>1.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Gambling</td>
<td>4.97</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Performance Enhancing Drugs</td>
<td>5.14</td>
<td>2.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Hazing</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>1.05</td>
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***The lower the mean, the greater the problem.***
Question III:

What is/are the best program(s) that your athletic department provides to student-athletes to educate them and help to minimize the problems?

**NCAA’s CHAMPS/Life Skills Program**

Many institutions responded by stating that the NCAA’s CHAMPS/Life Skills program is their best resource and what they devote the greatest amount of resources toward. Started in 1991, CHAMPS/Life Skills was created by the NCAA Foundation and the Division I-A Athletic Director’s Association in order to “create a total development program for student-athletes” (“Welcome to the NCAA CHAMPS/Life Skills,” 2009, p. 1). CHAMPS is an acronym for Challenging Athletes’ Minds for Personal Success. As of February 2009, there were a total of 664 CHAMPS/Life Skills programs in place at the Division I, II and III levels. The NCAA provides a number of guidelines. Each school, however, has the freedom to tailor the program to best fit their needs and interests (“Welcome to the NCAA CHAMPS/Life Skills,” 2009).
The program’s mission statement reads: “The CHAMPS/Life Skills program was created to support the student-athlete development initiatives of NCAA member institutions and to enhance the quality of the student-athlete experience within the context of higher education” (“CHAMPS/Life Skills Program,” p. 1). The program seeks to accomplish a number of objectives:

-- Promote student-athletes’ ownership of their academic, athletic, career, personal and community responsibilities.

-- Meet the changing needs of student-athletes.

-- Promote respect for diversity and inclusion among student-athletes.

-- Assist student-athletes in identifying and applying transferable skills.

-- Enhance partnerships between the NCAA, member institutions and their communities for the purpose of education.

-- Foster an environment that encourages student-athletes to effectively access campus resources.

-- Encourage the development of character, integrity and leadership skills.

-- Participating members in the CHAMPS/Life Skills Program are provided sample materials and supplemental resources which support a student-athlete’s development in five areas: academics, athletics, personal development, career development and community service (“CHAMPS/Life Skills Program,” 2009, p. 1-2).

**Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP)**

Several schools from the SEC referred to the conference sponsored “Mentors in Violence Prevention” (MVP) program. Started in 1993 at Northwestern University by Jackson Katz, MVP
is a “leadership program that empowers participants to play a central role in solving problems that historically have been considered ‘women’s issues’: rape, battering and sexual harassment” (“MVP Program Overview,” 2009, para. 2).

Georgia Tech (Atlanta, Georgia)

Georgia Tech employs the Total Person Program. Started by former athletic director Dr. Homer Rice, it is a truly innovative process. In fact, when the NCAA was developing the CHAMPS/Life Skills program they consulted with Georgia Tech as a result of the total person concept.

Rice believed that “excellence is a result of a balanced life that encompasses academic excellence, athletic achievement and personal well-being” (“The Total Person Program,” 2010, para. 1). It essentially provides programs that allow student-athletes to improve themselves in all areas of life. Within the Career Development and Placement section of the program, staff works with student-athletes on the development of resumes, mock job interviews and how to market themselves to potential employers. Even after having completed their degree requirements, student-athletes receive assistance from the staff in finding and obtaining internships and full-time job opportunities.

Student-athletes are also required to attend seminars each semester involving topics such as how alcohol affects athletic performance, the importance of a good diet and how to better manage time. To assist in this process, Georgia Tech brings in career service personnel, athletic administrators and also former athletes.
University of Arizona (Tucson, Arizona)

In Tucson, at the University of Arizona, they have developed STEP UP! Be a Leader, Make a Difference. The program is a “pro-social behavior and bystander intervention program that educates students to be proactive in helping others” (“About STEP UP!,” 2010, para. 2). STEP UP! looks to accomplish four goals:

1. Raise awareness of helping behaviors
2. Increase motivation to help
3. Develop skills and confidence when responding to problems or concerns
4. Ensure the safety and well-being of self and others (“About STEP UP!,” 2010, para. 3).

Arizona believes that very often problematic behaviors involve bystanders. When it comes to problems such as alcohol abuse, hazing, eating disorders, sexual assault and discrimination, student-athletes at nearly a 90 percent rate believed that the problem could have been prevented through intervention, and 85 percent showed a desire to learn intervention skills. STEP UP! training shows individuals how to intervene in some way, directly or indirectly, in all types of situations (“About STEP UP!,” 2010).

Brigham Young University (Provo, Utah)

Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, provides “an education in an atmosphere consistent with the ideals and principles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” (“Church Educational System,” 2009, para. 1). BYU demands a level of discipline unmatched by most colleges and universities. Within the Honor Code, faculty, staff and students are required at all times, on campus or off, to:
-- Be honest
-- Live a chaste and virtuous life
-- Obey the law and all campus policies
-- Use clean language
-- Respect others
-- Abstain from alcoholic beverages, tobacco, tea, coffee and substance abuse
-- Participate regularly in church services
-- Observe the Dress and Grooming Standards
-- Encourage others in their commitment to comply with the Honor Code ("Church Educational System," 2009, para. 2).

Northern Illinois University (DeKalb, Illinois)

Northern Illinois University provides a number of workshops, each approximately an hour in length, and appropriately titled the Hour of Power. Working in a collaborative effort with other departments across the DeKalb campus, the workshops are aimed at personal and professional skill enhancement. Programs include resume writing, interviewing skills, professional etiquette, gambling, substance abuse, personal responsibility, sportsmanship, sexual responsibility, working with sports agents, financial planning and more ("Hour of Power," 2010).

University of Oklahoma (Norman, Oklahoma)

At the University of Oklahoma, there is a program called Psychological Resources for OU Student-Athletes, or PROS for short. With a staff of seven, including two licensed sport psychologists, it works to address student-athlete concerns of all varieties (academic, athletic and
personal) through services such as “confidential individual/couples counseling, assessment and testing, outreach programs, team building retreats and more” (J. Castiglione, personal communication, February 17, 2010).

Through the use of “academic screening and psycho-educational testing, PROS seeks to streamline academic services to reduce unnecessary redundancy and increase effective academic support to reduce stress and increase success” (J. Castiglione, personal communication, February 17, 2010).

**The United States Naval Academy (Annapolis, Maryland)**

The United States Naval Academy simply returned a statement regarding their stance on alcohol abuse and illegal drugs.

As a future naval (Navy & Marine Corps) officer, all midshipmen at the Naval Academy are taught to drink in a responsible way, if at all, and to shun illegal drugs entirely. Normally, freshmen are not allowed to consume alcoholic beverages except when of legal age and on leave away from the Academy. An upper class midshipman may drink if of minimum legal age for drinking in the state, 21 in Maryland. The use of illegal drugs is strictly forbidden and results in expulsion from the Academy. All midshipmen are subject to random drug testing through urinalysis, consistent with Navy-wide policies and procedures. All midshipmen undergo mandatory annual training relating to hazing, harassment, gambling, alcohol abuse and illegal drugs, etc. There are other policies and procedures that all midshipmen must adhere to and any violation of policies and procedures are subject to separation from the United States Naval Academy. Student-athletes must adhere to the same policies and procedures as non student-athletes.
(D. Duncan-White, personal communication, February 23, 2010).
CHAPTER V. DISCUSSION

Bandura (1977) discussed how people will see a behavior and later replicate or imitate that behavior. Individuals on a team often take on the personality of its leaders. They begin to behave as a single unit instead of as individuals. Many teams have a distinct persona, a culture within the organization, good or bad.

The National Football League’s (NFL) Cincinnati Bengals are known for getting into trouble with the law. Since 2000, 31 Bengals’ players have been arrested, including nine within a sixth month period in 2006. During the string of arrests, Bengals’ quarterback Carson Palmer, a well respected player on and off the field, said, “It happens on another team and they’re shocked and surprised to hear it. With us, you hear about it and it doesn’t surprise you and you just shake your head and say, ‘Another one’” (“Bengals Vets Angry,” 2007). However, the Bengals’ front office personnel continue to perpetuate the problem and the culture by bringing in athletes with a past history of problems. In May, 2010, the Bengals signed Adam “Pacman” Jones to a two-year contract. Jones was suspended by the NFL for the entire 2007 season and for part of the 2008 season for violating the NFL’s conduct policy (“Pacman Jones to Play,” 2010). He has been arrested multiple times since arriving to the NFL from West Virginia University in 2005, and most notably was connected to a shooting at a Las Vegas strip club that left a man paralyzed (“Police: Pacman’s Cash Display,” 2007).

In reviewing the literature, as well as Bandura’s theory, it becomes evident that leadership -- positive or negative -- is an invaluable trait that sets the tone for everyone on the team, in the workplace, at a party or wherever it may be. A person’s environment, and the peers and leaders that they associate with largely shape the actions of that person. “If you start with good people, good people will find a way to be successful, but if you start with bad people
they’re going to get you,” said Lute Olson, a member of the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame and the former men’s basketball coach at Arizona. “They might not get you right now, but they’re going to get you in the long run” (Hemminger & Bensch, 2007, p. 165).

At the University of Florida, quarterback Tim Tebow led the Gators to two national championships (“Gator Football Roster/Bios,” 2010). Following the 2010 season, Tebow was drafted in the first round of the NFL Draft by the Denver Broncos. Despite being thought to possess the talent of a second or third round selection, many believe that Tebow’s high character, morals and leadership qualities were a large part as to why Denver drafted him so early. “It’s not just about playing quarterback, it’s about adding him to your football team,” said Jon Gruden, an ESPN analyst and Super Bowl winning coach. “You are adding one big-time human being on your football team. This is what John McDaniels [Denver’s head coach] is all about – character, work ethic, dependability, leadership” (Jones, 2010). Positive or negative, leadership, as evidenced by both the Cincinnati Bengals and the Denver Broncos, can go a long way in determining a team’s level of success or failure.

Student-athletes consume alcohol at a 30 percent greater rate than their non-athlete peers (Doumas, Turrisi, & Wright, 2006). This occurs despite the fact that student-athletes are also exposed to more preventative programs than their non-athlete counterparts (Nelson & Wechsler, 2001). In fact, a study found that “students at highest risk of misusing alcohol report extremely high levels of exposure to alcohol programming” (Weitzman, Nelson, & Wechsler, 2003, p. 34). Within athletic director responses, alcohol -- along with illegal drugs and “others” -- was found to be a much greater issue than topics such as agents, gambling, hazing and performance enhancing drugs. Although there are 664 institutions that employ the CHAMPS/Life Skills program, and the fact that the NCAA demands certain minimums regarding alcohol education,
do the programs really work? The evidence suggests that the answer is no they do not, not as stand-alone prevention.

According to Bandura’s theory and the literature, this is because of the environments that student-athletes are immersed in and the people and leadership surrounding them. Nelson and Wechsler (2001) found that social influences, going back to the idea of student-athletes’ desires to fit in, are more powerful than the educational programs in place, such as CHAMPS/Life Skills. The study found that student-athletes were more likely than non-athletes to socialize for two or more hours per day (82.3 percent for athletes, 75.6 percent for non-athletes), have five or more close friends (60.0 percent for athletes, 50.1 percent for non-athletes), put more importance on parties (44.9 percent for athletes, 33.0 percent for non-athletes) and drink in order to fit in with their friends (35.5 percent for athletes, 29.4 percent for non-athletes) (Nelson & Wechsler, 2001).

It was also found that athletes who socialized or were around alcoholic environments such as parties and residential settings became more likely to engage in binge drinking. Taking one further step, it was found that “students who binge on alcohol are also at higher risk of using other substances” (Weitzman, Nelson, & Wechsler, 2003). If the rate of alcohol abuse were to drop, one could assume that the number of student-athletes using marijuana, approximately 20 percent, would fall as well. It can also be assumed that “other” problems such as time management and academic issues would decrease as a result of less alcohol abuse. Everything points largely to alcohol abuse as the gateway to additional and severe issues.

If educational problems are indeed not powerful enough to alter behavior, the next question is – what is? How much do institutions care about the actions of their student-athletes? To what extent will they go in order to improve the situation? Several things, as evidenced in the
research, can be done. Athletes invest countless hours pursuing greatness on the playing surface and many are able to obtain a collegiate education as a result of their skills. However, nearly 60 percent of athletes do not believe that alcohol has an effect on their performance, despite the fact that almost 30 percent of athletes admitted to playing below average as a result of alcohol or drug use (DeHass, 2006). If athletic departments are better able to show the harmful effects on performance, much like the harm in smoking, it may positively affect athlete behavior.

If student-athletes are largely living in the same residence hall or housing unit, relatively isolated from other types of student populations, it may lead to alcohol abuse because of the importance placed on social acceptance (Nelson & Wechsler, 2001). Conversely, if athletes are housed in an array of living environments – dorms that are more intolerant of alcohol, potentially with honor’s students, or with students who have been found to get into less problematic situations, it may positively affect behavior.

A third idea is simple – institutions need to be less tolerant with regard to alcohol abuse as a whole. Institutions need to impose harsher penalties for offenders and the culture must become less accepting. The general perception of society, and backed up by athletic director responses, is that alcohol use is wide spread across the country and is accepted, largely, as a social norm among college-age populations.

At BYU, it is not accepted. In keeping with part of the Honor Code, no one, including non-athlete students, student-athletes, coaches or staff is permitted to consume alcohol or engage in a number of additional activities (“Church Educational System,” 2009). It simply is not tolerated. If others institutions were to adopt such a stance, might it curtail alcohol abuse, and as was discussed earlier, also reduce the prevalence of other issues that occur in part because of alcohol use? Also, if you impose harsher penalties for offenders, will it impact behavior? An
argument may arise that says, “If we do this it will negatively affect our recruiting efforts.” This has certainly not been the case at BYU. In his six seasons as the head football coach, Bronco Mendenhall has guided the FBS football team to a record of 60-17 (.779), including two Mountain West Conference championships, six bowl games and five consecutive seasons of 10 wins or more (“BYU Staff Profile,” 2009). If the system works at BYU, it can work at other schools.

However, do not diminish or undermine some of the programs that were described in athletic director responses, a number of them do great things. Any program that better educates student-athletes or prepares them for life after sports is beneficial, and programs at places like Georgia Tech, Arizona, Oklahoma and others serve as evidence to that fact. While the CHAMPS/Life Skills program may not alter behavior in the majority of student-athletes, it may be effective when it comes to student-athletes who are on the cusp and who could go either way when it comes to alcohol abuse. These programs and initiatives, coupled with the potential changes evidenced in the above discussion, may work in reducing the amount of problematic behaviors pertaining to alcohol consumption and abuse, and may also, as a byproduct, reduce other problems as well.
CHAPTER VI. CONCLUSIONS

Alcohol, drugs, academics and personal problems rank as the biggest issues facing student-athletes in the minds of athletic directors and other leaders within athletic departments across the nation.

The research shows that commuter schools and dormitories that are tougher on alcohol abuse show less usage. This is in large part because students are not around alcohol nearly as much if they are commuters. However, at many campuses, student-athletes often live together in the same dorm, apartment building or house. This is a problem. As discussed, student-athletes want to fit in, and if they are put in a culture that promotes alcohol, drugs, etc., then the chances that they will become users increases.

Programs that have been identified at schools like Arizona, BYU, Georgia Tech, Navy, Northern Illinois, Oklahoma and through the NCAA are doing great programming. They work to keep the problematic behaviors under control. However, the problems need to be addressed at a broader level. In order to influence change, colleges and universities will need to employ tougher standards and change the culture of drinking and drugs, particularly marijuana, to the point where it is not a generally accepted practice, much like institutions such as BYU and Navy.
CHAPTER VII: FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research needs to be conducted when it comes to Brigham Young University. Is it really a dry campus? How have Bronco Mendenhall, and former coaches like LaVell Edwards, been so successful in Provo? Are they an anomaly in part because of the religious background of the school, or is it a model that can indeed be replicated elsewhere? A similar study should also be conducted with student-athletes to find their feelings on the biggest problems and behaviors plaguing the college athletic landscape.
REFERENCES


Weir, T. (2003, December 9). Hazing issue rears ugly head across USA. *USA Today, 1C.*


APPENDIX A. INSTRUMENT

In collaboration with our athletic director, Mr. Greg Christopher, and our athletic department at Bowling Green State University, I have comprised a brief inquiry that is reaching out to each athletic director at the Division I (FBS) level.

Essentially I am looking to identify the problems and destructive activities facing student-athletes from the perspective of ADs, the severity of them, and bring to better light the programs currently in action around the country working to minimize the problems.

Enclosed you will find a questionnaire and consent information. Upon completion (by May 2010), I will return to you the results and findings of the study. Out of respect for your time, I have purposely kept this letter as brief as possible. If you have any questions, or would like further information, please call me at 419.410.2689.

Sincerely,

Andrew Hemminger
Bowling Green State University
andhemm@bgsu.edu
419.410.2689 (cell)
1. Using the list below, please rank the problems that student-athletes at your school face, with No. 1 being the biggest problem.

No. 1 ____________________________
No. 2 ____________________________
No. 3 ____________________________
No. 4 ____________________________
No. 5 ____________________________
No. 6 ____________________________
No. 7 ____________________________
No. 8 ____________________________
No. 9 ____________________________
No. 10 ____________________________

(listed alphabetically)
--- Agents
--- Alcohol Abuse
--- Gambling
--- Hazing
--- Illegal Drugs
--- “Other(s)”
--- Performance Enhancers

2. On a scale of 1-10 (10 being the most), please circle the number that best describes the severity of each problem facing student-athletes at your school.

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3. What is/are the best program(s) that your athletic department provides to student-athletes to educate them and help to minimize problems?

CONSENT: I have been informed of the purposes, procedures, risks and benefits of this study. I have had the opportunity to have all of my questions answered and I have been informed that my participation is completely voluntary. I agree to participate in this research.

SIGNATURE: ____________________________ Date: ______________

Please Print Name: ____________________________
APPENDIX B. CONSENT LETTER

CONSENT INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION: My name is Andrew Hemminger and I am a second year graduate student in sport administration at Bowling Green State University (Bowling Green, Ohio). Your contact information was acquired through your school’s official athletic website. My advisor on this study is Dr. Erianne Weight (419.372.2879 - eweight@bgsu.edu).

PURPOSE: I am conducting research in collaboration with our athletic department and I am looking to find out more information on the problems that face student-athletes at the 120 institutions that play Division I (FBS) football. Along with the problems, I am also looking to find the programs that are in place to combat the problems.

While schools compete with each other to obtain the best and brightest student-athletes, everyone is in the business of helping their student-athletes stay away from trouble and distractions. After the information is gathered, it will be analyzed and the results will be sent back to each of the participating institutions. It might help to expose schools to ideas and programs that they weren’t previously aware of and it may lead to them instituting a program that will help to reduce a problem amongst student-athletes.

PROCEDURE: The study is being sent out to each of the 120 athletic directors at the Division I (FBS) level and the attached survey is the only data collection tool. Your time commitment is limited to only the documents enclosed within this letter, approximately 3-5 minutes.

VOLUNTARY NATURE: Your participation is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw at any time. You may decide to skip questions or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. Deciding to participate or not will not affect your relationship with Bowling Green State University in any way.

CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY PROTECTION: All data will be stored in a locked safe within my home. I will be the only one with access to it and I will be the only one that will see it. As soon as the study is concluded (by May 2010), all potentially negative information will be properly destroyed. Reported problems (questions 1 and 2) at each institution will be kept confidential. Only the average of all combined reported problems will be made public. Therefore, a 7.5 average may appear for “gambling,” but never will a school be singled out or their individual problems be named. However, the programs that are in place that are working to reduce the amount of problems regarding student-athletes that are reported may be made public.

RISKS: The risks associated with participating in this study are no greater than in daily life.

CONTACT INFORMATION: You may contact me, Andrew Hemminger, at 419.410.2689 or by email at and-hemm@bgsu.edu. You may reach my advisor, Dr. Erianne Weight, at 419.372.2879 or by email at eweight@bgsu.edu. You may also contact the Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board at 419.372.7716 or by email at hrsrb@bgsu.edu if you have any questions about your rights as a participant. Thank you very much for your time.

On the survey, you will be asked to provide your signature and the following duplicate paragraph will be stated: I have been informed of the purposes, procedures, risks and benefits of this study. I have had the opportunity to have all of my questions answered and I have been informed that my participation is completely voluntary. I agree to participate in this research.