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The effects of a life skills program on the social and academic performance of freshman student-athletes

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THE EFFECTS OF A LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM
ON THE SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
OF FRESHMAN STUDENT-ATHLETES

By

Catherine Nicole Rasnack

Accepted in Partial Completion
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science

Moheb A. Ghali, Dean of the Graduate School

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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MASTER'S THESIS

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Catherine N. Rasnack
April 27, 2011

THE EFFECTS OF A LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM
ON THE SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
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A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of
Western Washington University

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of participation in a Life Skills program for freshman student-athletes on academic and social performance. Subjects ($n = 38$) were freshman student-athletes participating in varsity athletics at Western Washington University during Fall Quarter 2010. The treatment group ($n = 21$) met for one hour, twice a week and completed a Life Skills Seminar Course (LSSC) designed and taught by the researcher. Subjects completed both the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ) and the College Self-Efficacy Inventory (CSEI) at the beginning and conclusion of the course. A two-way ANOVA between-within was used to analyze adjustment and self-efficacy outcomes and means of the fall quarter grade point average were calculated and compared for both the treatment and the control group. No statistically significant interactions were found between time (pre- or post-measures) or groups (treatment and control) of student-athlete adaptation to college as measured by the SACQ or student-athlete college self-efficacy as measured by the College Self-Efficacy Inventory CSEI. No significant relationship between the grade point average (GPA) of the two groups was found although the GPA for seminar participants was 2.98, which was .35 points higher than the GPA for the control group participants. Despite no significant relationships in the measures, student-athletes reported on the effectiveness of participation in the LSSC through evaluations and described the course content as being beneficial to their general knowledge.

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Chapter I

The Problem and Its Scope

Introduction

For many individuals, the first year of college can be a very intimidating experience. Freshman university students often expect university life to offer them significant opportunities for personal, social, and intellectual growth. These opportunities require first year university students to adjust to the demands of a new adult independence in an entirely new environment (Pancer, Hunsberger, Pratt, & Alisat, 2000). For student-athletes, the university life often results in experiences that can lead to heightened levels of stress and pressure due to their dual role of academics and athletics (Wilson & Pritchard, 2005). For that reason it is important to provide student-athletes with an appropriate support system that will help them succeed during this transition.

Programs aimed at teaching basic life skills have been developed to help improve individuals' performance on a holistic level. The development of basic life skills programs such as Going for the Goal, Sports United for Education and Recreation, Play It Smart, and National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) CHAMPS/Life Skills provide youth, adolescent and university age students with the skills and tools they need to succeed in a variety of social environments (Ahlgren-Bedics & Monda, 2009; Danish & Nellen, 1997; Danish, Forneris, & Wallace, 2005; Goudas, Dermitzaki, & Leondari, 2006; Goudas & Giannoudis, 2007; National Collegiate Athletic Association, [NCAA], n.d.; Petitpas, Van Raalte, Cornelius, & Presbrey, 2004).

Student-athletes who have learned to effectively deal with the demands of university life through mastery of life, academic, and athletic skills have a better chance of succeeding

at multiple tasks in their life (Vernacchia, 2007). Programs that help student-athletes recognize how to transfer the mental skills they learned through sport to their life outside of sport can learn to improve their quality of life as a whole (Danish, Petitpas, & Hale, 1993). The development of life skills programs for youth, adolescents and Division I student-athletes has allowed participants to have an increased chance of becoming better students, better athletes, and more concerned and productive community members (Papacharisis et al., 2005). All student-athletes deserve an equal opportunity to develop the skills that will help them to succeed socially and academically once they enter college.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of a life skills program on the social and academic performance of freshman student-athletes.

Hypotheses

The first null hypothesis was there would be no difference in adjustment scores as measured by the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ; Baker & Siryk, 1984) of student-athletes who participated in a life skills program. The second null hypothesis was there would be no difference in self-efficacy scores, as measured by the College Self-Efficacy Inventory (CESI; Solberg, O'Brien, Villareal, Kennel, & Davis, 1993), of student-athletes who participated in the life skills program. The third and final null hypothesis was there would be no difference in academic grade point average of student-athletes who participate in the life skills program versus those student-athletes who did not participate in the life skills program.

Significance of the Study

Life skills programs help student-athletes successfully complete their college degree while developing skills that will serve them for life (Carodine, Almond, & Grato, 2001).

This study will help to identify important skills that student-athletes need in order to successfully transition into college as freshmen. It will hopefully help universities identify and develop programs that will assist student-athletes improve their social and academic performance as they negotiate the transition from high school to university life.

Limitations of the Study

- a. Results may not be generalizable to other student-athletes at other universities
- b. The course material is unique to this setting. Different materials and resources were taken from multiple programs, as well as skills the instructor felt were important to students' adjustment in college to create this course.
- c. Males and female student-athletes were grouped together during this study. Males and females could respond to the material presented in this study differently.

Definitions of Terms

Life Skills: Skills that enable success in multiple environments such as school, home or neighborhoods. Life skills can include, but are not limited to, interpersonal skills, such as assertiveness; or intrapersonal, such as goal setting (Danish, Forneris, & Wallace, 2005).

Self-efficacy: "A belief about what one can do under different sets of conditions with whatever skills one possesses" (Bandura, 1997, p. 37).

College Self-Efficacy: A student's degree of confidence in his or her ability to successfully complete a college-related task (e.g., taking class notes, participating in class discussions, and dividing chores among roommates); (Solberg, O'Brien, Villareal, Kennel, & Davis, 1993).

Academic Adjustment: How well students deal with the educational demands of the college (Baker & Siryk, 1984).

Social adjustment: How well students deal with interpersonal experiences such as meeting people, making friends, and joining groups (Baker & Siryk, 1984).

Chapter II

Review of Literature

Introduction

Transitioning as a freshman student to a new university requires an adjustment in the social and academic life of each individual (Pancer, Hunsberger, Pratt, & Alisat, 2000). For a student-athlete the dual role of being an athlete and a student can be complicated. Students are often overloaded by the various demands of each of these two very challenging roles and for that reason it is important for students to learn how to effectively balance and manage multiple responsibilities (Miller & Kerr, 2002; Wilson & Pritchard, 2005). Student-athletes face the challenge of mastering cognitive and psychosocial developmental tasks such as, decision-making tasks, interpersonal relationships; developing self-esteem and integrity, and achieving interdependence, and autonomy as they enter college (Carodine, Almond, & Grato, 2001).

The combination of multiple stressors can have a negative effect on an individual's well-being. As an athlete, effective athletic performance is directly related to an athlete's lifestyle. An individual's negative life experiences can spillover to affect an athlete's off-field life. At the collegiate level there has been a growing concern to assist athletes with developing life skills to help them cope with the multiple pressures that come from being a student-athlete (Vernacchia, 2007).

Life skills are those skills that enable individuals to succeed in a variety of social environments, such as school, home, and in their neighborhoods (Danish, Forneris, & Wallace, 2005). It has been found that often times, the skills needed to enhance sport performance and to succeed in life are essentially the same (Danish et al., 2005). The use of

life skills to support student-athletes improve performance in any setting is not only valuable within the university setting but can be transferred and implemented throughout an individual's life (Danish & Nellen, 1997; Danish et al., 2005).

The development of programs such as Going for the Goal, Sports United for Education and Recreation, Play It Smart, and National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) CHAMPS/Life Skills have aimed at improving the lives of individuals in a holistic approach (Ahlgren-Bedics & Monda, 2009; Danish & Nellen, 1997; Goudas, Dermitzaki, & Leondari, 2006; Goudas & Giannoudis, 2007; National Collegiate Athletic Association, [NCAA], n.d.; Petitpas, Van, Raalte, Cornelius, & Presbrey, 2004). By educating adolescents and collegiate level student-athletes these programs have helped to promote success in both sport and other domains of life. Student-athletes who learn life skills through programs such as these, can develop a better understanding of how to transfer these skills successfully into all life arenas and make each transition through university life with ease.

Transition to College

For many student-athletes, the transition from high school to college can be a challenging process as they are faced with multiple sources of stress. During this transition many student-athletes encounter obstacles that often times help to shape them as individuals. How they react and respond to these different challenges can help them successfully navigate their college years. Longer training and practice sessions, full academic course loads, and new social support systems require entering freshmen to cope with numerous demands on top of transitioning into a school environment (Potuto & O'Hanlon, 2007).

For student-athletes transitioning to university life, learning to effectively manage their time can help play a large role in relieving stress. Student-athletes expressed that during

the season they spend more than 20 hours per week practicing their sport, which leaves the remaining time left to devote to their academic work (Miller & Kerr, 2002; Potuto & O'Hanlon, 2007).

Student-athletes have been known to often over-identify with their athletic role and consequently have a difficult time with personal self-development (Watson & Kissinger, 2007). For adolescents, identity as an athlete can be important and it is natural for the athletic performance to take precedence over the academics (Goldberg, 1991). It had been found that in order to be successful, students must learn to balance the demands of both roles and be provided with an environment where they can meet the expectations of both roles (Ahlgren-Bedics & Monda, 2009; Goldberg, 1991).

Student-athletes also reported more stress than did non-athletes in a wide variety of variables: conflicts with a boyfriend or girlfriend, more responsibility, not enough time for sleep, and heavy demands from extracurricular activities (Wilson & Pritchard, 2005). In addition, student-athletes often reported trouble relaxing and had a lower degree of social support due to the stress as they transition into a new environment at college (Ahlgren-Bedics & Monda, 2009; Masten, Tusak, Zalar, & Zihlerl, 2009). The role of student and of athlete can be difficult to manage; combined it can be a source of stress in many different areas of life for a college student. Helping student-athletes identify the sources of stress and ways to effectively balance each area of their life is extremely important to their success academically and socially.

In an effort to study stress among university student-athletes, Petrie (1992) instructed 166 student-athletes to complete a two-part questionnaire regarding their experience with stress in college. Students from 11 different varsity sports completed the Life Events Scale

and the Life Events Survey for Collegiate Athletes (LESCA). Results from the questionnaires revealed a gender based difference in life stress scores. Females tended to report more negative and overall life stress than males and suggested that male and female collegiate athletes experienced and reported life events unequally (Petrie, 1992). Knowing that males and females respond differently to stress and the demands of university life can help educators develop programs designed specifically for each gender on developing skills to make the transition less stressful.

With time being one of the more commonly cited sources of stress when adjusting to college life, it is clear that student-athletes need assistance learning to balance and manage the multiple aspects of their life (Sailes, 2009). This type of assistance requires planning and self-discipline on the part of the student-athletes as well as the knowledge tools and skills that will aide them (Miller & Kerr, 2002; Wilson & Pritchard, 2005) It is important for life skills programming to address the multiple roles of the student-athlete, especially in relation to the impact of those roles may influence their academic, personal and social life (Ahlgren-Bedics & Monda, 2009). Life skills training programs are necessary and can be used as intervention strategies aimed at encouraging thoughtful awareness and discussion of emotions, especially during those crucial first few weeks of the fall semester (Kerr, Johnson, Gans, & Krumrine, 2004).

Measuring Adjustment

Adjustment to college can be measured by acquiring student's self-reports of their attachment to a university, participation in campus activities, psychological well-being, and academic standing (Taylor & Pastor, 2007). The Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ) is a 67-item self-report questionnaire that is widely used to measure

the quality of adaptation to university. It provides an overall index of adjustment as well as scores on four subscales that focus on academic, social, and personal-emotional adjustment, as well as attachment to university. Evidence for the scales' validity is derived from studies that indicate significant correlations between the SACQ and a wide range of other indications of adjustment, including GPA, involvement in university activities, and scores on measures of depression and anxiety (Baker & Siryk, 1984).

Baker and Siryk (1984) developed the SACQ as a reliable and valid instrument that can provide a resource to identify students who are at higher risk of failing to complete their degrees and can yield information concerning areas in which the difficulties occur. Internal reliability coefficients for the individual subscales range from: .81-.90 for academic adjustment; .83-.91 for social adjustment; .85-.91 for attachment subscale; and .81-.85 for personal-emotional adjustment subscale. Evidence for validity revealed significant correlations between the SACQ scores and variables reflecting adjustment to college.

Student adjustment. Learning new ways to adjust academically, socially and personally requires time and skill development. Life skills training and programs are essential and quite valuable in assisting with the adjustment process (Ahlgren-Bedics & Monda, 2009). Educational support programs that emphasize life skills provide students with higher rates of adjustment as they enter college (Melendez, 2006).

Pratt et al. (2000) randomly assigned 110 first-year Canadian University students to either a discussion group or a control. Students in both conditions were asked to complete multiple scales regarding their adjustment to college; the UCLA Loneliness Scale, Life Orientation Test, Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire, and the Epidemiological Study of Depression Scale. There were no significant differences between the two groups

upon the preliminary discussion. After the intervention students who were involved in the discussion group scored higher on adjustment than those who were only in the control group. Women involved in the class reported higher levels of social support than the control group, which helps to show that females will benefit from discussion groups. This study helped to demonstrate that students who participated in a class or discussion group aimed at helping them adjust to college will be less likely to skip classes and score higher on adjustment scores (Pratt et al., 2000).

Schwartz and Washington (1999) examined the academic success and retention of 214 freshman African American women. The study surveyed participants during the first two weeks of college using the SACQ and the Non-Cognitive Questionnaire, which is used to measure the variables important for success in college. The responses from the first two weeks were then compared to the participants' academic performance during their first year of college. Results of the survey suggest that academic success involves a combination of cognitive, adjustment and non-cognitive variables (Schwartz & Washington, 1999). Social adjustment was a very good predictor of persistence through college suggesting the importance of social adjustment during the first year of college. Researchers concluded that college success for participants was also a function of the students' background and their commitment to their education goals (Schwartz & Washington, 1999).

Student-athlete adjustment. The use of the SACQ and other instruments measuring student adjustment help to identify ways in which staff and educators can also support student-athletes.

Miller and Kerr (2002) interviewed eight student-athletes in their fourth and fifth year at a Canadian university to learn more about their athletic and academic experience during

college. The study determined that many student–athletes divide their lives into three categories, athletic, academic, and social to describe their identity. Student-athletes described the transition to university life as being difficult due to different study styles, dual roles, demanding schedules, and multiple responsibilities that came with being a student-athlete. Student-athletes expressed an overwhelming feeling of fear and uncertainty upon entering college, but their role and position on the team helped them to create a social system to cope with the new environment (Miller & Kerr, 2002). Student-athletes also expressed that as time progressed over the course of their time in college, they were better able to balance the multiple responsibilities of being a student-athlete (Miller & Kerr, 2002).

Harris, Altekruise, and Engels (2003) identified student-athlete behaviors and social interactions that are likely to be productive or destructive. They conducted a student seminar class for 77 freshman student-athletes and encouraged the students to also participate in a ninety min Psychoeducational Group session once a week for one semester. Discussions during the Group session included: time management and study skills, stress management, sexual responsibility, alcohol and drug abuse, career exploration and development, and life as a student-athlete. The class helped student-athletes adjust to college life by providing them with a safe environment to discuss topics and issues they encountered during their first year. The group sessions proved to be a beneficial tool in helping many members relax and begin the process of exploring personal/social issues (Harris, Altekruise & Engels, 2003). Athletes who participated in the program felt a sense of belonging and felt it positively influenced them in adjusting to the college environment (Harris, Altekruise & Engels, 2003).

Whitner and Myers (1986) examined the case study of a 19-year old freshman student-athlete enrolled in the Athletes Educational Planning Program (AEPP). The student

was categorized as being at high academic risk and entered into the AEPP, which assists incoming student-athletes to adjust and adapt to academics required in college. The authors noted that it is important to determine how students can be prepared for academic success and to provide services to students that will assist individuals upon entering university (Whitner & Myers, 1986). The study found that through providing individuals with proper study skills techniques and tools, as well as appropriate support academically and personally, students can learn to adjust to the demands of university life (Whitner & Myers, 1986).

Coping and Self-Efficacy

Effective coping skills can reduce stress, improve academic performance, provide skills that will enable student-athletes to develop as individuals, and increase self-efficacy (Chemers, Hu, & Garcia, 2001; Gore, 2006; Smith, 1989; Smith, Schutz, Smoll, & Ptacek, 1995). Bandura describes that “self-efficacy is not a measure of the skills one has but a belief about what one can do under different sets of conditions with whatever skills one possesses” (Bandura, 1997, p. 37).

In order to perform effectively an individual must have the skills and the belief to use those skills. Successfully completing a task requires the continual management of subskills within ever changing conditions (Bandura, 1997). When student-athletes believe in their own capabilities they can learn to effectively cope with the transition to college and ultimately become successful with every aspect of their lives.

Smith (1989) conducted an educational program aimed at exposing college students to a variety of coping skills shown to reduce anxiety. Forty-two students were selected among 452 students enrolled in an introduction to psychology class and who scored in the upper quartile of the test anxiety scale. The study consisted of five 60-minute group sessions

that met every two weeks where participants were asked to complete multiple inventories addressing anxiety and self-efficacy. A decrease in test anxiety was found to be significantly correlated with an improvement in test performance and an increase in general self-efficacy. Through the structured training in coping skills, Smith noted a positive change on trait and state measures of test anxiety in students' academic performance (Smith, 1989). Smith's study helps to provide insight into the importance of coping mechanisms. Learning to cope with test anxiety provided participants with some of the appropriate skills they needed to succeed academically. Once students are provided with the appropriate mental skills to cope with stressful situations they can learn how to transfer those skills to a variety of different areas of their life.

Smith, Schutz, Smoll and Ptacek (1995) conducted two studies looking at individual coping skills and techniques: The first investigated 637 high school and Division I football players, while the second examined 104 minor league baseball players. The researchers found that the presence of relatively independent psychological skills establishes an intricate concept of coping skills. This study helps to provide insight into how it is important to work on an individual basis when it comes to helping cope with changes. Identifying ways to cope with major changes can increase students' self-esteem and allow them to adapt to challenging situations (Smith et al., 1995).

Aspinwall and Taylor (1992) sent surveys to 1,101 college freshmen to assess the students' ability to cope with adjustment to college. Using multiple scales, they measured adjustment to college and the students' overall GPA by observing what type of coping strategy they used: avoidant coping, active coping or social support. Results of the questionnaires revealed that students who were found to use avoidant coping were predicted

to be less successful in their adjustment to college (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1992). It was also found that individuals with higher self-esteem, greater optimism and having an internal locus of control were predicted to use less of an avoidant coping strategy (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1992). Students who had a desire for control and a positive outlook were predicted to use active coping with the demands of entering college. Coping skills have been shown to help students adjust and manage challenging situations (Smith, 1989; Smith et al., 1995). Individuals who learn effective ways of coping can improve their self-esteem, which in turn will increase their belief in their own abilities (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1992).

Chemers, Hu and Garcia (2001) sent questionnaires to 373 first year university students that focused on academic and social adjustment during their transition to college. Researchers measured adjustment and also looked at other factors such as, self-efficacy, stress, health, high school GPA, and academic expectations upon entering university. Results of the questionnaires revealed that students who reported high self-efficacy perceived greater academic loads as more of a challenge than as a threat (Chemers et al., 2001). This perception directly relates to academic performance and personal adjustment since self-efficacy is strongly related to students' perceptions of their capacities for responding to the demands of college life (Chemers et al, 2001). The results also revealed that students with a higher GPA were more efficacious and demonstrated better academic performance (Chemers et al., 2001).

College self-efficacy. College self-efficacy can be defined as a student's degree of confidence in his or her ability to successfully complete college-related tasks: taking notes, asking questions in class, dealing with roommates etc. (Solberg, O'Brien, Villareal, Kennel, & Davis, 1993). The College Self-Efficacy Inventory was designed to help predict college

outcomes with students but has never been used to help predict college outcomes with student-athletes.

Solberg, O'Brien, Villareal, Kennel, and Davis, (1993) validated the College Self-Efficacy Inventory when they administered the 20-item questionnaire to 164 Mexican-American and Latino-American college students. The principle analysis yielded three subscales: courses efficacy, social efficacy, and roommate efficacy. The subscales manifested strong internal consistency and good convergent validity (Solberg et al., 1993). Internal reliability estimated the Cronbach alphas (.83 - .88) for the scales scores found from first-year college students (Gore, 2006).

A study of 629 first-year college students and second of 7,956 first-year students from four universities conducted by Gore (2006) demonstrated that the first semester of college is a critical time for promoting the academic self-efficacy beliefs of incoming first year students. Students were asked to self-report their GPA and complete the College Self-Efficacy Inventory (CESI; Solberg et al., 1993) at the beginning and end of the freshman orientation/transition class. A high correlation was found between the scores of the Academic Self-Confidence and the College Self-Efficacy Inventory, as they were good predictors of college GPA. A significant relationship between GPA and the end of semester CSEI scores was found, as well as a strong relationship between students' academic self-efficacy beliefs and college performance (Gore, 2006). Researchers found to help predict the academic performance and persistence of individual college students they can use their academic self-efficacy beliefs (Gore, 2006). By helping to individualize the process of developing the skills necessary for coping with demanding tasks and scenarios, universities can help students adjust to college (Chemers et al, 2001; Gore, 2006).

Life Skills In and Out of Sport

Most young athletes do not recognize that many of the skills that they have acquired in order to play sports or survive in their neighborhoods transfer to other life domains as well (Danish & Nellen, 1997). Transferring skills from sport to other aspects of their lives can help athletes prepare to manage transitions, such as when their athletic careers are nearing an end to be able to successfully cope with career termination (Lavalley, 2005). For transferability to take place, participants first must believe that they have skills and qualities that are of value in other settings (Danish & Nellen, 1997; Danish et al., 2005; Jones & Lavalley, 2009).

Understanding the importance of life skills. Helping athletes understand and identify their transferable skills can help to promote confidence in life as well as in sport. Young people can develop life skills, provided they have the awareness to understand what is required of them and they are motivated to develop it themselves (Jones & Lavalley, 2009). Athletes must believe that they have skills and qualities that are of value in other settings (Danish et al., 1993). Self-responsibility and taking the initiative to learn and practice life skills are important characteristics for athletic success. Student-athletes must feel engaged through the entire process in order to understand the importance of how these life skills are learned and in what context they can be executed (Danish et al., 1993; Larson, 2000; Papacharisis, Goudas, Danish, & Theodorakis, 2005). The desire to participate in an activity and being invested in it helps to make the experience intrinsically motivating, challenging, and important enough to warrant the expenditure of time and effort (Petitpas, Cornelius, Van Raalte, & Jones, 2005).

Holt, Tink, Mandigo, and Fox (2008) interviewed 12 male high school athletes to determine if they believe they learn life skills through sport. The study participants interviewed identified that the life skills associated with participation in sport were initiative, respect, and teamwork. Athletes explained that if qualities taught to them, such as respect, were demonstrated by mentors or coaches they were more likely to demonstrate and practice those qualities as well. Coaches felt that the structured environment provided an opportunity for youth to display the qualities learned through sport. Athletes reported that by learning to set realistic goals, learning to manage time and taking responsibility for one's self were characteristics they developed through sport and found them to be important to their success outside of sport (Holt et al., 2008).

Recognition of life skills. Recognition of life skills that are learned in one domain can be valuable in a variety of other domains once the importance of that skill has been considered. A case study by Jones and Lavalley (2009) reveals that athletes are able to recognize the life skills that can be transferred from sport to everyday life. Through interviews conducted with a 22 year old female tennis player, researchers observed that she had developed into a positive and successful young person because of an integration of the skills she was born with and the experiential learning associated with playing tennis. This case study demonstrates that student-athletes can have the capabilities to recognize the benefits of the multiple life skills learned through sport and can clearly implement them into their performance socially and personally.

Transference of life skills. Transferring life skills can be effective not only in sport but through other domains of life. Once skills are understood and recognized as important to an individual's well being they can begin to utilize and transfer that skill. Buhler, Schroder,

and Silbereisen (2008) reviewed a program designed for 643 fifth graders to determine the role of life skills promotion in substance abuse prevention. The program focused on eight general life skills behaviors as they related to four main substance use-related topics. Topics included: self-awareness, empathy, creativity, critical thinking, communication, interpersonal relationships, decision-making, problem solving, and coping with stress and emotions (Buhler et al., 2008). Results of the study found a significant effect of the prevention program concerning delaying the onset of smoking and heavy drinking. The program was effective in lowering the rate of nicotine abuse and fostering a critical attitude toward substance use among students in grade 5 by increasing their knowledge of general skills (Buhler et al., 2008). The program also served to help students develop a critical view on substance use, which could potentially assist them as they continued on in life. Students were able to learn new cognitive behavioral strategies regarding the general competence of basic life skills and then transfer of those skills successfully to achieve healthy lifestyles (Buhler et al., 2008).

Characteristics Important for Success

Adopting and internalizing new behaviors is a time consuming process. For student-athletes to become successful in university life they must first learn to adapt to new environments and adjust their behaviors accordingly. Universities that help identify resources and create awareness on how to access them can assist student-athletes with both personal and academic success (Petitpas et al., 2005; Whitner & Myers, 1986). By co-creating learning opportunities with student-athletes, counselors and educators can help promote an expansion of interests, skills, beliefs, values, and personal qualities that will help an individual become successful. Such personal development and growth can help student-

athletes deal with issues of identity and social isolation as well as problem-solving and decision-making skills that will serve them well over the course of their lives (Shurts & Shoffner, 2004). Establishing a foundation of skills that will lead to personal success is essential in the development of life skills programs.

Gould, Collins, Lauer, and Chung (2006) identified specific strategies coaches use to develop life skills with their athletes. They interviewed 10 football coaches recognized by the National Football League (NFL) as high school 'Coach of the Year Program'. An analysis of the interviews revealed that coaches felt that developing life skills with athletes was an on-going process. The coach-player relationship, as well as any relationship between two individuals, requires excellent communication and listening skills, along with trust, in order to create a healthy coach-athlete relationship. Coaches explained that treating players with respect and team building were very important foundations in coaching life skills (Gould et al., 2006). This study can be used as a guide for coaches and educators in helping players and students develop life skills. By modeling behaviors and demonstrating how to effectively use these behaviors, coaches and educators can help create an environment that clearly defines key behaviors, communicating, reinforcing appropriate behavior and actions to facilitate life skills and or moral development (Gould et al., 2006; Holt et al., 2008).

The Positive Youth Development Through Sport survey is a 99-item survey used to assess the role of sport in character development, problems in sport today, the role of coaches, and the influence of coaches on their athletes. Gould, Chung, Smith and White (2006) administered this survey to one hundred fifty-four high school varsity head coaches and found that coaches identify helping young people develop psychologically and socially as the number one priority. Some of the skills coaches identified hard work, time

management and goal setting as important life skills for young people to master. The biggest problems that coaches felt student-athletes experienced were: failure to take responsibility, lack of motivation, poor communication and listening skills, problems with parents, and poor grades (Gould et al., 2006). In observing differences between male and female athletes, coaches reported that males face more issues with tobacco and drug use, while females could experience sexual harassment issues (Gould et al., 2006).

Giacobbi, Roper, Whitney, and Butryn (2002) conducted semi-structured interviews with 10 NCAA Division I head coaches about their experiences coaching. Six main themes emerged regarding the characteristics that are needed for athletic success and skill improvement. Developmental considerations deemed important qualities for athletic development by the coaches included maturity, acting responsibly, and demonstrating accountability and commitment (Giacobbi et al., 2002).

Gould et al., (2006) administered interviews to 10 coaches, who were winners of NFL high school coach of the Year Program to learn more about their strategies for implementing life skills. Through in-depth phone interviews researchers received background information on the coaches' philosophy and background and the life skill strategies they use with their players. Through interviews the coaches implied that it was very important to establish a foundation that emphasized developing players as good citizens. Coach-player relationships based on excellent communication and treating players with respect help to create an environment that educates and enhances development. Results of the study found that developing players' life skills does not have to come at the cost of the program's success (Gould et al., 2006).

Life skills training can clearly be beneficial for youth, when it establishes an environment that clearly defines key behaviors and expectations. Effective communication, reinforcing appropriate behavior and actions to facilitate life skills and moral development are all skills that lead youth, and student-athletes, to become successful in what they accomplish (Giacobbi et al., 2002; Gould et al., 2006; Holt et al., 2008).

Components of an Effective Life Skills Program

An ideal program should include academic support, career counseling and personal development for student-athletes. There is a need to have a multidimensional focus in order to address the student-athlete as a whole (Carodine et al., 2001). Programs should also address social support, interpersonal feelings, as well as personal development and identity in order to enhance overall college experience (Watson & Kissinger, 2007). Life skills programs are designed with the intent of preparing students for challenges by providing them with strategies that will help them overcome those challenges and succeed (Pancer et al., 2000).

Buhler, Schroder, and Silbereisen (2008) created a general life skills class aimed at 643 fifth graders from Germany. Students were from 22 classes of seven 'Realschulen' schools, a type of non-college bound school. The intervention program provided eight sessions with interactive methods and emphasized references to personal daily life. Pre- and post-test were used to evaluate knowledge on substance use, affinity toward school, and general life skills knowledge. The study found that students who tended to drop out of classes appeared to have less knowledge regarding life skills. As a result of the prevention program, there was a significant effect on the students in the prevention program delaying the onset of smoking and heavy drinking (Buhler et al., 2008). The study also found that the

prevention program achieved its results of lowering rates of nicotine abuse and fostering a critical attitude toward substance use among students by increasing knowledge and use of general life skills. Prevention programs that help to educate and provide resources and tools for participants can help individuals perform to their highest ability.

Providing programs that focus on topics such as goal-setting and plan-making have been found to help students to clearly identify ways that they can improve their lives (Parish & Baker, 2006). Developing personal competence, educational and career planning, and preparation for the transition from high school to college are important developmental stages for counselors to consider when advising student-athletes (Goldberg, 1991).

Life Skills Programs and their Effectiveness

Many programs have been designed to promote the use of life skills and in the daily lives of student-athletes. The World Health Organization (1994) agrees that life skills education needs to be developed as part of a whole school initiative designed to support the healthy psychosocial development of children and adolescents. Implementing programs such as Sports United for Education and Recreation (SUPER), Going for the Goal (GOAL), and the NCAA/CHAMPS Life Skills have proven beneficial to individuals on many different levels.

Going For The Goal. Going for the Goal (GOAL) teaches adolescents a sense of personal control and confidence about their future so that they can make better decisions and ultimately become better citizens (Danish & Nellen, 1997). The foundational beliefs of the GOAL program encourage adolescents to develop a positive future orientation to decrease the risk of health-compromising behaviors (Forneris, Danish, & Scott, 2007). The program assists students in setting goals, making reachable goals, setting goal ladders, recognizing

and overcoming roadblocks, seeking help from others, rewards, and building strength (Danish & Nellen, 1997).

The GOAL program equips students with knowledge and skills that are necessary to succeed in coping with complex situations in life. The GOAL program provides students the opportunity to improve their performance by applying the life skills to real world settings (Goudas & Giannoudis, 2007; O'Hearn & Gatz, 2002). Students who participated in this program claimed they learned how to set goals, problem solve, and seek social support which supports the notion that programs which incorporate life skills training are valuable (Forneris et al., 2007).

Forneris et al., (2007) recruited twenty 9th graders from a Canadian school to learn more about their participation in a life skills based program and their knowledge on life skills. When asked in the beginning, students were randomly assigned to the intervention group and to define a goal. Most believed that it was something you wanted to do or achieve in the future. The control group seemed to know what a goal was, but they were unsure of the process and gave non-specific goals. Participants in GOAL understood goals needed to be broken down into small steps and to maximize probability of achievement and knew how to set and achieve them (Forneris et al., 2007). Non-participants and perhaps adolescents, in general, are not as aware of specific strategies that can be used to solve problems. In the program, students were able to look at problems in more detail and solve problems easier (Forneris et al., 2007). Students who participated in the GOAL program learned how to set goals, problem solve, and seek social support lending credence to the idea that programs that incorporate life skills training are valuable (Forneris et al., 2007).

O'Hearn and Gatz (2002) examined 479 middle school students enrolled in the school based GOAL program. They measured Knowledge of Goal Setting Skills, Locus of Control and Means-Ends Problem Solving Procedures with each student. Results indicated that middle school students demonstrated significant gains in knowledge of goal-setting skills when taught by high school students, or peers whom they admire. The study also noted that there were significant improvements in means-end problem solving skills, which will help with the prevention of various behavioral and psychological problems (O'Hearn & Gatz, 2002). The GOAL program not only increases students' knowledge on goal setting but can help to prevent behavioral problems in those who actively participate.

Goudas and Giannoudis (2007) administered a 15-item multiple choice test evaluating knowledge skills, and a 21-item scale measuring self-beliefs for goal setting, problem solving, and positive thinking to evaluate the effects of a life skills intervention program on 165 students on a Life Skills Intervention Program. Results were very encouraging and in agreement with the findings of GOAL program in school settings. Students who received the program demonstrated enhanced knowledge about life skills and higher self-beliefs for changing negative to positive thinking compared to students of the control group (Goudas & Giannoudis, 2007). The GOAL program demonstrates that students can improve their performance by applying the life skills they are taught to their own lives. GOAL equips students with knowledge and skills that are necessary for successful coping with complex situations in life (Goudas & Giannoudis, 2007).

Sports United for Education and Recreation. There are four main principles to the SUPER (Sports United for Education and Recreation) program: effective and accessible student-athlete role models; physical and mental skills are important for both sport and life; it

is important to set and attain goals in sport and in life; and that roadblocks to goals can be overcome (Danish & Nellen, 1997). College level student-athletes teach the program to adolescents and teach sport related skills. They coach the students to improve their sport performance, and teach them life skills related to sports (Danish & Nellen, 1997).

Improvements in sport skills by applying the skills learned while participating in the SUPER program were demonstrated by all students who took part (Papacharisis et al., 2005).

Sport participation is beneficial for youth because it promotes one's capacity to deal with life's challenges (Goudas & Giannoudis, 2007). Students who were active within the GOAL and SUPER programs received the opportunity to improve not only their physical playing skills while at the same time inclusion of life skills training during practice served as an effective model for transference of skill to other areas (Goudas et al., 2006).

Papacharisis et al., (2005) also evaluated an abbreviated form of the SUPER program using 40 female volleyball players, ages 10 to 12. The program consisted of shorter, fifteen minute sessions, which were conducted during practice time, and involved sports skills tests at the beginning of each session. Students were assessed on their sports skills, their self-beliefs, and knowledge of goals and how to problem solve. Students in the experimental group significantly differed from those in the control group on knowledge of life skills. The experimental group had higher scores in goal setting, problem solving and positive belief (Papacharisis et al., 2005). These results are in agreement with those found from the GOAL program, in that teaching life skills can result in an improvement in sports by applying the skills learned in the sessions. This program helps to support the idea that life skills programs equip young athletes with knowledge and skills that are necessary for successfully coping with the complex realities of life. They will therefore, have an increased chance of becoming

a better student, better athlete, and more concerned and productive community member (Papacharisis et al., 2005).

Goudas et al., (2006) conducted an abbreviated form of the GOAL & SUPER life skills program. With two sessions per week, over a total of four weeks they evaluated the effect of the program on 73 7th graders during their physical education classes. The results were very encouraging and demonstrated support for the GOAL and SUPER Program. Results revealed significant changes in social responsibility, emotional intelligence, goal knowledge, and social interest as well as performance on physical fitness skills (Goudas et al., 2006). It was concluded including life skills training into practice may serve as an effective model for learning life skills.

Play It Smart. The Play It Smart Program revolves around a life developmental framework, emphasizing continual growth and change and focuses on enhancement of skills. Petitpas et al., (2004) examined 252 high school football student-athletes participating in the program. The goal of the Play It Smart Program was to: improve grade point average, SAT or ACT scores and graduation rates; increase involvement in the community; improve knowledge of health enhancing behaviors. Results of the study indicated that participants in the program received higher grade point averages than their peers who did not participate in the class (Petitpas et al., 2004). The program supported the idea that sport participation does provide numerous opportunities for youth to learn about themselves and form important relationships with peers. The program also demonstrated the benefits of helping youth set goals and working hard to achieve them (Petitpas et al., 2004). Overall the Play it Smart program provides youth with educational opportunities to develop both personally and academically while at the same time utilizing the skills they developed in sports.

NCAA/CHAMPS Life Skills Program. Student-athletes who are entering college must cope with many different factors including; practice, training schedules, public scrutiny and extensive time demands, all on top of regular class work (Carodine et al., 2001). The CHAMPS/Life Skills Program (Challenging Athletes' Minds for Personal Success) was established to create total development for the unique needs of student-athletes at the collegiate level (Ahlgren-Bedics & Monda, 2009; NCAA, n.d.). The mission of the NCAA is to maintain intercollegiate athletics as an integral part of the campus educational program and the student-athlete as an integral part of the student body (NCAA, n.d.). With this in mind, the CHAMPS/Life Skills Program was created to support the student-athlete development initiatives of NCAA member institutions. The program is designed to enhance the quality of the student-athlete experience within the context of higher education that begins in the first year of college and continues through graduation (NCAA, n.d.; Petitpas, Brewer, & Van Raalte, 2009).

The NCAA CHAMPS/Life Skills program focuses on six different areas; Academic (goal setting, time management, study skills, orientation and assessment, etc.), Personal Development (nutrition, self-esteem, dealing with depression and grief, interpersonal communications, leadership, responsibility, etc), Career Development (freshman – sophomore issues, job searches, post college, etc.), Service (mentoring, peer education and counseling, etc), Athletic (coaching, support programs, department operations, etc.), and Program Administration (mission, values, and purpose, needs assessment, student-athlete evaluation, etc.) (NCAA, n.d.). These extensive resources have helped student-athletes develop skills necessary to manage transitions that they might face both during and after college careers (Petitpas et al., 2009). Today the CHAMPS/Life Skills Program has a total of

664 members and has provided athletes with a support system as they enter the college or university environment (NCAA, n.d.).

Life Skills Programs Aimed At Student-Athletes

Improving life skills and enhancing goal setting are traits that provide an increased chance of becoming better students and a more concerned and productive community members (Goudas et al., 2006). For student-athletes, life skills programs and programs aimed at teaching skills that will expand personal, social, and academic development are very advantageous in the transition into college.

Denson (1994) overviewed the development of a freshman seminar course taught within the University of Delaware. The semester long two-credit course was graded and primarily geared towards the needs of the students. Students who participated in the program were educated on academic navigation, career development, personal and social issues, and psychological skills in athletics. Students, as well as professionals evaluated the class and it was found to be favorable over the three years the course had been offered. Freshman seminars have been found to be a good way to increase the retention and graduation rates, academic performance, and personal and social growth of student-athletes.

Curry and Maniar (2003) looked at an academic course that combined psychological skills training and life skills education for student-athletes and non-athletes. Upon completion of the peak performance course, student-athletes were asked to comment on up to three content areas or activities that were most meaningful or helpful in terms of personal applications in one's own efforts to perform at one's best in his or her sport. The results of the peak performance class found that the cognitive-behavior homework was most influential and meaningful to students (Curry & Maniar, 2003). The study also revealed that having

students actively practice and apply the skills learned through the class can be beneficial and add to their success academically at the university level.

Melendez (2006) examined 207 Division I or IAA Student-athletes and non-athletes who had completed one semester of college and participated in a peak performance class. After receiving grade point averages and the scores based on the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire, Melendez (2006) was able to determine that student-athletes reported higher adjustment scores while participating in a peak performance class. There was a significant effect that was revealed for the athletic population, as participation in the peak performance class had a positive influence on academic adjustment. This study supplied the knowledge that education support programs provide students with higher rates of adjustment (Melendez, 2006). This demonstrates that support programs intended to maximize the social and developmental benefits athletic participation on college adjustment are beneficial to student-athletes at the university level.

In his doctoral dissertation, Downey (2005) examined the adjustment of student-athletes and non-student-athletes at a Division I school. Using a sample of 252 students, 78 student-athletes and 174 non student-athletes, during the seventh and 15th week of the semester, he administered the SACQ along with the Perceived Impact of Potential adjustment Factors (PIPAF) and the Brief Locus of Control scale (BLOC). The results of the questionnaires revealed that at week seven of the semester student-athletes were less committed to earning their degree and were found to score lower on the commitment subscale over all (Downey, 2005). Over time student-athletes adjustment significantly decreased on two of the four subscales of the SACQ, and the non-athlete adjustment scores did not significantly change (Downey, 2005). Results of this study concluded that student-

athletes appear to have a difficult time adjusting to college. Downey (2005) suggested that providing student-athletes with resources on campus, such as tutors and programs that could assist them academically during the transition to a university.

Kingston (2003) conducted a peak performance class for twenty-one varsity freshman student-athletes at a Division II University. Forty-two students were randomly assigned to either the treatment or control group over the quarter; either participating in peak performance class or completing regular academic course work. The peak performance class consisted of 2 hour per week classes over the fall quarter. The program was modeled after Student Services for Athletes from University of Delaware and students received two full academic credits for the course. Kingston (2003) evaluated the adjustment scores for the control and the experimental groups as well as their grade point average (GPA) over the course of the quarter. Adjustment scores for students at the end of the class increased significantly from the beginning to the end of the course; however there was no difference between the GPA of those who participated in the class and those who did not. Results of the study revealed that participation in the class might expose students to resources capable of helping them cope with the academic demands of college. Although there was no difference on the academic performance and GPA scores of students, the peak performance class successful at increasing knowledge of support services and thus student-athletes were successful in coping with interpersonal demands inherent in the college experience (Kingston, 2003).

Summary

Student-athletes face many different challenges as they transition from high school to college (Miller & Kerr, 2002; Pancer et al., 2000; Vernacchia, 2007). As athletes, they face not only the challenges of being a freshman student, but also the difficulties adjusting to new coaches, teammates and training regimens (Kimball & Fraysinger, 2003; Wilson & Pritchard, 2005). Stress comes from many different sources and helping to assist student-athlete's balance and manage these sources of stress will help develop a successful transition (Wilson, & Pritchard, 2005).

Many of the programs aimed at assisting student-athletes are focused either on youth, adolescents, or NCAA Division I athletes. There has been little research conducted regarding the development of basic life skills necessary for the transition to college for NCAA Division II student-athletes. Division II student-athletes may not be provided with as many resources and may have higher expectations academically than students who attend Division I universities. Life skills programs and peak performance courses can support students and contribute to the development of academic, social, and life skills that will promote confidence for students who place an importance in those areas (Papacharisis et al., 2005). These programs provide mental, social, and academic skills athletes learn through sport and once mastered, these skills can help them succeed in situations that they also encounter in their everyday lives (Danish & Nellen, 1997; Goudas et al., 2006).

Chapter III

Methods and Procedures

Introduction

Entering college places a high demand on first year students in adjusting and coping with a new environment (Pancer, Hunsberger, Pratt, & Alisat, 2000). For student-athletes the dual role of student and athlete is often times more demanding and can be very overwhelming. Helping student-athletes learn how to effectively balance and manage multiple responsibilities is important in their transition to college (Miller & Kerr, 2002; Wilson, & Pritchard, 2005). Life skills programs have shown to provide students with higher rates of adjustment (Melendez, 2006). By incorporating life skills programs into universities, student-athletes are provided with the basic skills needed to enhance sport performance and to succeed in life (Danish, Forneris, & Wallace, 2005). This study examined the effects of a life skills education program on the academic and social adjustment of student-athletes as measured by the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire and the College Self-Efficacy Inventory (Baker & Siryk, 1986; Gore, 2006; Solberg et al., 1993).

Description of Study Population

A total of 38 freshman student-athletes were recruited to participate in the present study. Twenty-one students were randomly assigned to be a part of the treatment group, a life skills program for student-athletes entering college. The remaining seventeen student-athletes were assigned to the control group. All students were between the ages of 18 and 21 years old. Students were members of the varsity athletic teams at Western Washington University.

Design of the Study

The study participants were assessed using a pretest and posttest to distinguish if participation in a life skills program as a freshman entering college would affect their adjustment to college. This particular design was modeled after Kingston's (2003) Peak Performance Seminar and included lectures, skill exercises, group sharing and discussion, as well as guest speakers. The class was titled "Life Skills for the College Student-Athlete" and met for two hours per week during fall quarter. The researcher taught the class and had previous experience teaching, including experience teaching life skills courses to elementary, middle, and high school aged students, as well as 100-level physical education courses at Western Washington University.

The current study differed from Kingston's (2003) Peak Performance Seminar in that the topic and subject for each lesson was selected based on skills that the researcher felt would enhance academic and social performance of freshman student-athletes. The activities, readings, and discussion were mainly adapted from material found in "A Student Athlete's Guide to College Success: Peak Performance in Class and Life" (Petrie, Hankes, & Denson, 2011). Incorporated into the course curriculum were psychological or mental skills necessary for successful athletic and academic lifestyles. A copy of the course syllabus can be found in Appendix D.

Data Collection Procedures

Instrumentation. The Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ; Baker & Siryk, 1984) is a 67-item self-report questionnaire that is widely used to measure the quality of adaptation to university. A copy of the SACQ can be found in Appendix A. The items on the SACQ are rated on a 9-point scale ranging from "applies very closely to me" to "doesn't

apply to me at all". The student indicates on the scale that best represents the degree to which the statement is true. It covers four subtopics: Academics, 24 items measuring how the student copes with the demands of college academics; Personal, 15 items reporting the students' responses to stress and psychological health; Social, 20 items that define the interpersonal demands of college; and Institutional, 15 items measuring the student's commitment to their university education (Baker & Siryk, 1984). The SACQ has been shown to have both a highly consistent and reliable testing instrument of adjustment to college life (Baker & Siryk, 1984). Higher scores indicate better adjustment while lower scores indicate that the student is relatively less well adjusted to college (Baker & Siryk, 1984). Evidence for the scales' validity comes from studies that indicate significant correlations between the SACQ and a wide range of other indications of adjustment, including GPA, involvement in university activities, and scores on measures of depression and anxiety (Baker & Siryk, 1984).

The College Self-Efficacy Inventory (CSEI; Solberg et al., 1993) is used to help predict college outcomes but has not been used with student-athletes. A copy of the CSEI (Solberg et al., 1993) can be found in Appendix B. The principle analysis yielded 3 subscales: courses efficacy, social efficacy, and roommate efficacy. The subscales manifested strong internal consistency and good convergent validity (Solberg et al., 1993). Internal consistency reliability estimated Cronbach alphas ranging between .83 to .88 for the scales scores found from first-year college students (Gore, 2006).

Measurement techniques and procedures. The program was conducted for one quarter (approximately 10 weeks). The SACQ (Baker & Siryk, 1984) and CSEI (Solberg et al., 1993) were administered at the beginning as well as at the end of the course/quarter

during the first and 20th class meeting. The treatment group (n=21) participated in a quarter long life skills program designed for entering freshman student-athletes. After successfully completing the course students received two academic credits. The control group (n=17) did not receive the treatment course but completed their academic course load for the quarter. The number of credits was recorded for each student and credit loads were compared between the two groups. The means of both the control and the treatment group academic grade point averages were recorded at the end of the quarter. The life skills program met twice a week for one hour. The course focused on improving participants' development in athletic and academic domains.

Data Analysis. Means and standard deviations were collected from both the pretest and the posttests of the different SACQ (Baker & Siryk, 1984) subscales as well as the SCEI (Solberg et al., 1993) subscales, scores were then calculated and compared. A two-way ANOVA between-within was used to measure the difference in adjustment outcomes as measured by the SACQ. A two-way ANOVA between-within was also used to measure the self-efficacy outcomes as measured by the SCEI between the treatment and control groups from the beginning of the quarter and at the end of the quarter. Means of the fall quarter grade point average were calculated and compared for both the treatment and the control group. A between group t-test was calculated for the fall GPA and a between group t-test was used to measure credit loads.

Chapter IV

Results and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of a life skills program on the social and academic performance of freshman student-athletes. More specifically, the purpose of this study was to determine: (1) if participation in a life skills program affected student-athlete adjustment outcomes as measured by the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ; Baker & Siryk, 1984), (2) if participation in a life skills program influenced student-athlete self-efficacy outcomes as measured by the College Self-Efficacy Inventory (CESI; Solberg, O'Brien, Villareal, Kennel, & Davis, 1993), and (3) if freshman student-athletes who participated in the program earned higher or lower grade point averages than the control group who did not participated in the program.

The Life Skills Seminar Class (LSSC) provided student-athletes with guidance in goal setting, time management, study skills, communication, nutrition, as well as alcohol and drug safety. During the LSSC assorted campus student services and programs were introduced to those who participated in the treatment group as a resource to help them through their transition to university life.

Results

The Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire and the College Self-Efficacy Inventory were hand scored by the researcher and individual totals as well as group totals were obtained (Appendix E - F) and means and standard deviations are provided in Tables 1 - 2 for the SACQ and CSEI. Significant and non-significant p-values for interactions between groups and the testing times are also reported in Tables 1-3.

The first null hypothesis was supported. There was no significant interaction in adjustment level scores as measured by the SACQ of student-athletes who participated in the life skills program versus those who did not (Table 1). While the experimental group showed a slight decrease in the Full Scale score from pre- to post-test results, it was not a significant difference. The control group showed no change in Full Scale scores as measured by adjustment when looking at results from pre- to post-test. Adjustment scores differed for the Full Scale from a mean of 347 (SD = 13.4) for the first week of school to a mean of 344 (SD = 17.2) following the 10-week intervention.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics - SACQ Full Scale

Group	N	Pre- <u>Mean</u>	Test <u>SD</u>	Post- <u>Mean</u>	Test <u>SD</u>	Significance
Experimental	21	347	13.4	344	17.2	
Control	17	342	20.5	342	14.0	0.709

The second null hypothesis was supported; there were no differences in self-efficacy scores as measured by the College Self-Efficacy Inventory (CESI; Solberg, O'Brien, Villareal, Kennel, & Davis, 1993), of student-athletes who participated in the LLSC versus those who did not (See Table 2). Self-Efficacy scores differed for the Full Scale from a mean of 129 (SD = 21.8) for the first week of school to a mean of 135 (SD = 17.4) following the 10-week intervention.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics - CSEI Full Scale

Group	N	Pre- <u>Mean</u>	Test <u>SD</u>	Post- <u>Mean</u>	Test <u>SD</u>	Significance
Experimental	21	129	21.8	135	17.4	
Control	17	135	21.1	141	21.4	0.901

The third and final null hypothesis was supported. There was no significant difference in the academic performance, based on grade point average, of student-athletes who participated in a life skills program versus those who did not (See Appendix G for individual data). The average number of credits taken during fall quarter was similar between the experimental and control groups (See Table 3). The range of credits completed for the experimental group during the fall quarter was nine to eighteen while the range of credits taken for the control group ranged between five and seventeen. The mean grade point average of the treatment group was higher than the mean of the control group participants (See Table 3). However, there was not a significant difference between the grade points of the two groups.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics - Academic Outcomes for Fall Quarter

Group	N	Credits		GPA	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Experimental	21	15	7.39	2.98	0.38
Control	17	13	10.23	2.63	0.95

Discussion

Although there were no statistically significant difference in academic performance based on grade point average, the differences between the two groups is worth noting. The average GPA for seminar participants was .35 of a grade higher than the GPA for control group participants. This suggests that participation in a life skills course could expose freshman student-athletes to skills and resources that can help them properly adjust to the academic demands placed on them during their transition to university.

Outcome results of this study do not show statistically significant results in support of a life skills program as measured by the SACQ and CSEI. However, participants in the

experimental group provided favorable reviews for the LSSC in the course evaluation (See Appendix H). On a four-point Likert-type scale evaluation, student-athletes rated the practicality and relevance of the course and the information provided (1 = poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good 4 = Excellent). Overall, participants enjoyed the course (Mean = 3.33; SD = 1.00) and felt that the material presented provided “Excellent” relevancy to their experience and needs as student-athletes:

“Pretty much all the main material was related to being a student-athlete and it was taught in a way that enabled us to follow along and try out some of the methods.”

“The content was always well known and expressed with good overall knowledge. The subjects were all relevant to our lives.”

Participants described the instructors’ guidance as well as effectiveness in teaching the course material to be useful (Mean = 3.50; SD = 1.04):

“Catherine did a good job always asking us students about our own thoughts and getting us involved all the time. It was helpful as a freshman to be given some helpful tips and guidance to succeed.”

Course evaluations provided by participants in the LSSC demonstrated that was perceived as beneficial to their academic success at Western Washington University. Freshman student-athletes who are successful in adjusting to the academic and social demands of university life will be more likely to achieve success in greater social and academic self-confidence (Curry & Maniar, 2003; Harris, Altekruze, & Engels, 2003; Melendez, 2006).

The last two questions on the course evaluation were open ended questions. The first question asked: “What aspects of the teaching or content do you feel were especially good?” The most common response was regarding the variety of teaching methods and material utilized. Students expressed how topics such as time management, goal setting, relaxation and stress management were helpful in enabling them to achieve academic success. The second question asked: “What changes would you make to improve future offerings of this course?” The overall response for this question was to offer more student involvement and group activities. Students reported that since the class was offered too early (8am), more active learning experiences would enhance their learning effectiveness. Other suggestions included the use of letter grades instead of a Pass/Fail grading system and an increase in the number of homework assignments.

Summary

Freshman student-athletes who participated in 10-week LSSC showed no significant differences in measures of students’ adaptation to college (SACQ), self-efficacy (CSEI), and grade point average when compared with those who did not participate in the LSSC. The grade point averages between the treatment and control groups were not significantly different. However, through self-reporting student-athletes conveyed that their participation in the life skills program proved to be useful and that the skills learned would continue to be useful through their college career.

Chapter V

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

The present study examined the effectiveness of a life skills seminar for freshman student-athletes on their social and academic adjustment to college. The various demands placed on student-athletes as they enter college requires a great amount of balance and responsibility (Carodine, Almond, & Grato, 2001; Miller & Kerr, 2002; Wilson & Pritchard, 2005). Research studies indicate that support and education programs focusing on life skills can help student-athletes succeed both socially and academically at the university level (Curry & Maniar, 2003; Denson, 1994; Melendez, 2006).

Thirty-eight freshman student-athletes were recruited and randomly selected to participate in a Life Skills Seminar Course (LSSC) designed to provide resources and tools that would help freshman student-athletes adjust academically and socially to university life at Western Washington University. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the LSSC on student adaptation to college, college self-efficacy, and grade point averages of the student-athletes were collected at the beginning and conclusion of the course.

Conclusions

The present study was designed to examine the significance of a life skills program for freshman student-athletes. It was tested if there would be no difference in adjustment, self-efficacy, and grade point average in the student-athletes who participated in the study versus those who did not. Findings of the study support all three of the null hypotheses:

1. No significant interaction found between time (pre- or post-measures) or groups (treatment and control) of student-athlete adaptation to college as measured by the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ).
2. No significant interaction was found between time (pre- or post-measures) or groups (treatment and control) in student-athlete college self-efficacy as measured by the College Self-Efficacy Inventory (CSEI), which supports the second null hypothesis.
3. Grade point averages (GPA) for Fall Quarter for both groups were compared at the end of the quarter and no significant relationship was found, supporting the third and final null hypothesis.

Although no significant interactions were found in adaptation, self-efficacy, or grade point averages, evaluations from student-athletes who participated in the LSSC stated that the course content was beneficial to their general knowledge. In addition, student-athletes expressed satisfaction with their educational experiences as participants in the LSSC. Goal setting, time management, the resource search assignment, and stress management were identified as the most helpful to their experience and education at Western. The results of the study also revealed that while the differences in academic performance, between the treatment and control, as measured by the grade point averages were not statistically significant, there was a difference worth noting. The average GPA for seminar participants was 2.98, which was .35 points higher than the GPA for the control group participants. This data suggests that the participants within the LSSC were exposed to resources that possibly helped them to properly adjust to the academic demands placed on them during their transition to university.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are suggested for future investigations:

1. It would be beneficial to complete a longitudinal study that would evaluate and assess participants as they continue their college career. Evaluating grade point averages as the student-athletes continue through the second and third year of college would help to better assess the long term outcomes of a Life Skills Seminar Course.
2. Researchers could also compare the differences in adjustment and self-efficacy outcomes based on gender and sport. Significant differences may exist between male and female participants, or between athletes who are in season or compete later during the school year. Certain sports begin their season in the summer or beginning of Fall Quarter and could experience two different periods of adjustment; at the start of their training for their sport and the start of school.
3. In an effort to control for variations in the coursework load of student-athletes, it would be ideal for researchers to be able to match the control and treatment groups according to the demands of their academic workloads.
4. It would be helpful to develop and include questions within the SACQ and CSEI that are tailored to measure freshman student-athlete adjustment and self-efficacy to college. Both the SACQ and CSEI scales that were used in this study were intended for general student populations; neither provided an athletic subscale or an aspect that would be unique to the student-athlete experience. Student-athletes who begin Fall Quarter must adjust to new teammates, coaches, roles on the team, and training schedules a full month ahead of school starting. Their adjustment could have a

- significantly different measure than those who do not start their training until Winter Quarter.
5. Creating a more active learning environment within the course. Feedback from participants stated that the goal setting assignment helped them to focus on their academics. Students wished there had been more interactive components to the course like the goal setting assignment to help them concentrate on specific areas of their life. Future courses should provide material where actively practicing skills can help students to narrow their focus and improve in the area they are working on.
 6. Future course should provide material on topics that student-athletes regard as important to their success at a university. Goal setting, time management, balance, self-care, and academic career planning were all topics that participants felt were extremely helpful to their transition to university life. Making sure to include these and any other subject matter that student-athletes feel is important, will help to establish a more positive environment for personal, social, and academic growth.
 7. Encouraging universities to provide life skills seminars or freshman orientation classes that can provide the academic support services that students need to succeed. Providing support services like life skills programs to student-athletes at the start of their freshman year can help them to receive as much academic and social support as they adjust to the new demands of university life.

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Appendix A
Informed Consent

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Purpose and Benefit:

The purpose of this experiment is to examine the effects of a life skills class on the social and academic performance of freshman student-athletes. The results of this study will advance our knowledge of the current needs of freshman student-athletes and provide an understanding of how administrators can provide future programming to student-athletes at the university level.

I UNDERSTAND THAT:

- 1) Participating in this experiment will involve enrolling in either a control or experiment group. As part of the experimental group I will receive 2 academic credits for my full participation and successful completion in a Life Skills Program (COURSE #). The class will meet twice a week for a total of two hours during the quarter. As part of my participation in this class I will be asked to participate in class discussions and complete required readings and assignments. During my participation in this class I will be required to complete two questionnaires (Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire and College Self-Efficacy Inventory) at the beginning and the end of the quarter. If I miss three class meetings or do not complete the minimum required assignments I will not receive credit for this course.
- 2) If assigned to the control group I will not receive credit. I will be asked to complete two questionnaires (Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire and College Self-Efficacy Inventory) at the beginning and the end of the quarter. The total time commitment will be about 2 hours during the quarter.
- 3) There are no anticipated risks or discomfort associated with participation. The researcher will be available to answer any questions I might have while participating. I am able to stop my participation in this study at any time and I understand that my participation is completely voluntary.
- 4) This study will require the documentation of grade point averages for the quarter. I give the researcher permission to access this information. I understand that this information provided will be kept confidential and my name will not appear on any of the results. No individual responses will be reported; only group findings will be reported.
- 5) Benefits for participating in this study can help me to understand how well I am adjusting to university life and how my social and academic performance can possibly improve with the knowledge and skills taught through this study. I will also be providing college administrators with valuable information and insight regarding the social and academic performance of freshman student-athletes. This knowledge can help to provide programs aimed at helping student-athletes become successful in life and at the freshman university level.
- 6) My signature on this form does not waive my legal rights of protection

- 7) This experiment is conducted by Catherine Rasnack. Any question you have about the experiment or your participation may be directed towards her.

If you have any questions about your participations or your rights as a research participant, you can contact the WWU Human Protections Administrator (HPA), (360) 650-3220. If during or after participation in this study you suffer from any adverse effects as a result of participation, please notify the researcher directing the study or the WWU Human Protections Administrator.



I have read the above description and agree to participate in this study.

Participant's Signature

Date

Participant's PRINTED NAME

NOTE: Please sign both copies of the form and retain the copy marked "Participant."

Appendix B

Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire

Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire

- 1) I feel that I fit in well as part of the college environment.
- 2) I have been feeling tense or nervous lately.
- 3) I have been keeping up to date on my academic work.
- 4) I am meeting as many people, and making as many friends as I would like at college.
- 5) I know why I'm in college and what I want out of it.
- 6) I am finding academic work at college difficult.
- 7) Lately I have been feeling blue and moody a lot.
- 8) I am very involved with social activities in college.
- 9) I am adjusting well to college.
- 10) I have not been functioning well during examinations.
- 11) I have felt tired much of the time lately.
- 12) Being on my own, taking responsibility for myself, has not been easy.
- 13) I am satisfied with the level at which I am performing academically.
- 14) I have had informal, personal contacts with college professors.
- 15) I am pleased now about my decision to go to college.
- 16) I am pleased now about my decision to attend this college in particular.
- 17) I'm not working as hard as I should at my course work.
- 18) I have several close social ties at college.
- 19) My academic goals and purposes are well defined.
- 20) I haven't been able to control my emotions well lately.
- 21) I'm not really smart enough for the academic work I am expected to be doing now.
- 22) Lonesomeness for home is a source of difficulty for me now.
- 23) Getting a college degree is very important to me.
- 24) My appetite has been good lately.
- 25) I have been very efficient in the use of study time lately.
- 26) I enjoy living in a college dormitory.
- 27) I enjoy writing papers for my course.
- 28) I have been having a lot of headaches lately.
- 29) I really haven't had much motivation for studying lately.

- 30) I am satisfied with the extracurricular activities available at college.
- 31) I've given a lot of thought lately to whether I should ask for help from the psychological/Counseling Center Services or from a psychotherapist outside of college.
- 32) Lately I have been having doubts regarding the value of a college education.
- 33) I am getting along very well with my roommate(s) at college.
- 34) I wish I were at another college or university.
- 35) I've put on (or lost) too much weight recently.
- 36) I am satisfied with the number and variety of courses available at college.
- 37) I feel that I have enough social skills to get along well in the college setting.
- 38) I have been getting angry too easily lately.
- 39) Recently I have had trouble concentrating when I try and study.
- 40) I haven't been sleeping well recently.
- 41) I'm not doing well enough academically for the amount of work I put in.
- 42) I am having difficulty feeling at ease with other people at college.
- 43) I am satisfied with the quality or the caliber of courses available at college.
- 44) I am attending classes regularly.
- 45) Sometimes my thinking gets muddled up too easily.
- 46) I am satisfied with the extent to which I am participating in social activities at college.
- 47) I expect to stay at college for a bachelor's degree.
- 48) I haven't been mixing too well with the opposite sex lately.
- 49) I worry a lot about my college expenses.
- 50) I am enjoying my academic work at college.
- 51) I have been feeling lonely a lot lately.
- 52) I am having a lot of trouble getting started on homework assignments.
- 53) I feel I have a good control over my life situation at college.
- 54) I am satisfied with my program of courses for this semester/quarter.
- 55) I have been feeling in good health lately.
- 56) I feel I am very different from other students at college in ways that I don't like.
- 57) On balance, I would rather be home than here.

- 58) Most of the things I am interested in are not related to any of my course work at college.
- 59) Lately I have been giving a lot of thought to transferring to another college.
- 60) Lately I have been giving a lot of thought to taking time off from college and finishing later.
- 61) I find myself giving considerable thought to taking time off from college altogether and for good.
- 62) I am very satisfied with the professors I have now in my courses.
- 63) I have some good friends or acquaintances at college with whom I can talk about any problems I may have
- 64) I am experiencing a lot of difficulty coping with the stresses imposed upon my in college.
- 65) I am quite satisfied with my social life at college.
- 66) I'm quite satisfied with my academic situation at college.
- 67) I feel confident that I will be able to deal in a satisfactory manner with future challenges here at college.

Appendix C

College Self-Efficacy Inventory (CSEI)

College Self-Efficacy

The College Experience Survey

PART F

This section of the questionnaire seeks information regarding your degree of confidence in completing tasks associated with being a student at your college. You will be asked to respond to a series of statements by marking the number on the blue answer sheet which best represents your present attitude or opinion. Remember this is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers. The answer categories range from:

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 0 - totally unconfident | 5 - somewhat confident |
| 1 - very unconfident | 6 - confident |
| 2 - unconfident | 7 - very confident |
| 3 - somewhat unconfident | 8 - totally confident |
| 4 - undecided | |

EXAMPLE:

You would mark the number (5) on the blue answer sheet if you are *somewhat confident* with:

07. Finding the Union.

Please Answer All The Items

Using the scale provided please mark the number on the blue answer sheet which best represents the degree to which you feel confident performing the following tasks.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 106. Make new friends at college | 117. Work on a group project |
| 107. Talk to your professors/instructors. | 118. Socialize with others you live with. |
| 108. Take good class notes. | 119. Do well on your exams. |
| 109. Divide chores with others you live with. | 120. Talk with a school academic and support (e.g. advising) staff. |
| 110. Research a term paper. | 121. Manage your time effectively. |
| 111. Join an intramural sports team. | 122. Use the Library |
| 112. Understand your textbooks. | 123. Join a student organization. |
| 113. Get a date when you want one. | 124. Ask a question in class. |
| 114. Ask a professor or instructor a question outside of class. | 125. Divide space in your residence (if applicable) |
| 115. Get along with others you live with. | 126. Participate in class discussions. |
| 116. Write a course paper. | 127. Keep up to date with your school work. |

Appendix D
Course Syllabus

Life Skills for the Student-Athlete Fall 2010

Instructors: Catherine Rasnack
rasnacc@students.wvu.edu
CV 112; (360)650-6877

Dr. Ralph Vernacchia
Ralph.Vernacchia@wvu.edu
CV 104; (360)650-3514

Office Hours: W 1-2pm

Students may also schedule a time to meet with instructor by appointment

Class Time: 8am M W

Location: Carver 110

Textbook: Petrie, Hankes, & Denson (2011). A student athlete's guide to college success: Peak performance in class and life. Boston, MA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Course Description:

This Life Skills class is a two-credit course designed to assist student-athletes during their transition to university both academically and personally. The purpose of this course is to provide you with an opportunity to explore issues that are relevant to collegiate level student-athletes. Upon completion of this course, you should have a better understanding of Western Washington University, its resources, and skills that will aide you in succeeding academically, socially, athletically, and personally.

Course Objectives:

1. To identify skills, tools, and resources necessary during the first year of college
2. To conduct class lectures and discussions which explore important topics that related to the lives of university student-athletes
3. Provide students with the opportunity to explore and develop skills that will serve them through their college career.

Course Requirements:

Attendance

Written report

Goal Assignment

Blackboard Assignments

Western Resource Search

Library Tour

Reading Assignments

Attendance – You are expected to attend all class meetings. You are permitted two (2) unexcused absences. If you miss more than two classes you will receive a grade of “F” for this course on your transcript. Excused absences for illness, family emergencies, and religious holidays will be accepted with proper documentation.

Written Report – Students will complete a written report at the end of the quarter about their experience implementing different subject matter discussed in class. Student will write on at least two skills that they found to be relevant and important to them in their own lives. The written report should be 3 – 5 pages in length describing what skills and tools from the class they found most beneficial to them. Students should describe how they are actually applying the skills learned in class life and how they see these skills benefiting them in the future. Papers should be typed, double spaced, and 12-point times new roman font.

Goal Assignment – Students will be asked to choose an area to focus on and evaluate for a month. Students must create a goal for themselves that is academic, personal, social, or athletic that they wish to work on over a month long time period. Students must document their daily or weekly progress and complete an evaluation of their progress. In a 1 page written report students must describe what their goal was, what worked for them in achieving their goal, anything they would improve on, any distractions that may have disrupted their goal attainment, etc.

Western Resource Search – Students will be asked to complete a search for resources on campus that would be beneficial to them through their college career. Students will write about three resources they choose and explain why those resources will be helpful to them. Include in your report: hours of operation, services offered, contact information, mission/goal of the resource etc.

Blackboard Assignments – Complete one discussion board post on Blackboard on dates listed in syllabus (see assignments below) based on exercises from assigned readings. All posts on Blackboard are confidential and will only be seen by your fellow classmates. You should only write and share what you feel comfortable sharing. Assignments will be graded based on completion and if posted on time. Any assignment that is posted late will not be counted in the total points.

Reading Assignments – Readings should be complete prior to the class date that they are assigned. Each assigned reading will be discussed in class as well as on Blackboard.

Grading

Grading will be based on a Pass/Fail (S/U) system. In order to successfully pass this class you must earn 280 points or more. Grades on individual assignments based will be determined on merit and effort. Please make sure to complete each assignment in completion and show that you took time answer each question carefully.

Attendance:

0 absences = 20 points

1 absence = 15 points

2 absences = 10 points

Your 3rd absences will result in NO CREDIT for this course

Assignment Grading

Attendance	10 - 20 points
Written Report:	100 points
Goal Assignment:	30 points
Readings:	11 - 10 points each = 110 points
Blackboard Assignments:	6 – 10 points each = 60 points
Resource Search	80 points
Total	400 points

** Remember to check the syllabus frequently so that you are aware of the deadlines and assignment due dates**

Important Due Dates & Reminders:
No Class – Wednesday Oct. 27th
Resource Search – Monday Nov. 1st
Goal Assignment - Monday Nov. 15th
Written Report – Wednesday Dec. 1st

Course Schedule

Monday Sept. 27th – Introduction

- Introduction & Course Syllabus overview
- Meet instructors and class members
- Complete SACQ & CSEI

Wednesday Sept. 29th – 7 Habits of Highly Effective Student-Athletes

- Guest Speaker Dr. Ralph Vernacchia

Assignment:

- **Reading Assignment:** Chapter 1 pg. 2 – 32
- **Blackboard Assignment:**
 - o Please respond to at least 1 of the 5 questions in **Exercise 1.1 Your Transition to** (pg. 4).
 - o With each response please include:
 - Which question you are responding to
 - Include a few sentences in your response and be as detailed as you feel comfortable.
 - o **Exercise 1.6 Why Are You in College?**
 - List 5 – 10 reasons why you enrolled at Western?

** Remember – all posts on BB are confidential and will only be seen by your fellow classmates. You should only write and share what you feel comfortable sharing. **

Monday Oct. 4th – Getting to Know You

- Discussion of BB Assignment
- Connections between Dr. Vernacchia's lecture and Class
- Small Group Discussion
- Ice Breaker

Assignment:

- **Reading Assignment:** Chapter 2 pg. 34 – 50
- **Come up with 4 questions for the Athlete Panel**
 - o Should be related to their transition to College and advice you would want for your own transition

Wednesday Oct. 6th – Athlete Panel

- Guest Speakers: WWU Junior & Senior student-athletes discuss their transition to WWU

Assignment:

- **Reading Assignment:** Chapter 3 pg. 52 – 76
- **BlackBoard Assignment:**
 - o **Exercise 3.1 Determining Your Time Priorities**

- Please complete the exercise listed on pg. 54
- Once you have completed the exercise please answer question 5 on BB

Monday Oct. 11th - Goal Setting and Time Management

- Learning and Developing short and long term goals
- Effectively managing time and balancing activities

Assignment:

- **Begin working on your Goal Assignment**
 - Establish a way to keep track and record your progress on successfully completing your goal
 - Evaluation will be due: **Nov. 15th**
- **Reading Assignment:**
 - Chapter 6 Pg. 127 – 136
 - Chapter 7 Pg. 153 - 162
- **BlackBoard Assignment:**
 - Exercise 7.1 What Distracts You? (Pg. 148)
 - Please respond to ALL the questions in Exercise 7.1
 - Your response may be in one complete written response or divided by each question

Wednesday Oct. 13th - Library Tour & Student Services

- Introduction to Wilson Library
- Introduction on how to use the databases and conduct systematic literature searches

Assignment:

- **Reading Assignment:**
 - Chapter 8 pg. 164 - 191

Monday Oct. 18th – Study Skills

- Study techniques
- Learning styles

Assignment:

- **Reading Assignment:**
 - Chapter 12 pg. 270 – 299
- **BlackBoard Assignment:**
 - **Exercise 12.2 Identifying Your Transferable Skills**
 - Complete Questions 1 – 3 on your own
 - Answer Question 4 on Blackboard
- Announce Resource Search Assignment – **Due: Monday Nov. 1st**

Wednesday Oct. 20th – Test Taking Skills & Campus Resources

- Test Taking Strategies
- Resources on campus
- Resource Search Assignment Discussed

Monday Oct. 25th – Motivational Inventory

- What motivates you?
- Discovering Life Values
- Life Values Inventory

Wednesday Oct. 27th – No Class

- Use this time to work on your Goal Evaluation Assignment or Resource Search Assignment
- Resource Search Assignment is due: **Monday Nov. 1st**
- Goal Evaluation Assignment is due: **Monday Nov. 15th**

Monday Nov. 1st – Relaxation

- Introduce importance of relaxation
- Learn to understand how to implement relaxation & visualization techniques into everyday life to help reduce stress
- Introduce concentration scripts

Wednesday Nov. 3rd - Self-Talk & Confidence

- Discussion on sources of confidence in sport, academics and personal life
- Introduction of self talk
- Learning how to replace negative thoughts and thought stoppage

Assignment:

- **Reading Assignment:**
 - o Chapter 13 pg. 300 - 320

Monday Nov. 8th – Registration & How to Choose A Major

- Discovering how to choose a major
- Looking over WWU Majors
- Registration questions answered

Assignment:

- **Reading Assignment:**
 - o Chapter 9 pg. 195 -215

Wednesday Nov. 10th – Communication

- The keys to effective communication
- Developing strategies to make your voice be heard in a non-confrontational way

Assignment:

- **Reading Assignment:**
 - o Chapter 11 pg. 246 – 268
- **BlackBoard Assignment:**
 - o Complete Exercise 11.1 What Are your Stressors?
 - o Complete Exercise 11.4 Eliminating Stressors from Your Life
 - o Answer Question 1 from 11.4 on BlackBoard

Monday Nov. 15th - Self- Care and Wellness

- Discussion on how to take care of yourself – mentally, physically, and emotionally
- Where to go when you are sick, how to find time for relaxation, and the importance of self care

Assignment:

- **Reading Assignment:**
 - o Chapter 10 pg. 230 - 244

Wednesday Nov. 17th – Alcohol & Drug Safety

- The hazards of partying
- How to drink responsibly (if you choose to)
- Guest speakers (Life Style Advisors - AOD)

Assignment:

- **Reading Assignment:**
 - o Chapter 10 pg. 217 – 230
 - o **Come up with 2 questions for Dr. Lindsey to answer in class on Monday**

Monday Nov. 22nd - Nutrition

- The dangers of stress to your body
- How stress affects you physically, mentally, and emotionally
- Strategies for coping with stress

Wednesday Nov. 24th – No Class

Monday Nov. 29th - Healthy/Positive Relationships

- Sexual relationships discussed
- Safe and healthy ways to be in a relationship
- Guest Speakers (Lifestyle Advisors – WEAVE/WMAV)

Wednesday Dec. 1st - Final Discussion

- Class discussion
- Written report due
- Class evaluation

Appendix E

Individual Adjustment Scores - SACQ

Experimental Group Data - SACQ

Subject Number	Full Scale	Academic	Social	Emotional	Attachment
1	343 (346)	134 (119)	82 (98)	64 (65)	97 (90)
2	349 (342)	117 (120)	97 (98)	71 (64)	95 (89)
3	341 (314)	122 (102)	95 (89)	63 (66)	91 (90)
4	343 (354)	165 (154)	72 (88)	79 (93)	85 (90)
5	347 (334)	117 (110)	96 (94)	77 (74)	88 (85)
6	358 (349)	129 (119)	98 (102)	72 (70)	94 (94)
7	356 (376)	120 (128)	98 (90)	70 (89)	97 (95)
8	341 (350)	121 (111)	95 (96)	67 (89)	90 (82)
9	360 (309)	136 (118)	89 (86)	80 (63)	90 (75)
10	349 (367)	121 (142)	97 (97)	75 (72)	96 (88)
11	361 (341)	115 (108)	105 (103)	81 (81)	93 (88)
12	322 (340)	117 (121)	93 (87)	67 (74)	79 (87)
13	338 (359)	123 (118)	98 (106)	72 (83)	81 (87)
14	318 (350)	108 (119)	100 (102)	63 (77)	76 (87)
15	352 (375)	119 (135)	109 (122)	70 (67)	93 (90)
16	339 (327)	116 (125)	98 (80)	61 (66)	96 (79)
17	349 (333)	113 (113)	100 (95)	75 (69)	94 (88)
18	353 (330)	126 (112)	94 (107)	74 (66)	89 (83)
19	350 (345)	125 (118)	92 (98)	67 (62)	88 (94)
20	348 (348)	115 (115)	101 (108)	73 (65)	90 (97)
21	382 (353)	132 (126)	105 (96)	77 (65)	99 (89)

*Pre-test (post-test)

Control Group Data - SACQ

Subject Number	Full Scale	Academic	Social	Emotional	Attachment
1	333 (331)	111 (124)	94 (84)	75 (66)	81 (76)
2	346 (370)	116 (130)	98 (95)	78 (83)	86 (87)
3	341 (346)	122 (126)	97 (95)	63 (71)	76 (77)
4	341 (342)	126 (118)	90 (100)	69 (61)	86 (90)
5	332 (341)	109 (117)	98 (113)	66 (58)	89 (92)
6	330 (329)	109 (122)	94 (89)	75 (68)	79 (78)
7	374 (328)	120 (126)	119 (81)	72 (81)	91 (81)
8	322 (330)	103 (105)	91 (92)	62 (68)	94 (89)
9	311 (362)	131 (120)	79 (102)	74 (76)	54 (92)
10	352 (346)	139 (139)	88 (88)	74 (72)	84 (83)
11	331 (343)	104 (109)	105 (100)	62 (70)	90 (91)
12	399 (320)	143 (122)	115 (78)	82 (62)	100 (99)
13	343 (332)	125 (108)	112 (91)	68 (73)	80 (92)
14	341 (367)	111 (122)	95 (103)	71 (89)	97 (86)
15	353 (337)	124 (95)	99 (97)	68 (84)	93 (92)
16	343 (348)	117 (121)	99 (89)	68 (79)	88 (91)
17	321 (347)	98 (118)	109 (97)	72 (80)	76 (88)

*Pre-test (post-test)

Appendix F

Individual Self- Efficacy Scores - CSEI

 Experimental Group Data - CSEI

Subject Number	Full Scale	Course	Roommate	Social	Social – I
1	99 (153)	30 (47)	24 (33)	25 (35)	13 (20)
2	167 (150)	54 (50)	30 (29)	48 (39)	22 (19)
3	128 (116)	36 (32)	25 (26)	39 (33)	15 (15)
4	176 (173)	56 (53)	32 (32)	48 (48)	24 (24)
5	144 (125)	44 (41)	31 (26)	40 (30)	16 (16)
6	142 (149)	41 (46)	28 (30)	43 (40)	19 (19)
7	138 (142)	41 (45)	27 (26)	38 (40)	20 (20)
8	106 (130)	24 (38)	24 (29)	28 (25)	16 (19)
9	117 (141)	27 (38)	30 (32)	34 (39)	19 (20)
10	98 (108)	18 (29)	26 (30)	29 (29)	17 (15)
11	113 (128)	35 (39)	25 (29)	30 (34)	15 (15)
12	125 (146)	36 (45)	31 (31)	35 (39)	15 (19)
13	88 (120)	19 (35)	29 (28)	21 (30)	12 (17)
14	112 (121)	36 (36)	23 (28)	29 (30)	15 (15)
15	123 (112)	39 (32)	25 (26)	35 (30)	14 (15)
16	143 (162)	43 (47)	31 (30)	35 (48)	21 (21)
17	141 (142)	46 (46)	26 (30)	35 (34)	19 (19)
18	132 (125)	42 (39)	25 (26)	35 (32)	17 (17)
19	140 (141)	42 (41)	25 (27)	37 (36)	23 (23)
20	129 (114)	45 (39)	24 (28)	28 (18)	20 (18)
21	139 (145)	38 (42)	32 (32)	36 (38)	22 (20)

 *Pre-test (post-test)

Control Group Data - CSEI

Subject Number	Full Scale	Course	Roommate	Social	Social – I
1	117 (119)	53 (38)	4 (15)	40 (38)	12 (14)
2	148 (143)	47 (42)	30 (28)	36 (40)	20 (19)
3	109 (111)	37 (33)	27 (24)	21 (29)	15 (13)
4	138 (124)	41 (36)	31 (25)	30 (32)	24 (20)
5	120 (122)	33 (33)	30 (28)	25 (28)	20 (19)
6	125 (118)	42 (45)	26 (17)	31 (30)	14 (13)
7	176 (121)	56 (36)	32 (18)	48 (37)	24 (16)
8	165 (173)	48 (54)	32 (32)	47 (48)	23 (23)
9	150 (159)	45 (48)	28 (32)	42 (43)	20 (22)
10	161 (167)	56 (56)	30 (31)	42 (44)	18 (21)
11	128 (126)	41 (41)	28 (25)	30 (32)	18 (16)
12	94 (125)	37 (35)	16 (30)	27 (37)	4 (10)
13	130 (158)	37 (54)	30 (32)	36 (39)	16 (20)
14	147 (174)	46 (53)	30 (32)	37 (47)	20 (26)
15	124 (148)	36 (47)	27 (26)	31 (39)	17 (22)
16	136 (143)	46 (47)	26 (25)	34 (36)	18 (21)
17	123 (162)	40 (50)	24 (31)	32 (44)	15 (24)

*Pre-test (post-test)

Appendix G

Individual Grade Point Average & Credit Load

Experimental Group Data	
Subject Number	Fall Quarter GPA
1	2.65
2	3.08
3	2.55
4	2.14
5	3.30
6	2.66
7	3.50
8	2.49
9	3.50
10	3.20
11	2.65
12	1.98
13	3.60
14	3.60
15	2.70
16	3.60
17	1.67
18	3.78
19	3.05
20	3.00
21	3.89

Control Group	
Subject Number	Fall Quarter GPA
1	2.66
2	3.13
3	2.23
4	3.45
5	2.38
6	3.10
7	4.00
8	1.23
9	3.11
10	2.56
11	3.54
12	3.30
13	0.62
14	2.23
15	0.96
16	3.79
17	2.33

Appendix H
Course Evaluation Outcomes

4 = Excellent, 3 = Good, 2 = Fair, 1 = Poor

Question:	Mean	SD
1. Use of class time was:	3.11	0.75
2. Clarity of student responsibilities and requirements was:	3.67	1.26
3. Encouragement of student self-expression was:	3.33	0.86
4. Challenge level of assigned work was:	3.00	0.57
5. Relevancy of course content to student-athlete was:	3.61	1.23
6. Instructor's Guidance as a discussion leader was:	3.50	1.04
7. Instructor's openness to student views was:	3.72	1.36
8. Instructor's effectiveness in teaching the subject matter was:	3.50	1.04
9. The usefulness of this course for freshman student-athletes was:	3.11	0.66
10. The course overall was:	3.33	1.00

4= Always, 3 = Often, 2 = Sometimes, 1 = Rarely or Never

11. How often did you use/practice the mental skills covered in the course to aid performance in your sport:	2.89	1.08
12. How often did you use/practice the mental skills covered in the course to aid you academic performance:	3.00	1.07

What aspects of the teaching or content do you feel were especially good?

- The content was always well known and expressed with good overall knowledge. The subjects were all relevant to our lives.
- Variety in topics/content was especially good and very relevant
- Guest speakers were a nice change of pace and really important
- Stress management and relaxation classes were really helpful
- Pretty much all the main content was related to being a student-athlete and she taught it in a way that enabled us to follow along and try out some of the methods.
- Catherine did a good job always asking us students about our own thoughts and getting us involved all the time. It was helpful as a freshman to be given helpful hints and guidance to succeed.
- Goal setting, library tour, and mental toughness lectures were really good

What changes would you make to improve future offerings of this course?

- The class was too early
- More student involvement or group activities
- Not having to buy the book – give out handouts instead