



## **Women's Sweet 16 Teams Score on the Court and in the Classroom**

### ***Lapchick Report on Graduation Rates for NCAA 2003 Sweet 16 Women's Basketball Teams***

**Orlando, FL... March 27, 2003** - The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport at the University of Central Florida today released a study, "Keeping Score When It Counts: Graduation Rates for 2003 NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Championship – The Sweet 16 Teams," which reports graduation rates for teams that have reached the Sweet 16 round of the NCAA Division I Women's basketball tournament. The study was authored by Dr. Richard Lapchick, who is director of the Institute and of the DeVos Sport Business Management Graduate Program at UCF.

Graduation rates were analyzed for the 16 college and university teams that have reached this elite level of the tournament. The study compares graduation rates for all student-athletes to basketball student-athletes in general and African-American basketball student-athletes in particular. A similar study of the Men's Sweet 16 teams was released by the Institute on March 24, 2003. The results for women stand in stark contrast to the men's teams:

- Eleven (69%) of the 16 women's teams had basketball student-athlete graduation rates that were **equal to or higher** than the schools' overall student-athlete graduation rates. Among the men's programs, only three (19%) of the men's teams had graduation rates for all basketball student-athletes that were **higher** than the schools' overall student-athlete graduation rates.
- Ten (63%) of the women's 16 teams had graduation rates for African-American basketball student-athletes that were **higher** than the schools' overall student-athlete graduation rates. In contrast, only two (13%) of the men's teams had graduation rates for African-American basketball student-athletes that were **higher** than the schools' overall student-athlete graduation rates.
- Ten (63%) of the women's 16 teams (versus only three – or 19% - of the men's Sweet 16 teams) **graduated at least two-thirds** of their African-American basketball student-athletes.
- Nine (56%) of the women's Sweet 16 **graduated at least two-thirds** of their student-athletes versus only five (31%) of the men's Sweet 16.
- Fifteen (94%) of the women's Sweet 16 teams graduated **at least one-half** of their African-American student-athletes and **at least one-half** of all student-athletes. Conversely, only seven (44%) of the men's Sweet 16 teams graduated **at least one-half** of their African-American student-athletes and only six (38%) graduated **at least one-half** of all student-athletes.

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- Six (38%) of the women's Sweet 16 teams **graduated 100 percent**, and eight **graduated 75 percent or more**, of their African-American student-athletes. Only one (6%) of the men's Sweet 16 teams **graduated 100 percent**, and only two (13%) graduated **more than 75 percent**, of their African-American student-athletes.
- In the sharpest contrast between the studies, only one (6%) of the women's Sweet 16 teams **graduated less than 50 percent** of its African-American student-athletes, while nine (56%) of the men's Sweet 16 teams **graduated less than 50 percent** of their African-American student-athletes.

As the tournaments began, four (6%) of the women's 64 teams and 13 (20%) of the 65 men's teams had not graduated an African-American student-athlete in six years. (NOTE: A complete list of graduation rates for the tournament teams is available at [www.bus.ucf.edu/sport/ides/sweet16women](http://www.bus.ucf.edu/sport/ides/sweet16women)).

Institute Director Dr. Richard Lapchick explained, "We are releasing these graduation rates in order to give March Madness fans a perspective on how well our institutions of higher education are doing off the basketball court. We promise all student-athletes who enter our universities that they will receive an education and that we will help them earn a college degree. This women's study shows that most universities do fulfill their promises to female basketball student-athletes, including African-American student-athletes. This was in sharp contrast to the results for male basketball student-athletes."

Lapchick noted that, "Among all college sports, women's basketball has a great record for graduation rates while men's basketball has the worst graduation rates. This is in a sport where 57 percent of Division I basketball student-athletes are African-American men and 38 percent are African-American women. Overall, only 36 percent of all male basketball student-athletes graduate and only 28 percent of African-American male basketball student-athletes graduate. Women basketball student-athletes fare far better, as they graduate at a rate of 67 percent overall and 56 percent for African-American female basketball student-athletes."

Lapchick emphasized, "It is striking that when we look at all 328 Division I teams, 58 of the women's programs graduated 100 percent of their African-American basketball student-athletes while 58 of the men's programs did not graduate a single African-American basketball student-athlete. Nonetheless, it is a warning signal that 26 of the Division I women's programs did not graduate a single African-American woman basketball student-athlete.

"We must be careful to closely watch the women's programs both for inspiration of how to do it right, and also to be sure that the problems afflicting men's basketball do not permeate the women's programs," Lapchick said.

According to report findings, if the 2003 NCAA Division I Basketball Tournament schools were required to have graduation rates of at least 50 percent, then 88 percent of the women's teams in the round of 32 would have qualified whereas 69 percent of the men's teams would have been ineligible to play. With this requirement, 15 of the 16 (94%) women's Sweet 16 would qualify for the NCAA Tournament, versus only six (38%) of the men's Sweet 16.

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Lapchick added, "If there were a Sweet 16 for the top graduation rates among the women's Tournament teams, then the bracket would include (in order of graduation rates for all basketball student-athletes): Pepperdine (100 percent), Holy Cross and Vanderbilt (tied), Stanford and Villanova (tied), North Carolina - Chapel Hill, California - Santa Barbara, Minnesota (tied), Texas Tech, Notre Dame and Duke (tied), Texas (Austin), Arkansas, Utah and Virginia (tied), and tied for 16<sup>th</sup> place are St. Francis (PA), Washington, Boston College, Boston University and Xavier (the latter five were tied with a 79 percent overall basketball graduation rate). Thus, teams in the women's Academic Sweet 16 graduated at least 79 percent of their basketball student-athletes; comparatively, the men's Academic Sweet 16 had a weaker academic showing and graduated 56 percent or more of their basketball student-athletes. Among the women's Academic Sweet 16, Villanova, Minnesota, Texas Tech, Notre Dame, Duke and Boston College are in the actual Sweet 16.

"In the Women's Academic Sweet 16, Pepperdine would win a close one over the winner of the Holy Cross-Vanderbilt semi-final match for the National Championship," Lapchick continued.

"These schools and their student-athletes inspire us about the possibilities of sport's place in higher education."

Statistics used in the study were from the 2002 NCAA Graduation Rates Report. They are six-year rates and four-class averages (classes entering 1992-93 through 1995-96). The NCAA credits a school for graduating students within six years of their freshman year; schools are not credited for transfers or junior college players who may get their degrees.

The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport serves as a comprehensive resource for issues related to gender and race in amateur, collegiate and professional sports. The Institute researches and publishes a variety of studies, including annual studies of student-athlete graduation rates and racial attitudes in sports, as well as the nationally recognized *Racial and Gender Report Card*, an assessment of hiring practices in coaching and sport management. Additionally, the Institute conducts diversity management training and will hold a biannual National Conference to address diversity issues in sport. The Institute also will monitor some of the critical ethical issues in college and professional sport, including the potential for the exploitation of student-athletes, gambling, performance-enhancing drugs and violence in sport.

The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport is part of the DeVos Sport Business Management Graduate Program in the University of Central Florida's College of Business Administration. This landmark program focuses on business skills necessary for graduates to conduct successful careers in the rapidly changing and dynamic sports industry while also emphasizing diversity, community service and sport and social issues.

News release and charts are available at [www.bus.ucf.edu/sport/ides/sweet16women](http://www.bus.ucf.edu/sport/ides/sweet16women).

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**See accompanying documents:**

**2003 NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Sweet 16 Graduation Rates Chart**

**2003 NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Tournament Graduation Rates Chart**

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