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This study investigated leadership development opportunities in one Division II conference (DIICConf). The primary purpose of this study was to determine the capacity of member institutions to offer leadership development programming. The secondary aim in this study was to investigate the congruence between mission statements of DIICConf athletic departments and deliberate strategies employed. I also explored the perceptions of student-athletes who participated in leadership development programming provided by their athletic department. Measures included a questionnaire to gather data from athletic administrators and head coaches ($N=74$) followed by a descriptive analysis of results. Data regarding student-athlete leadership development listed on each athletic department's website were collected. A content analysis was performed to determine how athletic departments address leadership development. A questionnaire was also sent to student-athletes ($n=158$) at one of the DIICConf member institutions to determine perceptions of available leadership opportunities. This study revealed the importance of DIICConf athletic departments creating mission statements that reflect their goals and priorities. Findings suggest athletic departments in this study may benefit from mobilizing internal and external resources as a way to maximize capacity for student-athlete leadership development opportunities. More research is needed to determine other effective methods for Division II institutions to provide leadership development training as well as the impact of such methods.

IDENTIFYING THE ROLE OF STUDENT-ATHLETE LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT IN DIVISION II ATHLETICS

by

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CHAPTER I

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Sports provides a platform to foster positive life skills such as leadership; however, the mere participation in sport does not automatically develop leadership (Weaver & Simet, 2015). The purpose of student-athlete leadership development is to prepare student-athletes for life after athletics as they develop the necessary skills to be engaged citizens and prepared professionals (Navarro & Malvaso, 2015). The path from dependency to independence is influenced by many sociocultural and bio-behavioral factors that make this transition challenging (Wood et al., 2018). Due to social and economic forces prolonging entry into adulthood, scholars created a new stage in life labeled *emerging adulthood* (18-28 years) and it has proven to be beneficial in the holistic development of individuals. Successful navigation during this time in development can significantly “influence important adult outcomes” (Wood et al., 2018, p. 124). Multiple studies have demonstrated the positive effects of leadership development programs on student-athletes (Grandzol, Perlis, & Draina, 2010; O’Brien, 2018; Vincer & Loughhead, 2010). Therefore, it is important for practitioners to provide intentional pathways that facilitate the development of leadership skills in student-athletes (Lerner, Brindis, Batanova, & Blum, 2018).

Statement of the Problem

Despite evidence showing college athletics participation alone is not sufficient to spur substantive leadership growth for the average student-athlete, the role of leadership development programs in athletic departments is still emerging (Grandzol et al., 2010). While the list of student-athlete leadership development programs at many Division I institutions continues to grow (Appendix A), unique challenges exist at the Division II level (Nite, 2012). A lack of resources and an emphasis placed on winning presents a significant barrier for many Division II universities, leaving little emphasis placed on meaningful student-athlete leadership development (Nite, 2012; O'Brien, 2018; Suggs, 2003; Thelin, 1994). While research has highlighted the importance of discovering innovative approaches for addressing the developmental needs of student-athletes, there is still little known about how or what leadership development opportunities are available for Division II student-athletes. Conducting this study provided an opportunity to better understand this phenomenon.

Review of Relevant Literature

Athlete leadership is often described as an athlete fulfilling a formal or informal role while influencing his or her team to achieve a common goal (Cotterill & Fransen, 2016). The components found to be central to this phenomenon explain leadership as (a) a process, (b) involving influence, (c) occurring within a group context, and (d) involving goal attainment (Northouse, 2010). Scholars further identify an athlete's personality traits, characteristics, and behaviors to be factors that differentiate leaders from their

followers. Voight (2012) simplified these factors by showing that athletes can occupy either a formal (e.g., team captain) or informal (e.g., motivators) leadership role and that both roles can have a significant impact upon a range of team-related factors including satisfaction, cohesion, and team dynamics.

Coaches seek and value the role of student-athletes as leaders (Weaver & Simet, 2015) and many sources support the positive impact athlete leaders have on a variety of team-related factors including positively affecting their teammates' satisfaction, their team confidence, the role clarity within the team, the team communication, the team's task and social cohesion, and ultimately team performance (Crozier, Loughead, & Munroe-Chandler, 2013; Fransen et al., 2015; Price & Weiss, 2011; Vincer & Loughead, 2010). Additionally, research has further shown that developing leadership skills provides an avenue for improvement of an athlete's individual sport performance (Ivanshchenko, Yarmak, Galan, Nakonechnyi, & Zoriy, 2017).

While strong leadership skills can contribute to winning, there are also significant benefits outside of sports (Crozier et al., 2013). Responsibilities such as being a role model, following team rules, mentoring teammates, and holding teammates accountable are additional benefits of athlete leadership. Research has further revealed important social off-field behaviors that also characterize a leader. Examples include being vocal and trustworthy, possessing good interpersonal skills, and showing care and concern for others. Given the amount of responsibility student-athlete leaders are given, they should be provided proper leadership training to be successful.

Fostering leadership has long been a primary student development outcome in higher education (Machida-Kosuga, 2017). The purpose of developing leadership in student-athletes is to prepare them for life after athletics as they learn the necessary skills to be engaged citizens and prepared professionals (Navarro & Malvaso, 2015; Weaver & Simet, 2015). The process in developing personal, social, and professional leadership skills in student-athletes focuses on translating these skills to the athletic setting, classroom, and community. Practitioners use competencies to describe the particular elements of each skill. The competencies comprise the knowledge, values, abilities, and behaviors that contribute to effective leadership (Seemiller, 2014). Seemiller’s (2014) *Student Leadership Competencies Guidebook* explains categories and competency areas for developing leadership in students as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1

Student Leadership Competencies

Category	Competency Areas	
Learning and Reasoning	Other perspectives, reflection and application, systems thinking	Idea generation, problem solving, decision making
Self-Awareness and Development	Self-understanding, personal values, personal contributions	Receiving feedback, self-development
Interpersonal Interaction	Productive relationships, helping others, empathy, mentoring, motivation	Empowerment, collaboration, providing feedback
Group Dynamics	Organizational behavior, power dynamics	Group development, creating change

Table 1

Cont.

Category	Competency Areas	
Civic Responsibility	Diversity, inclusion, others' circumstances	Social justice, social responsibility, service
Communication	Verbal and nonverbal communication, listening	Facilitation, conflict negotiations, advocating
Strategic Planning	Mission, vision, goals	Plan, organization
Personal Behavior	Initiative, responsibility for personal behavior, ethics, follow-through, functioning independently	Responding to change, confidence, resilience, positive attitude, excellence

While competencies help serve as a compass to guide student leadership development, new social and economic forces are now prolonging an adolescent's entry into adulthood. As a result, scholars created a new stage in an individual's developmental lifespan titled *emerging adulthood* (18-28 years) and have stressed the importance of recognizing emerging adults as a unique population who require additional specialized skills (Wood et al., 2018). Many sociocultural and biobehavioral factors make the transition from adolescent to adulthood challenging such as the continued formation of identity and values that occur during changes in relationships, living arrangements, educational pursuits, and social roles. Given the unique needs of the 21st century student-athlete, intentional programming is essential for the transition to and success in life after athletics (Navarro & Malvaso, 2015).

In agreement with not assuming that student-athletes will be “ready” to take on a leadership role when it is their time (Weaver & Simet, 2015), many scholars support educating student-athletes through leadership development training as an effective way to expand the capacity of team members to be influential in leadership roles (Navarro & Malvaso, 2015). While recognizing the value of facilitating developmental opportunities for student-athletes is important, it is as equally important to understand what comprises intentional programming. Intentional leadership development programs (a) are provided by a college or university administration, (b) meet regularly, and (c) include a cohort of participants that progress through the curriculum together (O’Brien, 2018).

Challenges in Division II Athletics

The mission of the National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) is “to be an integral part of higher education and to focus on the development of our student-athletes” (NCAA, 2019). While numerous athletic departments at the Division I level (Appendix A) are now embracing the need to provide skill-building leadership training to better prepare our future leaders, institutions competing at the Division II level face many challenges (e.g., lack of financial resources, small staffs, and an emphasis placed upon winning) that detract from the growth and development of student-athletes (Nite, 2012). Without specific programs and training opportunities, Division II student-athletes are reliant on what is available at their institution, which often conflicts with athletic commitments (Weaver & Simet, 2015). Practitioners must consider how to best prepare

Division II student-athletes to be leaders on the field, in the classroom, and in life after sport (Nararro & Malvaso, 2015).

The Mission of an Athletic Department

A series of scandals in the late 1980s led to the formation of The Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics (Andrassy & Bruening, 2011). The commission mandated athletic departments put their “principles into action” by moving reform from “rhetoric to reality” (Hesburgh & Friday, 1991, p. 35). Scholars have since challenged athletic departments who state student-athlete development is central to their mission by demonstrating some departments not always willing or able to commit the resources necessary to provide a quality program (Andrassy & Bruening, 2011). The structural context of a mission statement (language, value, power) helps guide individuals to be civically engaged and unify the efforts of stakeholders in accomplishing goals. However, if resources and actions do not follow the expectations of the mission, stakeholders become constrained by the structure. Therefore, scholars suggest annual attention be given to support the effort of leadership development through stakeholder buy-in, a leadership committee, continuous professional development, and assessment of school culture (Banks & Mhunpiew, 2012). A group’s purpose and collective voice may be clear, its aspirations energizing, and its commitment to collective responsibility total, but unless the group cares about and reflects upon the quality of its work product, little organizational learning will result (Braskamp & Wergin, 2008).

Capacity for Leadership Development

It is important to fully understand the capacity of individual athletic departments in order to improve methods for designing and implementing leadership development training at the Division II level (Cotterill & Fransen, 2016; Nite, 2012; Voight, 2012). Studies have made clear that athletic departments that maximize human, financial, and structural resources are better able to positively impact the effectiveness of student-athlete leadership development (Table 2; Andrassy, Svensson, Bruening, Huml, & Chung, 2014). While it is often assumed that athletic departments with greater resources have a greater capacity, this is not always the case (Eisinger, 2002).

Table 2

Components of Organizational Capacity

Human Resources	Financial Resources	Structural Resources
<u>Administrators:</u> Contributions from Athletic Directors, SAAC staff leaders, Faculty Athletic Representatives <u>Coaches:</u> Coaches' involvement in the personal development of student-athletes. Identifying needed leadership skills and scheduling/facilitating leadership development training opportunities <u>Student-athletes:</u> Student-athletes run their leadership development operation according to their goals and creativity	<u>NCAA grants:</u> Funds/ NCAA leadership development training <u>Corporate:</u> Funds obtained from logistical costs subsidized by corporate organizations <u>Internal athletic department funds:</u> Internal funds allocated by the athletic department <u>Donors:</u> Funds and resources	<u>Relationships & Networks:</u> Campus partnerships, Community partnerships: <u>Infrastructure and Process:</u> Academic courses, Leadership development education, Athletic department mission <u>Planning and Development:</u> Evaluation: Feedback, interviews, surveys

The successful implementation of a leadership development program is the ability of an athletic department to maximize its organizational capacity (Voight & Hickey, 2016). Many athletic departments have overcome their lack of resources by using internal resources and people to implement their own “do-it-yourself (DIY) leadership academies” (Voight & Hickey, 2016, p. 1). For example, engaging internal stakeholders, creatively securing funding, and leveraging external relationships were found to be key characteristics of athletic departments that demonstrate a strong organizational capacity. Ultimately, a *commitment* to student development forms the foundation for maximizing capacity (Andrassy et al., 2014).

Purpose Statement

My research was inspired by 10 years of experience as an educator and health-care practitioner in Division II athletics, the emerging phenomenon of student-athlete leadership development, and the unique challenges faced by small athletic departments in the NCAA. The catalyst for this study dates back to 2017 as a participant in the NCAA’s Effective Facilitation Workshop. The event inspired me to design an evidence-based leadership development program for student-athletes at my institution. However, I faced significant barriers when attempting to implement a program. Unlike my colleagues at Division I universities, my institution does not have comparable resources to dedicate to a perceived “non-essential” program. The process of moving these barriers and my experiences as a facilitator for leadership development programs served as the driving forces behind my research. As a facilitator it was, and still is, powerful to observe

participants express how much they learned about themselves from self-reflection activities and the validation they feel by completing personal assessments. While these experiences are rewarding, I was curious to know what opportunities are available for leadership development for student-athletes in Division II.

The purpose of this study was to identify the role of student-athlete leadership development in Division II athletics. This research adds to the existing literature on student-athlete leadership development by identifying obstacles and strategies for implementing student-athlete leadership development programs at Division II institutions. My specific aims are:

1. To determine the extent to which Division II athletic departments are implementing leadership development opportunities for student-athletes.
2. To determine how athletic department mission statements address leadership development.
3. To determine student-athlete perceptions of leadership development opportunities.

Methods

This mixed methods study identified current student-athlete leadership development programs employed at athletic departments competing in one Division II Athletic Conference (DIICConf). This study further analyzed athletic website content (Appendix B) of member institutions to determine how athletic departments put their

principles into action. This study also gathered feedback from student-athletes on their perceptions and experiences of leadership development programs.

Participants

Data from 68 participants (73.5% male, 26.5% female) were collected to better understand how athletic departments are implementing leadership development opportunities in DIICConf. Participants were currently serving as an athletic director ($n=5$), faculty athletic representative ($n=8$), or head coach ($n=55$). Of the 68 participants, $n=44$ (64.6%) serve at a public university and $n=24$ (35.3%) serve at a private university. The highest degree earned by participants indicated $n=17$ (25%) earned a bachelor's degree, $n=39$ (57.4%) earned a master's degree, and $n=10$ (14.7%) had a higher degree.

To address the third aim, student-athletes ($n=158$) enrolled at one of the DIICConf member institutions were included in this study. Participants included male (27.8%) and female (66.5%) student-athletes ranging in age from 18 to 22. The class rank of participants included freshman (20.9%), sophomores (19.6%), juniors (25.9%), and seniors (25.9%). The majority of participants indicated they had not held any leadership positions in athletics (71%) or outside of athletics (86%).

Measurements

Athletic administrator and head coach questionnaire. The athletic administrator survey (Appendix C) was designed to gain a more in-depth understanding of the organizational capacity for student-athlete leadership development at DIICConf member institutions. An electronic survey including the purpose of the study and link to a

Qualtrics questionnaire was sent to each participant's university-issued email address. Participants agreed to the informed consent prior to completing the questionnaire. The survey questions asked participants to indicate the level of responsibility and priority their role has in fostering student-athlete leadership. Questions regarding the financial resources dedicated to student-athlete leadership development were included. To measure the structural component of organizational capacity, the survey asked participants about their campus and community relationships, as well as the type and amount of student-athlete feedback collected annually. Additionally, participants were asked open-ended questions on specific leadership development programs in place at their institution, the biggest challenges that exist to offering programs, and what suggestions they had to enhance initiatives aimed at student-athlete leadership development at their institution.

Web content analysis. A web content analysis provided a snapshot of what athletic departments are conveying about their services that support leadership development training for student-athletes. For this study, a leadership development program or training was defined as a program designed to help student-athletes identify their personal core values, understand and build a sense of character and integrity, and learn about the role college athletics plays in higher education. The data gathered were compiled in a rubric that recorded evidence of a formal leadership development program, the title of the formal program, targeted program participants, program goals, number of program sessions, and any other relevant notes about each program (Appendix D).

Student-athlete questionnaire. Student-athletes at one of the DIICConf member institutions were sent an email explaining the purpose of the study and a link to the online Qualtrics questionnaire. The questionnaire (Appendix E) collected information on the experiences and perceptions of student-athletes regarding leadership training opportunities at their institution. The survey asked participants if they had ever participated in leadership development programming sponsored by their university's athletic department, as well as if they would be interested in such programming. Questions then asked participants who were not interested to indicate the reasons why. Participants who were interested were asked to choose the type of programming they preferred. Open-ended questions further asked student-athletes to share their thoughts and suggestions on what should be included in a leadership development program.

Analysis of Data

Mission statements were analyzed using an 11-Step Content Analysis (Appendix F; Andrassy & Bruening, 2011). Results of survey data collected from athletic administrators, head coaches, and student-athletes were exported and analyzed using SPSS 25. Descriptive statistical analysis was used to analyze survey data from the athletic directors, faculty athletic representatives, and head coaches, as well as results from the student-athlete survey.

Findings

Results of the administrator and head coach survey are presented first, followed by the content analysis of mission statements, and then student-athlete perceptions of leadership development.

Athletic Administrator and Head Coach Results

It is important to note that the majority of results from this survey were from $n=55$ Division II head coaches (80.9%), $n=8$ faculty athletic representatives (11.8%) and $n=5$ athletic directors (7.3%). Data were coded using priori themes based in student involvement and organizational capacity theories. A complete report of results from a descriptive analysis on human, financial, and structural resources dedicated to student-athlete leadership development is available in Appendix C.

Human resources. Participants were asked to indicate their level of responsibility for student-athlete leadership development. Results reported that $n=26$ (38.2%) participants were somewhat responsible, $n=27$ (39.7%) were mostly responsible, and $n=15$ (22.1%) were completely responsible. No participants reported they were not at all responsible. Further analysis provided details regarding priority of student-athlete leadership development. Three (4.4%) reported it was not a priority, $n=7$ (10.3%) reported it was a low priority, $n=17$ (25%) reported it was of medium priority, $n=35$ (51.5%) indicated it was a high priority, and $n=6$ (8.8%) indicated it was an essential priority. In alignment with best practices for student-athlete development, most

institutions (83.3%) reported student-athletes were involved in the decision-making process.

Financial resources. Participants were asked to indicate the financial resources dedicated to support student-athlete leadership development. Notable findings revealed the limited use (never use, $n=12$; almost never use $n=4$; occasionally use, $n=7$) of NCAA grants by participants to support student-athlete leadership development. Corporate donated funds were also sparingly used by participants as $n=14$ (20.6%) never use, $n=9$ (13.2%) almost never use, and $n=7$ (10.3%) occasionally use. The use of internal funds and private donor funds support student-athlete leadership development by participants were also low.

Structural resources. Participant responses regarding structural resources dedicated to support student-athlete leadership development revealed information on the partnerships in which each department engages with both the campus and community, as well as methods for assessing feedback from student-athletes and alumni (Table 3). Results show that the majority of athlete departments rarely use campus partnerships to obtain funds ($n=24$, 35.3%) or manpower ($n=24$, 35.3%) to support student-athlete leadership development.

Table 3

Structural Resources

	Never <i>n</i> (%)	Rarely <i>n</i> (%)	Occasionally <i>n</i> (%)	Moderate <i>n</i> (%)	Often <i>n</i> (%)
Campus partnerships for man- power	5 (8.3)	40 (40)	19 (31.7)	11 (18.3)	1 (1.7)
Campus partnerships for navigating university resources	2 (3.3)	18 (29.5)	22 (36.1)	16 (26.2)	3 (4.9)
Community partnerships	6 (9.7)	23 (37.1)	19 (30.1)	11 (17.7)	3 (4.8)
Alumni feedback	15 (23.4)	29 (45.3)	14 (21.9)	5 (7.8)	1 (1.6)
Student-athlete focus group feedback	14 (21.5)	22 (36.9)	22 (33.9)	4 (6.2)	1 (1.5)
Student-athlete exit interview feedback	8 (12.3)	13 (20)	22 (33.9)	15 (23.1)	7 (10.7)

Open-ended Responses: Administrator and Head Coach

Participants reported the biggest challenges (Table 4) in developing and operating a student-athlete leadership development program at their institution were financial (38.4%), time (17.3%), manpower (13.5%), and support from department leadership (13.5%). Suggestions from participants on methods to enhance student-athlete leadership development at their institution (Table 5) included gathering results from surveys and researching best-practices (22.2%), implementing or re-vamping formal leadership training programs (22.2%), and enhancing department-wide buy-in (18.5%).

Table 4

Biggest Challenges Faced

Challenge	<i>n</i> (%)
Funding, financial resources, money	20 (38.4)
Time	9 (17.3)
Staff, manpower, personnel role	7 (13.5)
Support/buy-in from leadership, willingness to change	7 (13.5)
Student-athlete buy-in/participation	7 (7.7)
Identifying relevant learning objectives	1 (2)
Unsure/none	4 (7.7)

Table 5

Suggestions to Enhance Leadership Development

Suggestions	<i>n</i> (%)
Survey, determine best practices, results from research	6 (22.2)
Implement/re-vamp formal leadership training programs	6 (22.2)
Increase staff, department-wide buy-in	5 (18.5)
Change/enhance administrative leadership	2 (7.4)
Professional staff development	2 (7.4)
Increase involvement in campus initiatives	1 (3.7)

Mission Statement Results

Results from the mission statement analysis (Appendix H) revealed only one out of 13 universities included in this study emphasized student-athlete leadership

development. Furthermore, there was no evidence of a formal leadership development program for student-athletes on any of the athletic department websites. Notably, while not specific to leadership development, $n=10$ (77%) athletic department mission statements included the term ‘develop.’

Student-Athlete Survey Results

Most of the student-athletes at the university included in this study had not held any leadership positions in athletics (71%) or outside of athletics (86%). The majority of student-athletes indicated they were interested (36.4%) or may be interested (53.5%) in participating in leadership development programming (Appendix H). The types of programming most student-athletes show interest in include semester seminars (33.3%) and service-learning projects (34.9%).

Open-ended Responses: Student-Athlete

Results from the open-ended questions indicated student-athletes want to develop their leadership skills. Seventy-four participants provided responses regarding their thoughts on what should be included in a leadership development program for student-athletes. Themes from results revealed $n=17$ (30.9%) wanted to gain skills on how to lead or effective leadership, $n=13$ (23.6%) would include communication skills, $n=8$ (14.5%) wanted guest speakers or leadership experts, and $n=7$ (12.7%) preferred active learning strategies. Other ideas included service learning ($n=4$, 7.2%), team-building strategies ($n=4$, 7.2%), and mental health discussions ($n=2$, 3.6%). Flexible timing ($n=14$, 22.9%), incentives ($n=13$, 21.3%), active learning ($n=10$, 16.4%), and peer participants ($n=10$,

16.4%) were among the most common themes identified by student-athletes for making a leadership program more attractive to them. Student-athletes also shared suggestions for leadership development programs. The most notable results indicated student-athletes want to be communicated with directly and a leadership development program should be promoted and advertised by the athletic department ($n=21$, 53%). A large, diverse group of participants ($n=8$, 20.5%) and including practical skill-building learning outcomes ($n=3$, 7.7%) were also included in student-athlete suggestion feedback.

Table 6

Student-athlete Survey Feedback

Survey Question/Responses	<i>n</i> (%)
What should be included in a leadership development program for student-athletes?	
How to lead	17 (30.9)
Communication skills	13 (23.6)
Guest speakers	8 (14.5)
Active learning	7 (12.7)
Service-learning	4 (7.2)
Team building	4 (7.2)
Mental health	2 (3.6)
What will make a leadership development program more attractive?	
Flexible times	14 (22.9)
Advertisements, food, incentives	13 (21.3)
The participants involved	10 (16.4)
Active learning	10 (16.4)
Guest speakers	6 (9.8)
Resume builder	4 (6.6)
Online delivery	2 (3.2)
Judgement free, no bias, openness	2 (3.2)
What suggestions do you have for leadership development program at your institution?	
Advertise program, promotions	21 (53.8)
Diverse, large group of participants	8 (20.5)
Practical skill-building	3 (7.7)
Increase programs, awareness of leadership skills	2 (5.1)
Service	2 (5.1)
Speaker/experts	2 (5.1)

Discussion

The aim of this study was to identify the role of student-athlete leadership development in Division II athletics. A descriptive analysis was chosen to measure the current status of leadership development programming for student-athletes in one Division II conference. Overall, human, financial, and structural resource mobilization through the athletic director, faculty athletic representative, and head coaches was missing. While athletic administrators and head coaches agree student-athlete leadership development is a high priority, it is not as clear where the responsibility for this priority lies. Several factors could account for this ambiguity, though the results from the mission statement analysis in this study may be significant. The challenges faced by athletic departments in Division II may be combatted by using existing assets and resources to provide and promote developmental opportunities for student athletes. Nearly half of the participants indicated campus partnerships were *rarely* used to secure funds or manpower. Student-affairs practitioners are equipped to promote student growth and development in resilience and self-efficacy, which are two areas that have been shown to have a significant positive impact on leadership development. Building relationships with units across campus and the community and regularly gathering feedback from alumni and student-athletes, as well as using faculty expertise are actions that can be taken to mobilize resources. Additionally, resources available through the NCAA are not fully utilized. Applying for NCAA grants and taking advantage of leadership development resources and training opportunities may assist in expanding financial resources.

Investing in the NCAA's professional development opportunities may further assist in generating buy-in from coaches and support staff.

For the DIICConf institutions in this study, mission statements do not guide strategic decision-making for student-athlete leadership development. Results from this study affirm a contradiction between what is being said and what is being done. A web-content analysis found only one athletic department emphasized leadership development in their mission statement. As a result, for many DIICConf athletic departments, the potential resources in achieving the common goal of student-athlete leadership development may not be fully mobilized. Additionally, there was no evidence of purposeful leadership development initiatives offered specifically for student-athletes. As cited in Andrassy and Bruening (2011), publicizing initiatives on the department website provides a means to communicate and strengthen organizational identity (Crolley, 2008). Furthermore, this study may provide athletic departments in Division II with a framework for strategic planning. Clearly stating a departmental expectation for student-athlete leadership development may unify stakeholders toward achieving common goals and further support resource allocation decisions. Notably, all but three athletic departments in this study do include the term 'develop' in their mission statements.

This study may be further used to support the importance of the student-athlete voice in leadership development programming. Student-athletes in this study recognize a void in their skillset and are hungry for leadership development. While more than half of student-athletes are unfamiliar with leadership development, many are interested in

learning and growing in diverse environments. Active learning sessions, skills for navigating difficult conversations, team-building, and service learning were among the most common responses.

Service-learning projects provide many conditions well-suited for developing student leadership competencies, while also facilitating relationships among students, faculty, and community members (Felton & Clayton, 2011). Service-learning pedagogies combine learning goals and community service in meaningful ways that enhance both student growth and the common good. It is important for student-athletes to consider their responsibility and role in social issues impacting their campus and community.

Integrating service-learning opportunities into intentional leadership development programming allows students to confront social issues, analyze their origins, formulate responses, and engage in advocacy (Bringle, Ruiz, Brown, & Reeb, 2016). The skills learned through service learning promote the development of psychologically literate citizens who are equipped with tools to create positive social change.

There are limits to this study. The results from the administrator and head coach survey were comprised mostly of head coach participants. More data from athletic administrators are needed to better understand Division II Conference resources. This survey was not sent to Senior Woman Administrators (SWA), a staff position mandated by the NCAA; future research should include this position. Despite the limitations, the findings provide evidence that DIICConf member institutions may not be mobilizing all internal and external resources that are available. While there may be opportunities to

enhance support for student-athlete leadership development, additional research may determine if the structure of the organization is constraining efforts to provide opportunities for student-athlete leadership development. More research is needed to understand the best methods for Division II conference universities to enhance student-athlete leadership development opportunities in order for institutions to best prepare tomorrow's future.

CHAPTER II

DISSEMINATION

I will present results from this research and recommendations for practitioners who represent the institutions included in this study (Appendix I). Attendees at this meeting include Division II office staff, faculty athletic representatives, athletic directors, and other senior athletic administrators from member institutions. The aim of the presentation is to share the findings of this research, demonstrate the alignment of the research results with best-practices in student-athlete development, and discuss sustainable methods to implement development opportunities for student-athletes.

Presentation to Practitioners

Slide 1—My name is Jen Cole; I am the assistant volleyball coach at the University of Alabama in Huntsville. Prior to my current role I spent 8 years as an athletic trainer. My research was inspired by 10 years of experience as an educator and healthcare practitioner in Division II athletics, the emerging phenomenon of student-athlete leadership development, and the unique challenges faced by small athletic departments in the NCAA.

Slide 2—The catalyst for this study dates back to 2017 when I was a participant in the NCAA's Effective Facilitation Workshop. The event inspired me to start an evidence-based leadership development program for student-athletes at my institution. However, I

faced significant barriers when attempting to implement my idea. Unlike my colleagues at Division I universities, my institution does not have comparable resources to dedicate to a perceived non-essential program. The process of moving these barriers and my experiences as a facilitator for leadership development programs served as the driving forces behind my research. As a facilitator it was, and still is, powerful to observe participants express how much they learn about themselves from self-reflective activities and the validation they feel by completing personal assessments. While these experiences are rewarding, I was curious to know what opportunities are available for leadership development for student-athletes in Division II.

Slide 3—Fostering leadership has long been a primary student development outcome in higher education. The ultimate goal in establishing a leadership development program in collegiate athletics is for students to gain skills that transfer far beyond their years as a student-athlete. As practitioners we know that transition periods are important for positive development and numerous sociocultural and biobehavioral factors make the transition from adolescent to adulthood challenging. Today's social and economic forces have prolonged the entry into adulthood and as a result, scholars have created a new life stage labeled *emerging adulthood*. Identifying this life stage, years 18-28, has proven beneficial in explaining the social, cognitive, and psychological development during this time. Successful navigation during this time can significantly influence positive youth development (PYD). Programs that facilitate PYD help individuals achieve social, emotional, behavioral, and moral competence. While positive psychology focuses on

individual fulfilment, positive psychology and leadership development connect when individuals utilize personal talents and strengths and encourage others to do the same. Although the literature supports the experiences that generated my “great idea,” the main problem was how to make this possible in Division II. Time, money, and staff are all limited resources in many athletic departments at this level. Diving back into the research led me to discover that while it is often assumed that organizations with a larger number of resources have greater organizational capacity, this is not always the case. Studies have shown organizations that best mobilize both internal and external human, financial, and structural resources are better able to maximize their capacity. In other words, athletic departments that utilize departmental, campus, and community resources are able to positively impact the effectiveness of student-athlete leadership development. So that leaves us with the final component of my research: mission statements. Athletic departments often state student-athlete leadership development is central to their mission, but it turns out they are not always willing or claim they are unable to commit the resources necessary to provide a quality program. I wanted to know how committed Division II athletic departments were to mobilizing resources in order to implement meaningful programs.

Slide 4—The aims of my research were achieved using an online questionnaire sent to faculty athletic representatives, athletic directors, and head coaches, a web content analysis of athletic departments’ websites, and an online questionnaire sent to student-athletes. A full report of results from my research is available through this QR code.

Slide 5—The main findings of my research revealed that human, financial, and structural mobilization through head coaches, athletic directors, and faculty athletic representatives was missing. One athletic department out of 13 included in this study emphasized leadership development in their mission statement and there was no evidence of a formal leadership development program on any athletic department website. A leadership development is described as a program provided by a college or university administration as part of the college student experience. These programs meet regularly and include a cohort of students that progress through the program together. While more than half of the student-athletes in this study are unfamiliar with the concept of leadership development, many recognize a void in their leadership skillset and are interested in learning and growing. Active learning sessions, skills for navigating difficult conversations, team-building, and service learning were among the most common responses from student-athletes.

Slide 6—We are all familiar with the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics and understand that students are our main priority. Investing in their developmental needs as a person first and athlete second leads to stronger, better-rounded individuals in life and in performance. Truly buying into the concept and taking ownership in your role in “student-athlete centered, coach driven, and administrator supported” is the first step toward prioritizing leadership development. When we combine positive character traits with the primary goal of intercollegiate athletics, the student-athlete as a “person” is more important than the “player.” Ironically, the person

ultimately drives the player. Sports provides a platform for student-athletes to show the world who they are as a person. Investing in the time student-athletes spend progressing through *emerging adulthood* offers the most opportunity for individuals to develop the characteristic qualities necessary for work during adult years (Wood et al., 2018). Implementing intentional developmental programming designed to facilitate effective communication, ethical behaviors and attitudes, an openness to new ideas, and the importance of being a lifelong learner, among others, is a win for all stakeholders. Administrators and coaches will further benefit from building relationships with across campus units and considering faculty expertise, utilizing resources available through the NCAA working with coaches to understand needs, and empowering the student-athlete voice.

Slide 7—Charging ON is an example of mobilizing internal and external resources to enhance student-athlete leadership programming (Appendix J). *Charging ON* is a program grounded in theory and designed to educate all student-athletes to be successful during their time as a student-athlete at their institution and in life after sport (Appendix K). The curriculum for this program, available via this QR code, is delivered in three phases—*Charge!*, *Charge UP!*, and *Charge ON!* The program utilizes the technology department on campus, educational resources available through the NCAA website, and the university’s Department for Diversity and Inclusion to offer an online course for student-athletes to achieve core competencies. The second step of *Charging ON*, *Charge UP!* was first made possible through stakeholder buy-in. It utilized training

experiences offered by the NCAA, donated funding, and the student-athlete voice to design a curriculum for student-athletes to learn about themselves first in order to strengthen relationships with others and lead effectively. Student-athletes will meet five teams over the course of one academic year to discuss each topic included in *Charge UP!* The final step of *Charging ON* further uses faculty expertise to educate student-athletes on topics such as financial literacy, physical activity after sport, resume preparation and mock interviews, and holistic wellness. All steps in the *Charging ON* model include a service requirement for all student-athletes.

Slide 8—Collecting feedback from student-athletes at each DIICong institution included in this study and initiating plans for a conference-wide leadership development summit for student-athletes, coaches, and administrators are among future directions related to this research. Additionally, the assessment results from *Charging ON* will be analyzed and modified as indicated.

Slide 9—I'd like to take the time now to thank you and invite any questions or comments you may have. As explained earlier, a full report of this research is available via the QR code on the screen.

Dissemination of this research will further extend to manuscripts submitted to the *Journal of Athlete Development and Experience (JADE)* and a presentation at the 2020 National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) conference.

CHAPTER III

ACTION PLAN

This research was inspired by 10 years of experience as an educator and healthcare practitioner in Division II athletics, the emerging phenomenon of leadership development programs in college athletics, and unique challenges faced by small athletic departments in the NCAA. The catalyst for this study dates back to 2017 and my immersion in an impactful leadership development initiative. The event empowered me to start an evidence-based development program for student-athletes. However, a significant barrier existed when I returned to campus and initiated my first attempt at advancing student-athlete development. Unlike my colleagues at major Division I universities, my institution does not have comparable resources to dedicate to a perceived non-essential program. The process of overcoming this barrier also served as the driving force of this research. As a result, I created and successfully proposed *Charging ON!*, a formal development program for student-athletes that will begin in the fall of 2019. The program is grounded in theory and designed using results from this research. Utilizing student-athlete feedback and results from the head coach and administrator survey were significant to better understanding gaps in current employed resources.

As development is understood as a process that creates growth or positive change, *Charging ON!* is an initiative centered on the common purpose of developing student-

athletes through sport. The program is comprised of online modules for all student-athletes, curriculum for selected student-athletes, and events for advanced student-athletes to expand their skillsets. The end goal is to foster intentional experiences for student-athletes to gain a competitive edge in life through sport. The design and implementation of this program reflects best practices that promote integrated learning and results from this research.

The vision, mission, and core values of both the university that I serve and the athletic department align with the mission and learning objectives of *Charging ON!* The program will be featured on the athletics website of the department demonstrating the mission of the department in action, as well as prioritizing the value of publicizing information about student-athlete leadership development. Analyzing the capacity of the athletic department in which I serve and using the results to maximize organizational resources was key to the materialization of *Charging ON!* The proposed curriculum also aligns with feedback from student-athletes regarding content that should be included in a leadership development program for student-athletes and the methods of delivery. Active learning components include listening, writing, reflecting, and talking. Each session utilizes a learner-centered approach. The number one suggestion from student-athletes regarding what should be included in a leadership development program was conversation skills. As a result, an engaging pedagogy encompassing the skills presented in the best-seller *Crucial Conversations* (Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, & Switzler, 2012) is included in one of the five sessions offered throughout the year.

Results of this research indicated many universities in this study do not fully utilize campus partnerships. As a result, I initiated a partnership with the Office of Student Life to implement *United We Charge* (UWC). The purpose of UWC is to create support among the 18 varsity sports by the student-athletes themselves (The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 2019). Teams earn points for attending specific home athletic events during the year. Each team receives a point for their game in which they are playing on a UWC date. The winning team will share a meal with the Director of Athletics at a restaurant of their choice and have the opportunity to design the following year's UWC t-shirt. The partnership aligns with the void in campus relationships to secure funding and manpower. The Office of Student Life has sponsored the funding for the shirts and will staff a table to record attendance during UWC events. This initiative further demonstrates a measurable outcome of the university's mission for inclusiveness and diversity to create unity.

To further disseminate results from this research, I plan to submit manuscripts on the leadership development opportunities available at Division II institutions and perceptions of leadership development from Division II student-athletes to relevant journals, such as the *Journal of Athlete Development and Experience* (JADE). "The mission of [JADE] is to advance, promote, and disseminate research . . . concerning athletes and athlete development" (Professional Association of Athlete Development Specialists [PAADS], 2019, para. 1). JADE is intended for both scholars and

practitioners. Ideal manuscripts offer insight into athlete development and the athlete experience.

The National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) serves as a professional association for those in the field of athletics administration. The association provides athletics administrators with educational opportunities, networking, and a platform to share information with others. The main focus of NACDA's annual convention is to examine and discuss contemporary issues athletics administrators face. I plan to showcase my research at a future NACDA conference. Presenting this research at this annual event will connect results with practitioners who are invested in student-athlete development.

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APPENDIX A

COLLEGE ATHLETICS LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

- University of Alabama:
<http://www.rolltide.com/sports/2016/11/26/d-r-i-v-e-forsuccess-career-leadership.aspx>
- University of Arkansas:
<http://www.janssensportsleadership.com/programs/collegeleadership-academies/>
- Boston University:
<http://www.janssensportsleadership.com/programs/collegeleadershipacademies/>
- Canisius College:
<http://gogriffs.com>
- University of Central Florida:
<http://www.ucfknight.com/sports/2016/9/23/leadership-development.aspx>
- Colgate University:
<http://www.janssensportsleadership.com/programs/collegeleadership-academies/>
- Fordham University:
<http://www.janssensportsleadership.com/programs/collegeleadership-academies/>
- Georgetown University:
<https://sites.google.com/a/georgetown.edu/calp/about>
- George Washington University:
<http://www.janssensportsleadership.com/programs/college-leadership-academies/>
- University of Illinois:
<http://fightingillini.com/sports/2015/6/14/leadershipacademy.aspx>
- Lehigh University:
<http://www.janssensportsleadership.com/programs/collegeleadership-academies/>
- Loyola University:
<http://www.janssensportsleadership.com/programs/collegeleadership-academies/>
- University of Miami:
<http://www.hurricanesports.com/signingday/saac/saac/2/>
- University of Michigan:
<http://www.mgoblue.com/sports/2017/6/16/asp-leadershipacademy-html.aspx?id=1305>
- University of Minnesota:
<http://www.gophersports.com/sports/student-affairs/minnstudent-affairs-body.html>
- UNC-Charlotte:
<http://www.janssensportsleadership.com/programs/collegeleadership-academies/>

- Northeastern University:
<http://www.gonu.com/#>
- Ohio State University:
<http://www.ohiostatebuckeyes.com/sports/sasso/specrel/about.html>
- Old Dominion University:
http://www.odusports.com/SportSelect.dbml?DB_OEM_ID=31100&SPID=187818&SPSID=1165810&DB_OEM_ID=31100
- University of Southern California:
<http://saas.usc.edu/personaldevelopment/leadership/>
- Stetson University:
<http://www.janssensportsleadership.com/programs/collegeleadership-academies/>
- University of South Carolina:
<http://www.janssensportsleadership.com/programs/college-leadership-academies/>
- University of Washington:
<http://sites.education.washington.edu/uwcla/research/working-paper>

APPENDIX B

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENTS

“University A”—The mission of intercollegiate athletics at “University A” is to provide student-athletes with the opportunity to compete within a structured sporting environment that facilitates and enriches one's intellectual, personal, cultural and professional development. “University A” Athletics is committed to the complete welfare of all student-athletes and advocates an environment that promotes excellence in academic and athletic performance, ethical conduct, rules compliance, sportsmanship, diversity, and equity.

“University B”—The “University B” Department of Athletics strives to provide a competitive program for student-athletes that will foster their development through education, competition and civic engagement, emphasizing learning, balance, resourcefulness, sportsmanship, passion and service.

“University C”—To recruit, develop and graduate exceptional student-athletes who excel in the classroom and on the field, consistently competing for league championships and the opportunity to compete on the national level. “University C” provides its students with exceptional educational opportunities, in the Lasallian tradition, while fostering a focus on creating an experience both in the classroom and on the field of play. “University C is committed to sustaining a strong, competitive Division II program, where student-athletes are taught to conduct themselves with honesty and integrity, strive for excellence, persevere through adversity, and compete with dignity and pride while developing a commitment to teamwork and service to the community.

“University D”—The mission of “University D” Department of Athletics is to advance the role of the University in its pursuit of excellence in providing the total educational experience for its students. The Athletics Department will produce competitive and entertaining athletic teams, by recruiting outstanding student-athletes, and maintaining quality coaches and staff. The Athletics Department will prepare student-athletes to be productive members of society by molding their development socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically. This commitment will breed success for the student-athlete, the athletics department, and the institution. “University D” Athletics is committed to this mission.

“University E”—As a Christian liberal arts university, is committed to the principle that God is glorified when individuals develop to their full potential as whole persons—intellectually, spiritually, socially, and physically. The existence of an athletic program at University E” not only is consistent with this principle but is necessary to it. A university

without an athletic program omits an important part of the preparation of its students for “responsible Christian living in a complex world.” The mission of the intercollegiate athletic program is to assist in the preparation of graduates for Christian service in their occupations, academic pursuits, and personal ministry. The success of this preparation depends on programs and services whereby physical, mental, social, and spiritual development is fostered. The mission is pursued within a variety of activities provided within the context of the intercollegiate athletic program.

The intercollegiate athletic program is designed to assist in preparing students for “responsible Christian living in the complex world.” Its commitment is to develop an integrated person—one who is spiritually alive, intellectually alert, and physically disciplined. This balance is achieved in each athlete by training him/her to think about athletics with a competitive spirit from the Christian perspective. “University E” takes seriously the task of preparing students for responsible Christian living in a complex world. The goal is pursued within a variety of structures provided within the widest campus context, such as classroom instruction, extracurricular activities, student development services and residential living. The university realizes that the knowledge, appreciation, understanding, ability and skill for such resourceful living will be evident in its students in direct proportion to the success of its programs and service whereby a healthy physical, mental, social, cultural, and spiritual development is fostered.

“University F”—The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, an integral part of “University F’s” mission of Transforming Lives through Christ, is a comprehensive and nationally-recognized NCAA athletics program which positively reflects the interests and values of the institution's students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends who support its many endeavors.

Central to its mission, the Department will provide the leadership, resources and support to ensure all student-athletes receive the finest academic and athletic experience possible. The Department fosters an environment that encourages degree completion, good citizenship, character and personal growth, while developing student-athletes who are positive role models and productive members of society.

“University G”—The purpose of the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics at “University G” is to enhance the educational experiences of our student-athletes and to benefit the entire campus community. Our mission is to promote the spiritual, social, emotional and physical development of our student-athletes while embracing the Division II model for a balanced program of learning and development. Our primary focus is to provide a supportive environment which will enable student-athletes to successfully complete all academic requirements for their particular field of study and to provide opportunities that will allow them to utilize their skills, talents and abilities to “become good citizens, leaders and contributors in their communities.”

“University H”—The mission of “University H” athletic department is to promote and monitor the educational achievement and personal growth of student-athletes; to conduct an athletics program that protects and enhances the physical and educational welfare of student-athletes; to provide fair and equitable opportunity for all student-athletes and staff participating in intercollegiate sport activities, regardless of gender or ethnicity; to promote the principles of good sportsmanship and honesty in compliance with University, State, National Collegiate Athletic Association and Conference regulations; to conduct a competitive athletics program that promotes faculty, staff, student and community affiliation with the University and to serve the community through public service and outreach activities which positively reflect the University and promote good will in the community.

“University I”—**No “Mission Statement” listed**

- **Excellence-Driven:** The student-athlete at “University I” strives for excellence in both academics and sports. This requires optimal effort on the practice field in preparation for competition as well as optimal study in preparation for the classroom.
- **Christ-Centered:** The student-athlete embraces “University I’s core value of being ‘Christ-centered’ in conduct as an athlete and student. This objective is manifested by personal spiritual growth as well as exhibited by Christ-like conduct and sportsmanship in competition.”
- **People-Focused:** The student-athlete seeks to exemplify charitable and compassionate character in relationships with fellow students on campus and to operate from a “team first” philosophy in the venue of athletic competition. Externally, all student-athletes are expected to participate in mission and community outreach projects to meet people's physical and spiritual needs in local and even international settings.
- **Future-Directed:** The overall mission of “University” is to prepare students to succeed in their chosen careers and engage society as responsible citizens and followers of Christ. Believing athletics serves as a companion to the classroom in this goal, “University I’s” coaches, faculty, and administration partner together in equipping the student-athlete with skills, character, and spiritual growth for the present and the future.

“University J”—*Does not have athletic department “MISSION STATEMENT” listed on website, below is the “philosophy for intercollegiate athletics.”*

“University J’s” intercollegiate athletic programs operate under the National Collegiate Athletic Association, Division II. The University seeks to conduct all athletic competition in accordance with the principles of fair play and amateurism and in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the NCAA and the Conference. The University is committed to the student-athlete as a student first and an athlete second. The University strives to help the student-athlete reach his/her academic goals and develop an interest in the total development of the student-athlete and who exemplify good conduct and sportsmanship,

possess a high degree of integrity, having outstanding technical knowledge, and are committed to the educational goals of the University.

The athletic programs are expected to contribute to the broader mission of the University and to fully support and reflect the educational goals of the institution. While the University is committed to the development of competitive, successful intercollegiate athletic programs, the integrity of the athletic programs are the academic progress and graduation rates of our student-athletes are more important indicators of success and achievement. The University is committed to recruiting and admitting academically qualified student-athletes who demonstrate the ability and desire to make satisfactory progress towards earning baccalaureate degrees

“University K”—The mission of “University K’s” Intercollegiate Athletic Program is to nurture the spirit of continuing growth and challenging expectations for achievement at all levels of team and individual participation. Consistent with the overall mission statement of the University, the intercollegiate athletic programs subscribe to the concept of the developing student-athlete by providing opportunities to transform and enrich the lives of its student-athletes.

As a part of the greater university community the intercollegiate athletic programs supports the highest standards of scholarship, public service, sportsmanship, teamwork, and citizenship. The athletic program ultimately seeks to recruit, train, educate, and graduate first-class student-athletes. Consistent with the University’s goals of developing positive character, the intercollegiate athletic program encourages respect and trust among team members from diverse backgrounds and experiences affirming the equal dignity of each student-athlete.

“University L”—Intercollegiate athletic programs at “University L” offer student-athletes the opportunity to compete at the championship level and continue their personal development by actively engaging the community and providing appropriate resources for academic and athletic success.

“University M”—The mission of the Department of Athletics is to develop student-athletes so they may achieve academic success and social development. This must be done within the academic framework of the institution, with consideration for the student-athlete’s physical and emotional well-being and in concert with the institution’s overall mission. With respect to non-participants, the athletic program seeks to serve the region and enhance the development of the institution by fostering a sense of loyalty and community among students, faculty, staff, alumni, and supporters.

APPENDIX C

ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATOR AND HEAD COACH SURVEY

Demographics. Please select the most appropriate response for each of the following questions.

Gender:

- Female
- Male

Please specify your ethnicity

- White
- Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African American
- Native American or American Indian
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Other

Age range

- 20-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- 61-70
- 71 or older

Role you serve in at your current institution:

- Faculty Athletics Representative
- Athletic Director
- Head Coach

Type of university or college that you serve at

- Public
- Private

Highest degree earned

- Bachelors
- Masters
- Doctorate

Please indicate the academic discipline of your highest degree earned

Please indicate the number of years you have served in your *current* role (FAR, AD, Head Coach) at your *current* institution.

- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 21-25 years
- 25+ years

Please indicate the total number of years you have served in your current role (FAR, AD, Head Coach) at *any* institution (including your current one).

- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 21-25 years
- 25+ years

In the model your institution currently uses, please indicate the level of responsibility your role has to student-athlete leadership development.

- Not at all responsible
- Somewhat responsible
- Mostly responsible
- Completely responsible

Human resources. Please select the most appropriate response for the following questions about responsibility and importance of student-athlete leadership development at your institution.

Please indicate the level of priority student-athlete leadership development is in your role at your current institution.

- Not a priority
- Low priority
- Medium priority
- High priority
- Essential

When thinking about student-athlete leadership development, please rank the following roles in order from the “most engaged” to the “least engaged.”

- _____ Faculty Athletic Representative
- _____ Athletic Director
- _____ Head Coach
- _____ Student-Athlete

Financial resources. Please select the most appropriate response for the following questions about financial resources for student-athlete leadership development at your institution.

Please indicate how much NCAA affiliated grant funds are used to support your student-athlete’s leadership development.

- Never use
- Almost never use
- Occasionally use
- Used almost every year
- Used frequently every year
- Not sure

Please indicate how much NCAA life skill development speakers are used to support your student-athlete’s leadership development.

- Never use
- Almost never use
- Occasionally use
- Used almost every year
- Used frequently every year
- Not sure

Please indicate how much corporate donated funds are used to support your student-athlete’s leadership development at your institution.

- Never use
- Almost never use
- Occasionally use
- Used almost every year
- Used frequently every year
- Not sure

Please indicate how much internal funds, allocated by the athletic department, are used to support your student-athlete's leadership development.

- Never use
- Almost never use
- Occasionally use
- Used almost every year
- Used frequently every year
- Not sure

Please indicate how much private donor funds are used to support your student-athlete's leadership development.

- Never use
- Almost never use
- Occasionally use
- Used almost every year
- Used frequently every year
- Not sure

Structural Resources. Please select the most appropriate response for the following questions about structural resources for student-athlete leadership development at your institution.

Please indicate how much campus partnerships are used to obtain funds that are solely dedicated to support your student-athlete's leadership development.

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Moderate amount
- A great deal

Please indicate how much campus partnerships are used to recruit manpower that is used solely to support your student-athlete's leadership development.

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Moderate amount
- A great deal

Please indicate how much campus partnerships are used to help your student-athletes navigate other resources that support their own leadership development.

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Moderate amount
- A great deal

Please indicate how much community partnerships are used to host civic engagement events to support your student-athlete's leadership development.

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Moderate amount
- A great deal

Does your university offer academic courses in which student-athletes perform community service or receive like skills training as a component of an official University course?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Does your university offer formal workshops, training sessions, or service opportunities aimed at developing leadership skills in student-athletes?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Does your university invite student-athletes to participate in the making of departmental-level decisions through Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC)?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

In your current role, please indicate how often you obtain feedback related to student-athlete leadership development from alumni.

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- A moderate amount
- A great deal

In your current role, please indicate how often you obtain feedback related to student-athlete leadership development through student-athlete focus groups or surveys from student-athletes.

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- A moderate amount
- A great deal

In your current role, please indicate how often you obtain feedback related to student-athlete leadership development through exit interviews with your student-athletes.

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- A moderate amount
- A great deal

What student-athlete leadership development programs does your institution currently have in place?

What are the biggest challenges that exist at your institution in developing and operating a student-athlete leadership development program?

Do you have any suggestions to enhance initiatives aimed at student-athlete leadership development at your institution?

APPENDIX D
STUDENT-ATHLETE SURVEY

Gender:

- Male
- Female

Please specify your ethnicity.

- White
- Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African American
- Native American or American Indian
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Other _____

Age:

- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22 or older

Class rank:

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Other: _____

What sport do you play?

Have you held any leadership positions in athletics?

Yes

No

If yes, what leadership positions have you held?

Have you held leadership positions on campus-other than athletics?

Yes

No

If yes, what leadership positions have you held on campus?

In the last year, have you participated in any student-athlete leadership development programming sponsored by the Department of Athletics?

Yes

No

If you answered Yes, what student-athlete leadership development program did you participate in?

Would you be interested in participating in student-athlete leadership development programming offered by the Department of Athletics?

Yes

Maybe

No

If you answered NO, select the reasons why (check all that apply).

I don't have time

I am not interested in the programs offered

Participating in a leadership development program would interfere with my academics

I am not familiar with leadership development programs for student-athletes

Other: _____

If you answered YES, please check the types of student-athlete leadership development programming you would be interested in.

Monthly seminars

Semester seminars

Service-learning projects

Weekend workshops

Other: _____

If a student-athlete leadership development program were offered, how likely are you to participate?

Definitely

Probably

Probably not

Definitely not

What do you think should be included in a leadership development program for student-athletes?

What would make a leadership development program more attractive to you?

What suggestions do you have for student-athlete leadership development at your institution?

APPENDIX E

PROCEDURE FOR CONDUCTING CONTENT ANALYSIS

1. Identify research question and constructs
2. Identify the texts to be examined
3. Specify the units of analysis (i.e. departmental mission statements and leadership development data available on the athletic website of each institution)
4. Devise specification of categories
 - a. Review content of departmental mission statements and the breadth and scope of leadership development
 - b. Review
5. Formulate sampling coding schemes. Mission statements will be categorized and coded based upon the presence or absence of a commitment to student-athlete development
6. Resolve ambiguities and purify coding scheme
7. Revise categories using Komives's (2011) essential theories essential for college leadership programs.
 - a. Leadership development should be deliberate and not a by-product of the college experience.
 - b. A purposeful education should entail more than individual leadership skill-building.
 - c. Positive leadership educational outcomes must be understood through a theoretical framework
8. Examine data
9. Assess reliability of the research
10. Assess validity of the research
 - a. Construct validity ensured through development of implied and explicit dedication to leadership development using Voight's definition.
11. Analysis: Evaluate athletic department's dedication to leadership development based upon information about leadership development that was collected through their official website.

APPENDIX F

RESULTS FROM ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATOR SURVEY

Human Resources

Priority	Responsibility	SA participate in decision-making
Not a priority: <i>n</i> =3 (4.4%),	Not at all responsible: <i>n</i> =0 (0%)	Yes: <i>n</i> = 54(83.3%)
Low priority: <i>n</i> =7 (10.3%)	Somewhat responsible: <i>n</i> =26 (38.2%)	No: <i>n</i> =4 (6.2%)
Medium priority: <i>n</i> =17 (25%)	Mostly responsible: <i>n</i> = 27(39.7%)	I don't know: <i>n</i> =7 (10.8%)
High priority: <i>n</i> =35 (51.5%)	Completely responsible: <i>n</i> =15 (22.1%)	
Essential priority: <i>n</i> =6 (8.8%)		

Financial Resources

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Moderate	Often
NCAA grants	17.9% (<i>n</i> =12)	5.9% (<i>n</i> =4)	10.4% (<i>n</i> =7)	10.4% (<i>n</i> =7)	4.4% (<i>n</i> =3)
NCAA leadership development resources	19.4% (<i>n</i> =13)	15% (<i>n</i> =10)	19.4% (<i>n</i> =13)	9% (<i>n</i> =6)	9% (<i>n</i> =6)
Corporate funds	21% (<i>n</i> =14)	13.4% (<i>n</i> =9)	10.5% (<i>n</i> =7)	4.5% (<i>n</i> =3)	3% (<i>n</i> =2)
Internal funds	12% (<i>n</i> =8)	16.4% (<i>n</i> =11)	16.4% (<i>n</i> =11)	12% (<i>n</i> =8)	12% (<i>n</i> =8)
Campus partnerships to secure funds	8.3% (<i>n</i> =5)	40% (<i>n</i> =24)	31.7% (<i>n</i> =19)	18.3% (<i>n</i> =11)	1.7% (<i>n</i> =1)

Structural Resources

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Moderate	Often
Campus partnerships for man-power	8.3% (n=5)	40% (n=40)	31.7% (n=19)	18.3% (n=11)	1.7% (n=1)
Campus partnerships for navigating university resources	3.3% (n=2)	29.5% (n=18)	36.1% (n=22)	26.2% (n=16)	4.9% (n=3)
Community partnerships	9.7% (n=6)	37.1% (n=23)	30.1% (n=19)	17.7% (n=11)	4.8% (n=3)
Alumni feedback	23.4% (n=15)	45.3% (n=29)	21.9% (n=14)	7.8% (n=5)	1.6% (n=1)
Student-athlete focus group feedback	21.5% (n=14)	36.9% (n=22)	33.9% (n=22)	6.2% (n=4)	1.5% (n=1)
Student-athlete exit interview feedback	12.3% (n=8)	20% (n=13)	33.9% (n=22)	23.1% (n=15)	10.7% (n=7)
	Yes	No	Not Sure		
Academic courses	60% (n=39)	6.1% (n=4)	33.9% (n=22)		
Formal workshops or training	69.2% (n=45)	7.7% (n=5)	23.1% (n=15)		

Biggest Challenges Faced

Challenge	n (%)
Funding, financial resources, money	20 (38.4)
Time	9 (17.3)
Staff, manpower, personnel role	7 (13.5)
Support/buy-in from leadership, willingness to change	7 (13.5)
Student-athlete buy-in/participation	7 (7.7)
Identifying relevant learning objectives	1 (2)
Unsure/none	4 (0.7)

Suggestions to Enhance Leadership Development

Suggestions	<i>n</i> (%)
Survey, determine best practices, results from research	6 (22.2)
Implement/re-vamp formal leadership training programs	6 (22.2)
Increase staff, department-wide buy-in	5 (18.5)
Change/enhance administrative leadership	2 (7.4)
Professional staff development	2 (7.4)
Increase involvement in campus initiatives	1 (3.7)

APPENDIX G

RESULTS FROM WEB CONTENT ANALYSIS

University	Mission Statement Key Words	Formal Program
A	“Intellectual, personal, cultural and professional development”	No
B	“Foster SA development through education, competition, and civic engagement”	No
C	“Developing a commitment to teamwork and service to the community”	No
D	“Department will prepare SA to be productive member of society by molding their development socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically”	No
E	“Develop to their full potential as whole persons- intellectually, spiritually, socially, and physically”	No
F	“Become good citizens, leaders, and contributors in their communities”	No
G	“Personal growth of student-athletes”	No
H	“Department fosters an environment that encourages . . . good citizenship, character and personal growth, while developing SA who are positive role models and productive members of society”	No
I	“Prepare students to engage society as responsible citizens; equipping SA with skills, character and spiritual growth for present and future”	No
J	“Develop interest in the total development of the SA”	No
K	“Social development”	No
L	“Personal development”	No
M	“Developing SA by providing opportunities to transform and enrich the lives of its SA; developing positive character”	No

APPENDIX H

RESULTS FROM STUDENT-ATHLETE SURVEY

Interest in Leadership Development by Class Rank

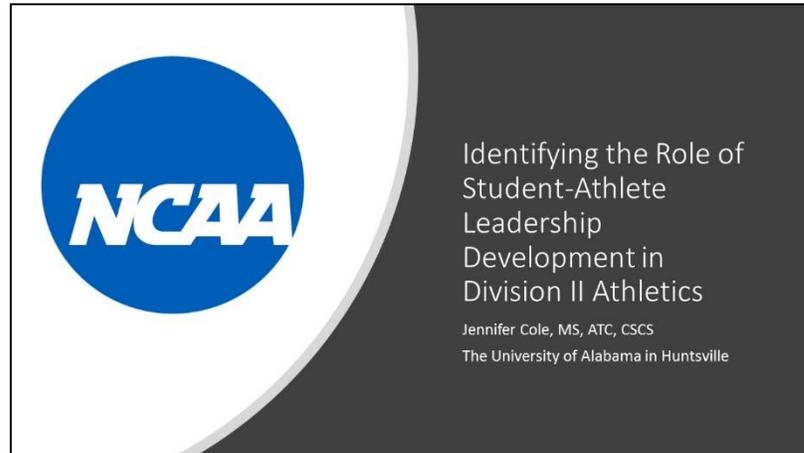
Class Rank	Yes	Maybe	No
Freshman	13	14	1
Sophomores	6	16	2
Juniors	13	21	4
Seniors	14	27	6

Student-athlete Feedback

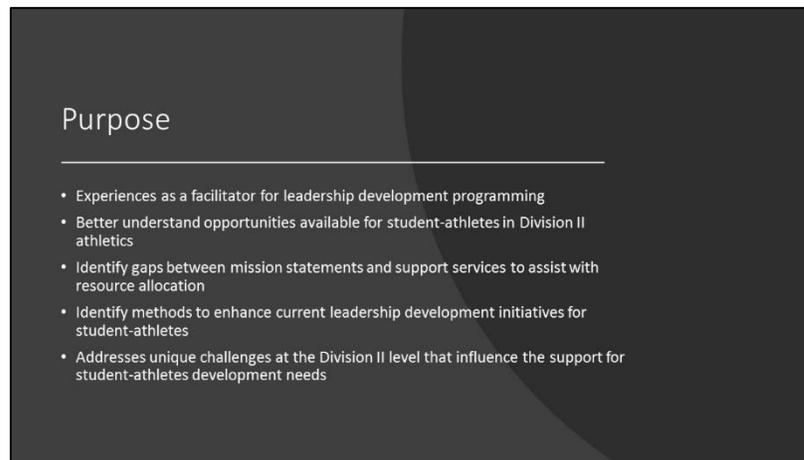
Survey Questions/Responses	n (%)
What should be included in a leadership development program for student-athletes?	
How to lead	17 (30.9)
Communication skills	13 (23.6)
Guest speakers	8 (14.5)
Active learning	7 (12.7)
Service-learning	4 (7.2)
Team building	4 (7.2)
Mental health	2 (3.6)
What will make a leadership development program more attractive?	
Flexible times	14 (22.9)
Advertisements, food, incentives	13 (21.3)
The participants involved	10 (16.4)
Active learning	10 (16.4)
Guest speakers	6 (9.8)
Resume builder	4 (6.6)
Online delivery	2 (3.2)
Judgement free, no bias, openness	2 (3.2)
What suggestions do you have for leadership development program at your institution?	
Advertise program, promotions	21 (53.8)
Diverse, large group of participants	8 (20.5)
Practical skill-building	3 (7.7)
Increase programs, awareness of leadership skills	2 (5.1)
Service	2 (5.1)
Speaker/experts	2 (5.1)
Mental health	1 (2.6)

APPENDIX I

DISSEMINATION PRESENTATION



Slide 1



Slide 2

Background

- Leadership Development in Higher Education
- Student Leadership Competencies
- A New Life State: Emerging Adulthood
- Positive Psychology
- Theoretical Framework
- Organizational Capacity
- Reality of Mission Statements

Slide 3

Methods: Measures

- **Athletic administrator and head coach survey:** Evaluate the components of organizational capacity currently utilized at each institution.
- **Web content analysis:** Quantify characteristics of DIICong athletic department mission statement text and examined occurrence of words and phrases within the text. Analyze dedication to leadership development based upon information collected through official DIICong athletic department websites.
- **Student-athlete survey:** Collect responses and recommend desired leadership development programming based on feedback from student-athletes, alignment with literature, and institution capacity.

Slide 4

Main Findings

Resource mobilization through the athletic director, faculty athletic representative, and head coaches was missing.

One athletic department emphasized *leadership development* in their mission statement. No evidence of a formal program.

More than half of student-athletes are unfamiliar with leadership development, many recognize a void in their leadership skillset and are interested in learning and growing.

The outcomes of PYD programming align with athletic departments that included the term "develop" in their mission statements.



Slide 5

Practical Implications

- Student-athlete centered, coach driven, administrator supported.
- Mobilize human, financial, structural resources.
- Utilize results for strategic planning. Align mission statements with principles that will enhance and justify resource allotment.
- Publicizing initiatives on the department website as a means to communicate and strengthen organizational identity.



Slide 6

Student-Athlete Development Programming

While you provide a platform for practice, the skills and leadership to be gained, the more participation in sport does not automatically foster leadership.

Learning Objectives

- Development is a process that creates growth or positive change. This initiative is centered on the common goal of "charging ahead". The process is a component of overall programming for all student athletes, contributing to athletic career growth, and providing career guidance, and experiences for advanced student-athletes. The end goal is to create opportunities for our student athletes to gain a competitive edge in the through sport.
- Student athletes will develop the confidence, skills, and ability to positively impact their team, campus, and community.
- Participants will create, discuss, and apply personal and leadership development objectives that facilitate a transformational experience.
- Participants will generate personal leadership philosophies and integrate personal attributes opportunities to live and lead in an authentic manner.
- Cultivate a deep understanding of yourself—not only what your strengths and weaknesses are but also how you learn, work with others, and where you represent the greatest contribution. **Only when you know your strengths can you achieve true excellence.** You have to know all of the hard things you are not so good at, and that gives you the ability to make decisions in the things you do do your life.

Charging ON!

Charge! (Challenging personal and professional growth)
 • Build Confidence
 • Build Resilience
 • Build Teamwork
 • Build Leadership
 • Build Integrity

Charge UP! (Developing personal and professional growth)
 • Develop Self
 • Develop Team
 • Develop Process
 • Develop Mindset
 • Develop Communication

Charge ON! (Empowering personal and professional growth)
 • Empower Personal
 • Empower Team
 • Empower Process
 • Empower Mindset
 • Empower Communication

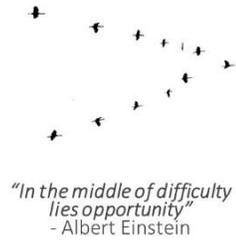
Values—Develop champions, athletes for life through character formation, academic achievement, and athletic results.
 Core Values—Trust, Integrity, Character, Authenticity, Learning, Growth.

Outline for student-athlete development at one DIICong.




Slide 7

- Collect feedback from all DIICong student-athletes
- Assess pilot program implementation
- Conference-wide leadership development summit



Future Directions

Slide 8



Questions/ Large- Group Discussion



Full Report of Results:



Slide 9

APPENDIX J

ATHLETIC STAKEHOLDER HANDOUT

While sports provide a platform for positive life skills such as leadership to be fostered, the mere participation in sport does not automatically foster leadership.

Learning Objectives

Development is a process that creates growth or positive change. This initiative is centered on the common goal of “growing people”. The process is comprised of annual programming for all student-athletes, a curriculum for selected student-athletes, and experiences for advanced student-athletes. The end goal is to foster experiences for our student-athletes to gain a competitive edge in life through sport.

- Student-athletes will develop the confidence, skills, and values to positively impact their team, campus, and community.
- Participants will create, discuss, and apply personal and leadership development activities that facilitate a transformational experience
- Participants will generate personal leadership philosophies and interpret personal attribute assessments to live and lead in an authentic manner.

Cultivate a deep understanding of yourself—not only what your strengths and weaknesses are but also how you learn, work with others, and where you can make the greatest contribution. **Only when you operate from strengths can you achieve true excellence.** You have to win off the field before you can win on it, and that goes back to making winning decisions in the things you do in your life.

Charging ON!



Vision—Develop champions.

Mission—Prepare student-athletes for life through character formation, academic achievement, and athletic success.

Core Values—Trust. Integrity. Character. Authenticity. Learning. Growth.

APPENDIX K
CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

Framework for Intentional Student-Athlete Leadership Development

Theory	Authentic Leadership Ethical Leadership	Self-Efficacy Self-Determination	Relational Leadership	Strength-Based Leadership
Student-Leadership Competencies	Decision-making Self-understanding Ethics Empathy Personal Values	Resilience Responding to change Confidence Motivation Positive Attitude	Personal Contributions Self-Development Verbal Communication Receiving Feedback Providing Feedback Analysis Evaluation	Shared Purpose Commitment Trust Effectiveness Collaboration
Programming	Core Values	Growth Mindset	Emotional Intelligence Crucial Conversations	Strengths-Finder

APPENDIX L

CHARGING ON! PROPOSAL

Development is a process that creates growth or positive change. The initiative is centered on the common purpose of “growing people.” The process is comprised of annual programming for all student-athletes, a curriculum for selected student-athletes, and experiences for advanced student-athletes. The end goal is to foster experiences for our student-athletes to gain a competitive edge in life through sport.

- Charge! (Royal): All student athletes gain knowledge needed to be successful as a Charger.
- Charge UP! (White): Selected student-athletes learn how to lead from the inside- out.
- Charge ON! (Black): Graduates of Illuminate further enhance their holistic development through practical experiences.

UAH Core Values alignment with Charging ON! Curriculum

- *Integrity and respect*: We are guided by principles of ethics, treat others with differential regard, and are civil in our interactions.
 - Our thoughts and actions are guided by our values.” Integrity never goes out of style” – Jim George
 - Core Values, Strengths Finder, Crucial Conversations, Emotional Intelligence
- *Diligence and Excellence*: We work hard and are tireless in the pursuit of our goals and achieving outcomes of the highest quality.
 - “Excellence is the result of caring more than others think is wise, risking more than others think is safe, dreaming more than others think is practical, and expecting more than others think is possible.” – Ronnie Oldham
 - Growth Mindset, Strengths Finder
- *Inclusiveness and Diversity*: We honor the individual. We celebrate differences and use them to create unity.
 - “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” – African Proverb
 - Core Values, Strengths Finder

Vision—Develop champions.

Mission—Prepare champions for life through character formation, academic achievement, and athletic success.

Core Values—Trust. Integrity. Character. Authenticity. Learning.

Cultivate a deep understanding of yourself—not only what your strengths and weaknesses are but also how you learn, work with others, and where you can make the greatest contribution. **Only when you operate from strengths can you achieve true excellence.** You have to win off the field before you can win on it, and that goes back to making winning decisions in the things you do in your life.

Purpose

Sports provides a platform for positive life skills such as leadership to be fostered. However, the mere participation in sport does not automatically foster leadership, nor does it correlate to an individual becoming a leader as an adult. The purpose of student-athlete leadership development is to prepare student-athletes for life after athletics as they develop the necessary skills to be engaged citizens and prepared professionals (Navarro & Malvaso, 2015). Without specific programs and training opportunities, Division II student-athletes are reliant on what is available at their institution; which often conflicts with athletic commitments (Weaver & Simet, 2015). An increasing amount of sources have revealed the positive outcomes of teaching leadership skills and practices to student-athletes; including effective communication, ethical behaviors and attitudes, openness to new ideas, and the importance of being lifelong learners among others (Crozier et al., 2013; Fransen et al., 2015; Navarro & Malvaso, 2015; Voight & Hickey, 2016). Student-athlete participants need more time to focus on themselves to prepare them for a leadership role (O'Brien, 2018). Once the student-athletes develop a foundation of personal growth and development (core values, growth mindset, strength finders, emotional intelligence), they need skills to be able to navigate difficult social situations and conflict (crucial conversations).

Charging ON! Proposal

The website of an athletic department provides a snapshot of services that support leadership development training for student-athletes. This proposal requests the following changes to the existing web platform:

- Webpage on athletics website to reflect what the department is providing for student-athletes.
- Student-Athlete Development staff position listed in staff directory.

Level 1: Charge!

Charge! will utilize Canvas as a platform to deliver online modules. Developing these modules will require assistance from OIT staff to create a course and enroll all student-athletes. The course will serve as a one-stop shop for student-athletes to

educate themselves on institutional core competencies. Examples include alcohol and substance abuse, sexual violence, mental health, and academic compliance.

Level 2: Charge UP!

All student-athletes will be given the opportunity to participate in this selective programming. From the pool of interested student-athletes, athletic administrators will generate a diverse group of student-athletes for meaningful development.

Learning Outcomes

- Student-athletes will develop the confidence, skills, and values to positively impact their team, campus, and community.
- Participants will create, discuss, and apply personal and leadership development activities that facilitate a transformational experience.
- Participants will generate personal leadership philosophies and interpret personal attribute assessments to live and lead in an authentic manner.
 - Growth Mindset (Dweck, 2008)
 - Core Values (Sinek, 2009)
 - Strengths Finder (Rath & Conchie, 2008)
 - Emotional Intelligence (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009)
 - Crucial Conversations (Patterson et al., 2009)
 - Service-Learning Project (Feiten & Clayton, 2011)

Program Structure

- Fall semester: Growth Mindset, Core Values, Strengths Finder, Service
- Spring semester: Emotional Intelligence, Crucial Conversations

Level 3: Charge ON!

Student-athletes who have completed the second level of *Charging ON! (Charge UP!)* will have the opportunity to expand their skillsets with further intentional programming. This level will utilize campus and community experts to serve as facilitators to (fall 2020 start date). While it is often assumed that athletic departments with greater resources have a greater capacity, this is not always the case (Eisinger, 2002). Studies have made clear that athletic departments who maximize human, financial, and structural resources are better able to positively impact the effectiveness of student-athlete leadership development (Figure 2; Andrassy et al., 2014). Studies show that athletic departments “dedicated” to student-athlete development highlight the critical role of coaches and internal athletic department stakeholders as a significant strength of a department’s human resource capacity. For example, engaging internal stakeholders,

creatively securing funding, and leveraging external relationships were found to be key characteristics of athletic departments that demonstrate a strong organizational capacity. Many athletic departments have overcome their lack of resources by using internal resources and people to implement their own “do-it-yourself (DIY) leadership academies” (Voight & Hickey, 2016). Those who insource their own people and resources are better able to conform their programs to the department’s philosophies, traditions, and visions. As a result, the successful implementation of a leadership development program is the ability of an athletic departments to maximize its organizational capacity (Voight, 2016). *Charge ON!* will utilize campus and community partnerships to provide student-athletes with additional tools and skills to successfully transition to life after sport. Examples include ways to stay physically active after sport (kinesiology), resumes and mock interviews (student success), financial literacy (business), holistic wellness (counseling), and physical health (nursing).