

THE EFFECT OF A CAREER INTERVENTION PROGRAM
ON THE CAREER SELF-EFFICACY OF COLLEGE STUDENT-ATHLETES
AT A NCAA DIVISION III INSTITUTION: A PROGRAM EVALUATION

By
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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effectiveness of a career intervention program on the career self-efficacy of college student-athletes at a private NCAA Division III institution in the Midwest. The purpose of this study was to determine if there were significant improvements in career self-efficacy scores among student-athletes participating in the Life After Sport Transition (LAST) program. The participants were 59 male and 39 female student-athletes across 13 varsity sports. The study consisted of pre-testing and post-testing of student-athlete participant career self-efficacy beliefs using pre-selected variables from the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Scale – Short Form (CDMSE-SF).

Descriptive statistics described the demographic characteristics of the student-athletes who participated in the program. Paired sample t-tests suggested participants' career self-efficacy beliefs were high to begin with, their scores overall improved from pre-test to post-test, and were significant at $p < .05$ in three personal beliefs: finding out employment trends for an occupation over the next 10 years, preparing a good resume to be considered by employers, and successfully managing the job interview process. Independent sample t-tests indicated there were no significant differences among any of the groups assessed in the study. Results also suggested participants were satisfied with the program and believed it should continue as a program offered on campus in the future.

The findings of this study have important implications for student-athlete career development efforts at small colleges and universities that lack the athletic staff, resources, and extracurricular funding to implement similar programs. This study provides support for such career practices, and indicates that career self-efficacy is responsive to change through career interventions.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated in memory of my dear grandmother, Johnnie M. Watkins as you were and always will be my biggest fan in support of this doctoral expedition. In memoriam of Kevin E. Gardner, my devoted road warrior and closest friend from childhood to adulthood, the loyalty you instilled as a friend, teammate, roommate, and best man will never be forgotten.

I also dedicate this manuscript to my beautiful wife Amy, and our boys Kylan, Kamden, Kyrie, and Kamari. So much sacrifice has been made by each of you to ensure this goal was achievable. I hope this can one day serve as an inspiration to my boys and empower each of you to accomplish your dreams no matter the amount of effort, range of difficulty, or level of investment. Amy, you rocked it from day one, never wavered, and can never be thanked enough for holding down our home during my long hours, days, and nights writing. Your own career aspirations and attainment of National Board Teacher Certification was pivotal, and an extremely inspirational time for me.

In 2005, I began a purpose-driven career, traveling across country 240 days a year, assisting student-athletes with their personal and professional development, individuals who were in the shoes I was once in. Now, 15 years, 800 athletic programs, and 500,000 student-athletes later, I could not be prouder of my relentless effort and impact on achieving workforce outcomes for this demographic. As a final point of dedication, this is for competitive athletes around the globe who have made or are in the process of making the successful life after sport transition.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation was designed to evaluate the effect of a career intervention program on the career self-efficacy of college student-athletes at a small, liberal arts college in the Midwest. The athletic department at a NCAA Division III institution in the greater Chicago area expressed interest in a career transition program for its student-athletes, which is referred to in this study as the Life After Sport Transition (LAST) career program. The Vice President for Student Affairs, Director of Athletics, and Director of Career Services were among campus stakeholders involved in initial discussions with the researcher, who is the author of this dissertation. This program evaluation consists of data from varsity student-athlete participants across all academic classifications; freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Campus stakeholders acknowledged that student-athletes at the respective institution continued to express concerns about transitioning from sport to career after their athletic eligibility ends. In order to address these concerns, a program evaluation was used to help guide the study, and determine if the intervention had a positive effect on program participants.

Although the researcher worked alongside campus leadership at the research study site to clarify, design, and, implement the intervention, the focus of this dissertation was on the evaluation aspect. Conducting an evaluation of a career transition program has relevance to the literature on collegiate student-athletes and the lack of career services provided to student-athletes at smaller, private institutions. Traditional college students seeking career-related assistance are often provided such support during their college career, because they learn how to navigate institutional pathways and have adequate time to do so (Carodine, 2003; Gaston-Gayles, 2005; Martens, 1998). Career services designed specifically for students in athletics are often

limited, and not as well-received by the busy student-athlete (Carodine, 2003). There is a significant number of student-athletes needing personalized career development, and there is also a demand for relevant programs in this area (Gaston-Gayles, 2005). There is also an opportunity for collegiate student-athletes to increase the sense of competence and self-worth regarding personal career development (Martens, 1998). One aspect of self-worth that will be examined in this study is the relationship between career development and self-efficacy. Self-Efficacy is defined as an individual's belief in his or her ability to succeed at a given task (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy beliefs affect behavior, and how much effort is placed on specific tasks, in addition to the length of time one will persist despite overcoming adversity in route to complete the designated task (Bandura, 1977). Betz, Taylor and Hackett (1983) were among the early researchers to tie Bandura's theory of self-efficacy to career decision-making. The term career self-efficacy was then discovered as an individual's belief in their own ability to successfully perform a career-related task or behavior (Taylor & Betz, 1983).

Statement of the Problem

Commitment to sport, which is often developed early in life and encouraged by parents, coaches, and peers, may delay an athlete's career preparation (Martens & Lee, 1998). Because of this commitment, student-athletes tend to embrace a greater role in participation of their sport, and lesser role in participation of other educational-centered activities (Martens & Lee, 1998). Researchers have identified a correlation between high athletic identity and low career preparation among student-athletes at all levels (Martens & Cox, 2000; Martens & Lee, 1998; Murphy, Petitpas, & Brewer, 1996; Sanstedt et al., 2004; Wiechman & Williams, 1997).

While there is a considerable amount of research regarding low career preparation among athletic communities, there is little evidence supporting the planning, implementing, and evaluating of a career intervention program for college student-athletes. Moreover, research is nearly non-existent on this matter at the NCAA Division III level. These points should be used to differentiate this study from evidence found in earlier research. This is a program evaluation designed to examine the effectiveness of a career intervention program on the career decision self-efficacy among student-athletes and help them gain career-related outcomes pertaining to life after sport transition. Program outcomes may inform other athletic departments to develop a long-term, career transition program to address the lack of career preparation among college student-athletes on today's campuses nationwide.

Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of this program evaluation was to work with an institution to gather, explore, and understand information in a way that evaluative judgements can be made about the worth or merit of the program, as well as, the program's effect on career self-efficacy (Maher 2012). Relatedly, information may be used to make conclusions about the program's strengths, limitations, and areas of future improvement. This program evaluation was conducted to help enhance and continue developing a program, not to make summative judgement about it (Maher, 2012). Additionally, program relevant information can be used to decide how to implement and operate a program, as well as, increase the likelihood of the program's value toward the target population in need (Maher 2012).

Maher's (2012) program planning and evaluation framework guides this study utilizing the four phases of program development: Clarification, Design, Implementation, and Evaluation and a description of all four phases are discussed in Chapter 3. This study focuses on the

evaluation phase. Program implementation consists of a comprehensive career development session, often referred to as the career intervention. After implementation the program evaluation is conducted so that judgements can be made about the program's effect on career self-efficacy, and the overall value of the program as perceived by college student-athletes. These initiatives inform future program improvement and development. Results of the study are derived from participating in the career intervention session, answering a satisfaction questionnaire on the entire experience, and completing a career self-efficacy assessment that rates a participant's ability to complete career-related tasks.

There were four forms administered throughout the program. First, an individual consent form was distributed prior to start of the program. Second, the Athlete Participant Information (API) form was provided to obtain descriptive and demographic information about program participants. Third, the Athlete Participant Evaluation (APE) form was directed at the end of the session to collect feedback and understand the level of satisfaction among program participants. Finally, student-athlete participants were asked to complete a condensed version of the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Scale-Short Form (CDMSE-SF) to rate their confidence level in their ability to complete career-related tasks. This assessment was administered before (pre-test) and after (post-test) the career intervention occurred. Follow-up meetings with senior athletic administrators closely involved took place immediately after the session to gain additional feedback on future program improvement and development. A final discussion was scheduled with senior leaders on campus to review program participant feedback and possible recommendations for future university program integration, as well as, to assess the program's potential value to the target population.

Importance of the Evaluation

This program evaluation is important because limited career focus among student-athletes consequently affects future earnings, employment status, and overall attitudes toward early career transition (Burns, Jasinski, Dunn, & Fletcher, 2013). The findings of this program evaluation may assist the institution's stakeholders with strategies for improving student-athlete career preparation within the university. This evaluation may also expand the athletic program's offering of an isolated course or program to improve the overall career preparation of student-athletes from their freshman to senior years at the university.

As higher education continues to change and evolve, athletic departments have a need to adapt as well. It is important to ensure programming is in place to educate student-athletes and help them with career transition outside of collegiate athletics. Revealing the potential benefits student-athletes may gain including how to articulate transferrable skills acquired from competition in athletics should not only be a priority, but a responsibility. This study provides critical information to an athletic department on the outcomes student-athletes may gain from a career transition program, as well as, the potential strengths and limitations of such a career intervention, and the areas of improvement for future program development.

Introduction to the Program

The purpose of this research was to determine the effectiveness of an intervention program on the career self-efficacy of student-athlete participants at a private, liberal arts college in the greater Chicago area. This section provides information about the relevant situation of the Division of Intercollegiate Athletics, within a NCAA Division III institution, and about its student-athletes and their potential career outcomes. Program evaluation goals addressed the athletic department's need to gain student-athlete satisfaction with the program, identify

strengths and limitations of the intervention, and acknowledge potential areas of program development. This information was gathered by the researcher based on feedback and information from the campus administration, and senior athletic administrators.

The research setting is Concordia University Chicago (CUC), located in River Forest, IL, just outside Chicago city limits. The university is part of the Concordia University System that includes eight colleges and universities, which operate independently in the United States and led by the Lutheran Church. Campus enrollment for the 2018-2019 academic year surpassed 6,000 students with more than 1,500 classifying as undergraduate students. The private, four-year institution, known for its student engagement and civic engagement efforts, is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and offers bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, and doctoral degrees through its five schools. The College of Business, College of Education, and College of Innovation and Professional Programs are the most popular schools among the student-athletes on campus (Undergraduate Fast Facts, 2018). Concordia has a solid intercollegiate athletics program, and competes as a NCAA Division III member institution. Athletics at Concordia consists of 19 athletic sports programs and nearly 400 student-athletes. Concordia University Chicago has competed in the Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference since 2006 along with 13 other private colleges and universities from the bordering states of Illinois and Wisconsin (Athletics Homepage, 2018).

Participating student-athletes experienced an integrated career session, also known to this study as the career intervention. The session was conducted in an athletic-wide, group setting consisting of student-athletes and employers over the course of three hours. The session was conducted on campus, and there was no cost to attend. Campus stakeholders strongly encouraged student-athlete attendance to the career session, and those who had academic

schedule conflicts were excused. The majority of the student-athlete population were expected to attend the career session after accounting for permissible, pre-scheduled absences. Integrated topics were covered on career and graduate school planning, career and employment strategies, and making the most of online resources and professional networking opportunities, which are discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

Program Evaluation Questions

The evaluation questions for this program evaluation have been designed to assist in gathering information about the worth and merit of the Life After Sport Transition (LAST) career program. Answers to these evaluation questions were used to inform conclusions and recommendations about the program's use and future campus integration. The questions below were designed to address the preferred areas of interest by the hosting university and provide results in an organized, practical format:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of the student-athletes who participated in the program?
2. Did participating in the Life After Sport Transition (LAST) program improve the career self-efficacy of the student-athletes?
3. What was the overall satisfaction level of the student-athletes who participated in the program?

The answers to these questions will indicate whether this career transition program a) addressed the unique student-athlete demographics of the study, b) achieved the projected goals of the program, and c) acquired satisfaction among its program participants. The information gathered from this evaluation will be used to make conclusions about the opportunities and limitations facing the program, and areas for future improvement. The job of the researcher was not to

provide statistically significant results, but to assess the actual program that was conducted and evaluate its fidelity. However, there is a major question that will quickly arise among the results and discussion, regardless of the study's program evaluation design. *Do program participants' career self-efficacy scores increase after experiencing the intervention?* Ultimately, stakeholders would simply like to learn if this program had an effect on the participating student-athletes.

Significance of the Study

It is widely known, and research supports, that due to the lack of knowledge, skills, and abilities related to career transition, student-athletes are at-risk for limited career growth, loss of earnings, underemployment, and poor outlook on early career opportunities (Burns et. al, 2013). The rationale for choosing the educational problem and lack of student-athlete career development is both personal and important to the researcher who has 15 years of related experience working with student-athletes. In a recent interview, a senior campus leader at the program site stated that an evaluation of career-related services had never been conducted nor had an intervention, such as a series of career components, been executed to measure the overall value of the initiative (personal communication, November 1, 2018). The athletic program at the research site has collaborated with career services in the past to conduct a single career talk, but not an integrated career segment with a variety of career development topics focusing on its student-athletes. According to campus leaders, a comprehensive career session would be an improvement over what has been done the past several years for the student-athletes (personal communication, November 1, 2018).

Scriven (1971), an academic philosopher, known for his theory and practice of evaluation, stated “the purpose of evaluation is not to prove, but improve” (p. 133). This

program evaluation may help the institution provide greater gains toward career preparation for its student-athletes. Worthen, Sanders, and Fitzpatrick (1997) note that “evaluations should be conducted to examine the effectiveness of a program versus a relationship between variables, and evaluation is determining the worth or merit of an evaluation object” (p. 5). In this study, the student-athlete career intervention is the object being evaluated. And, “evaluations are complementary to, and supportive of, the development and provision of effective and responsive public and private sector interventions” (Owen, 2007, p. 22). This evaluation could be validation toward the career intervention, to identify the strengths and limitations perceived by those involved with the program, and to improve past initiatives by providing recommendations for future institutional career programming. The utmost outcome from this research study will be the effect of a career intervention on the career self-efficacy of program participants and their capacity to pick up knowledge, skills, and abilities related to career transition.

Organization of the Study

Chapter One provides a general introduction to the problem; lack of student-athlete career preparation within university athletic departments, and the significant amount of time placed on athletic-related activities versus educational-centered initiatives. The program evaluation, purpose, and literature related to the evaluation are explored in this chapter. The research questions, assumptions and limitations of the study are also highlighted in this section. The chapter also includes the significance of the study, which focused on the needs of university athletic departments to produce career programming for college student-athletes, and concludes with an overview of the proceeding chapters.

Chapter Two begins with an introduction to NCAA Division III athletics and college student-athletes, and continues with a general discussion about the time and sport commitment,

academic priorities, and role that athletic identity plays in overall student-athlete development and well-being. This chapter also provides an exploration into career self-efficacy research, and rundown of career development interventions. A critical analysis of the literature is provided, along with a chapter ending discussion. Research and practice in the area of student-athletes at small, private institutions has been narrow, which is one of many reasons this dissertation is valuable to the field.

Chapter Three provides background about the setup and design of the intervention, laying a roadmap for how it was created and organized. Chapter Four presents the methodology that was used in this study to evaluate the effect a career intervention has on the career self-efficacy of college student-athletes. Chapters Three and Four describe the research setting and use of Maher's (2012) program planning and evaluation framework as the primary method for evaluating the program. His model encourages the use of four phases during the planning and evaluation process, which are ordered as the clarification, design, implementation, and evaluation phases. This study focused on the last of his stages. These set of principles allowed the researcher and research institution to identify and develop program goals, content, standards, and program outcomes. The characteristics of study participants will be described, and the study procedures will be outlined. Finally, a plan is shared in Chapter Four on the data management and collection process, as well as, the overall research method and data analysis plan.

Chapter Five provides results of the overall program evaluation followed by an analysis of the data collected from the Athlete Participant Information (API) form, Athlete Participant Evaluation (APE) form, and the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Scale – Short Form (CDMSE-SF). The findings will be described in order and relation to the evaluation questions, which align with program evaluation goals. Chapter Six provides a discussion of the results,

implications of the study, limitations of the study, and offers recommendations for continued program improvement and future research.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a focused review of the literature as it pertains to college student-athletes and career development practice. Factors including athletic identity, commitment to sport, and academic priorities are among those that describe the climate within today's college athletic departments. An introduction to career self-efficacy is presented, along with a summary of common career interventions used in higher education practice. In this first section, the campus environment and athletic makeup are shared through the lens of NCAA Division III athletics, which may also apply to other small, private institutions that remain lean in areas of athletic funding, athletic staff, and programming opportunities for student-athletes.

NCAA Division III Athletics

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) is the governing body of more than 1100 institutions that participate in championship competition at the national level. This section provides information on college student-athletes who compete in NCAA Division III sports, and how literature suggests their circumstances are different than those who participate at other levels. In this review, division III is categorized as one of three intercollegiate athletics divisions with NCAA affiliation, governance, and championship play. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (2020) describes the division III culture as an integrated experience focusing on both academic and competitive athletic success. Division III rules are independent from other divisions, and intended to minimize potential conflicts between athletics and academics (NCAA, 2020). An example, is the focus on regional in-season and conference play to support student-athletes' involvement in academic, co-curricular, and extracurricular opportunities (NCAA, 2020). This is different from NCAA Division I and II student-athlete

experiences, which often engage with regional and national play, as well as, complex athletic schedules that may require a generous amount of time away from campus (NCAA, 2020).

Before placing an emphasis on the unique differences that exist solely within division III athletics, one should have an understanding of the type of schools that comprise of the other divisions, as well as, a breakdown by level of participation. Division I schools, on average, enroll the most students, provide the most athletic scholarships, and manage the largest athletic budgets (NCAA, 2018). The division II environment provides growth through academics and high-level athletic competition with a focus on community engagement, while serving a high percentage of first-generation students (NCAA, 2018). According to NCAA Recruiting Facts (2018), 179,200 student-athletes from more than 350 colleges and universities participate in division I, while 121,900 student-athletes across 300 schools participate in division II (NCAA, 2018).

NCAA Division III serves more student-athletes (190,900), and member institutions (440) than any other NCAA athletics division (NCAA, 2018). The majority of schools in this division represent small, private institutions that value the overall educational experience, successful academic completion rates, and coaches in significant roles as educators (NCAA Commissioners, 2020). Division III student-athletes report active engagement in academic extras such as faculty research, study abroad opportunities, and curriculum capstone projects (NCAA Commissioners, 2020). At division III, the graduation rate is about 5% higher than the overall student body, there is more volunteer involvement among student-athletes, and they are likely to see themselves as part of the campus community over their peers competing in other athletic divisions (NCAA Commissioners, 2020).

Perhaps the greatest difference that separates division III athletics from the other divisions is in the allocation of athletic scholarships awarded to students. At the division I and division II level about 60% of all student-athletes receive some level of athletics aid, while student-athletes at division III institutions receive no form of athletic scholarships (NCAA, 2020). However, 80% of all student-athletes at this level receive some form of academic grant or need-based scholarship, which institutional gift aid totals \$17,000 on average across division III schools (NCAA Recruiting, 2018).

Based on the research reviewed, division III institutions provide an environment that involves the balance of rigorous academics and competitive athletics while fostering personal and professional career development beyond the classroom (NCAA Commissioners, 2020). Student-athletes at this level have busy schedules, academic priorities, and face similar time constraint challenges as student-athletes in more competitive divisions without the obligation of an athletics scholarship (NCAA Commissioners, 2020). Although NCAA schools affiliated with divisions I and II have standardized athletic eligibility requirements, it is important to note that NCAA Division III schools do not. Schools featured at the division III level are subject to their own admissions and eligibility standards, which are aligned with the overall requirements of the general student body (NCAA College-Bound, 2019). This often means, division III student-athletes may face tougher admissions and college entrance requirements than their peers representing other divisions (NCAA College-Bound, 2019).

Recent studies show that student-athletes participating in division III athletics have quality, well-rounded experiences, and desire integrating co-curricular activities into their normal routine (NCAA, 2018, 2019 & 2020). Unlike their peers competing at other levels, division III student-athletes report having higher engagement with non-athletic pursuits, including 25% of

division III student-athletes experiencing studying abroad, 45% working at least 8.5 hours per week, 60% planning to attend graduate school, and 67% engaging in internship experiences. Literature presented in this section on the culture within division III athletics supports the notion that student-athletes at this level may have less of a need for career support than their athletic peers at other institutional types.

College Student-Athletes

Participation in collegiate athletics provide a promising opportunity to compete at a high-level while working toward an academic degree, which may lead to lifelong achievement (NCAA College-Bound, 2019). There are more than 480,000 student-athletes competing within three NCAA divisions, and research indicates fewer than 2% of them will go pro in their respective sport (NCAA College-Bound, 2019). Therefore, college educational attainment, and achieving personal and professional growth through campus experiences may be the most rewarding benefit to being a student-athlete aside from competing in varsity athletics. Overall, student-athletes graduate at higher rates than their peers in the student body, and those rates continue to rise each year (NCAA College-Bound, 2019).

Before addressing the campus experience and career development of college student-athletes, it is important to understand the sport commitment and academic priorities required of this demographic on college campuses nationwide. This review shares how competitive student-athletes at the intercollegiate level have different expectations from other college students in terms of campus involvement, daily schedule, time availability, etc. (Carodine, 2003; Gaston-Gayles, 2005; Martens, 1998). This unique responsibility is why it is important to address the need for innovative learning and practices to assist with college student-athlete development. The lifestyles of student-athletes are distinctive due to the full academic, and athletic

responsibilities they are expected to maintain. In varsity athletics, student-athletes endure daily training workouts, routine game film sessions, and extensive, competitive athletic schedules (Carodine, 2003). College student-athletes face more restrictions and priorities around campus than their non-student-athlete counterparts (Martens, 1998).

Sport commitment. Colleges and universities at every level are often criticized for the number of hours student-athletes commit to their sport versus other educational activities (Gaston-Gayles & Hu, 2009). A research study conducted by the NCAA on more than 21,000 current student-athletes found the median time spent on athletics for one sport was 42 hours a week while in season. This number was up from 39 hours a week in 2010 for that same sport (NCAA Goals, 2016). “Student-athletes also spend less time on educational centered activities than their peers, and the least amount of time spent overall is on career development” (Gaston-Gayles & Hu, 2009, p. 316).

Gaston-Gayles (2009) conducted research about student-athletes at larger institutions, particularly focused on football players. Results revealed that at least 40 hours per week was being spent on non-educational activities related to sports. Martens (1998) found that a student-athlete’s commitment to sport was formed early during childhood and supported by family, friends and athletic constituents such as teammates and coaches. In terms of demographics, researchers found female student-athletes capable of balancing greater academic and athletic schedules while maintaining a high-level of social activity on campus (Gaston-Gayles & Hu, 2009). Regardless of sport and gender, commitment plays an incredible role in delaying student-athletes’ exposure to things outside their athletic interests, which is why this study considers time as a critical component to providing the appropriate career-related solutions for college student-

athletes. This overall concern of commitment to sport does not exist solely at the division I level, but even division III athletics as well (NCAA Goals, 2016).

Academic priorities. Student-athletes have similar academic expectations as any college student regarding keeping a solid class attendance, studying course content, and consistently achieving good scores during an academic semester (Umbach, 2004). In contrast to the traditional college students, college student-athletes are also responsible for maintaining athletic eligibility during their career as a requirement of the governing body, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). This responsibility, according to Carodine (2003) can be an influence on making solid grades from a student-athlete's perspective. For example, failure to sustain a competitive grade point average would hinder a student-athlete from competing in his or her sport (Carodine, 2003).

In past years, the NCAA issued standard policies among college athletics in terms of academic performance, while providing additional resources in this area. The academic progress rate (APR) for example, helps an institution progress the learning experience of its student-athletes (Gaston-Gayles, 2009). Many athletic departments have even added academic advisors and learning skills specialists to assist in a variety of developmental areas such as multi-tasking, time management, and study skills (Gaston-Gayles, 2004). Academic advisors can help increase the confidence of student-athletes in areas associated with strong academic advising and studying (Gaston-Gayles, 2005). Academics will often be on the list as one of the top priorities for student-athletes, because it directly affects their eligibility to play (Carodine, 2003). Athletic departments must now allow learning intervention programs to assist the student-athlete community with additional development (Gaston-Gayles, 2009). Because program intervention was a key construct in this study, it will be discussed further in this chapter. The overall

approach in which a student-athlete develops is based on how he or she applies what they have learned through athletic competition (Gaston-Gayles, 2004). This study mirrors the importance of academic performance, and learning while also focusing on another kind of intervention – career intervention.

Athletic Identity. Although a significant amount of research has been conducted on student-athlete academics, there has also been a strong focus on student-athlete identity. In 2004, researchers Aries, McCarthy, Salovey, and Banaji categorized competitive individuals as high-commitment athletes if they spent more than 10 hours per day related to athletic participation. Collegiate student-athletes have a high degree of athletic identity, which has been defined in the literature as the extent to which an individual identifies with his or her athletic role (Martens, 1998). Many student-athletes have decided to aim for a career as an athlete rather than in the academic discipline pursued while in college (Martens, 1998). Furthermore, student-athletes with future aspirations of pursuing professional sports are more inclined to degree completion while performing at the college level (Gaston-Gayles, 2004).

College student-athletes can fail at having an impact on individual developmental areas depending on their athletic status. It is understood from the direction of research conducted by Martens (1998) and Gaston-Gayles (2004) that student-athletes have a high-athletic identity. This high degree of athletic identity affects career exploration tendencies that lead to lower levels of self-confidence toward career development for these individuals. Student-athletes with a major athletic-identity have been known to have difficulty toward career planning and goal setting to say the least. Linnemeyer and Brown (2010) revealed that student-athletes displayed a lower-level of career focus when compared to their non-athlete counterparts. The authors described career focus as a way to realistic career decisions and progress toward one's

professional career. Ultimately, it implies that an individual has acquired the necessary knowledge and skills to develop in a chosen profession. Professional development areas surrounding the scope of adequate career development are negatively affected by the student-athlete who is highly immersed in his or her athletic career (Cox, 2001).

Sanstedt (2004) looked at the relationship of athletic identity and career self-efficacy through a 40-item survey that measured the career situation, athlete experiences, and academic gains of college student-athletes. Career situation is the degree to which personal growth may or may not improve based on career-related experiences such as interests, skills, beliefs, and values (Sanstedt, 2004). The scale of items used in the Student-Athlete Career Situation Inventory (SACSI) suggested what experiences formed within the college environment affected the overall, student-athlete career development. The findings indicated five central themes: career self-efficacy, career to sport identity, challenges in career development, sport to work relationship, and career control (Sanstedt, 2004). Career versus sport identity and career development self-efficacy have a common relationship in the fact that student-athletes who do not have a high sport identity are very comfortable and confident in their career readiness. The ability or inability to relate the athletic skill-set to a respective career shares a certain value among college student-athletes making an important and independent career transition. Sanstedt (2004) also referenced one other study conducted by Smallman and Sowa in 1996 that found student-athletes among revenue and non-revenue producing sports have a lower-level of career maturity than the non-athlete population. This next section will discuss the concept of self-efficacy, and its relationship with career development, particularly among college student-athletes (Sanstedt, 2004).

Career Self-Efficacy

It is important to gain a general understanding of career development before looking at the topic of career self-efficacy from a student's perspective. The traditional definition of career development has been modified on many occasions over time. It can be characterized in a cooperative or group manner, as well as, an individual occurrence. McDonald (2005) would agree with both the individual and group concept concerning career development. The individual experience is described as the process by which a person develops in stages. The group version is the process that individuals experience working together to enhance their aptitude and worth among career development. Parker (2009) explains career development as the energy an individual spends independently or collectively developing future career aspirations and long-term professional goals. Career Development can be a life-long learning process that consists of several themes such as career planning, career choice, and career transition to name a few of its stages (Parker, 2009). Exploration is an essential part of career development and very effective in assisting college students. Career exploration consists of the learning activities performed by an individual to enhance the commitment toward quality career decision-making and growth (Fouad, 2009). Each of these themes are addressed in the next chapter, which is a description of the career intervention program used in this study.

This main understanding of career development has been integrated with several other common themes involving leadership, learning, self-worth, and employability. It can be linked to leadership in working collaboratively with others at career practices such as mentoring, networking, and occupational advancement (Parker, 2009). Shurts and Shoffner (2004) discuss the career development of student-athletes by integrating the learning concept in their research. The authors found it is important to create learning opportunities for these individuals because it

will ultimately enhance their personal development. This study used the career intervention program to create learning opportunities for college student-athletes at a small, private institution.

Self-worth, from what literature explains, has been added to discussions about career development based on an individual's career decision-making practice. This concept of self-worth, also known as self-efficacy, is defined as a person's condition in making successful choices related to career development in a timely manner (Wang et al., 2006). In its simplest form, self-efficacy is also associated with the level of confidence an individual acquires while completing tasks related to career development practice (Reed, 2004). Ultimately, career self-efficacy is an individual's expectations to actively participate in educational activities that help with overall career development (Reed, 2004). In a study conducted at three Midwestern universities, findings suggested that extended hours in sport participation was connected to lower self-efficacy for career decision-making in 189 collegiate student-athletes (Glastetter-Fender & Shelton, 2000).

Aside from their practical approach, Wang (2006) and colleagues delivered an adoptive approach based on Bandura's theory (1986) to highlight self-efficacy among an individual's career development. It was concluded that if an individual can engage and successfully complete a number of career-related activities, he or she would have high self-efficacy. In this current study, program participants engaged in a series of career segments, and were asked if career-related activities met their expectations. This approach indicated positive outcomes related to career self-efficacy beliefs among college student-athletes. Moreover, student-athletes that have solid self-efficacy patterns tend to gain more toward career development from the college experience (Sanstedt, 2004). Students who have become more outspoken about their career

exploration and familiar with their own vocational aspirations tend to be more self-efficacious in the career development process (Wang et al., 2006). There was a definitive relationship between the literature in this chapter, and the overall findings in this study.

In general, literature suggests that self-efficacy beliefs influence the choice of majors and career decisions of college students (Hackett & Betz, 1989). For decades, studies have demonstrated the contributing role of self-efficacy beliefs toward positive career and academic outcomes (Hackett, 1985; Lent & Hackett, 1987). Undergraduates choose college majors and careers in areas they feel most competent in and avoid areas they feel less competent in (Lopez & Bieschke, 1991). For example, the self-efficacy of college undergraduates is more predictive of their interest, choice of academic courses, and selected majors than their prior achievement or outcome expectations (Pajares & Miller, 1994). Hackett (1995) noted the key implications from these examples, and charted future directions for career self-efficacy research. In the next discussion, an overview of career intervention programs is shared. This review covers activities that are being evaluated in this study, and what is currently being used by athletic departments big and small, regardless of size, budget, and resources.

Career Development Interventions

While athletic departments face challenges in providing a balanced educational experience for student-athletes, demands of greater career preparation for all college students also exist. In 2015, McGraw-Hill Education published results from a survey conducted by Hanover Research on workforce readiness of nearly 1,000 college students. Findings revealed 67% of college students want more internships and professional experience, 61% want classes designed to help build career skills, and 58% want more time to focus on career preparation (Workforce Readiness, 2015).

Not only do students feel the need for better career preparation while in college, but employers agree that students do not possess the learning outcomes they view as important in the workplace. According to a recent survey of 400 employers conducted by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU), there are concerns regarding new graduates and their transition to the workforce (Hart Research, 2015). Employers give college graduates low scores regarding oral communication, written communication, critical thinking, creativity, and 88% of employers believe it is important for academic institutions to equip students with the skills and knowledge to complete applied learning activities (Hart Research, 2015). This information shared by employers, and the challenges mentioned above are important to the current study, because it inspired the inclusion of employer-led segments within the program. The collection of interventions presented over the next few sections are among those already utilized and provided through career services on campus.

Career Centers. Career services departments were created and placed under the area of student affairs at most institutions to assist the student with making a prominent transition through college (Brown, 2004). Many workshops, programs, counseling, and training initiatives are provided to college students through their on-campus career services office. Electronic resources, print materials, and personal assessments are also afforded by these departments (Brown, 2004). Although often conveniently located inside student center buildings, and central common areas on campus, reaching career services may still be a challenge for some students (Fouad, 2009). A study was conducted on 694 college students and their use of career services. Career counseling was among the most familiar services provided by career centers to college students in this study and only 50% of the participants were aware this service was available. Even fewer college students surveyed were aware of the university career center website

although it was located directly under the student section on the homepage of the website (Fouad, 2009).

Career centers can only do so much for college students, and maybe even less for student-athletes due to their academic and athletic priorities (Martens & Lee, 1998). Career centers can foster the progress of a student-athlete, but it is mainly the student-athletes that must seize the opportunities offered by career personnel on campus. However, it is the responsibility of career professionals to have a proactive approach in place when connecting student-athletes to career programs. Career development outreach can be very successful if the career center reaches out to an athletic department to collectively provide programs and services for these individuals (Martens & Lee, 1998).

University career centers are designed to facilitate the journey toward career success, but even traditional college students, non-athletes for example, often decide on post-college plans without consulting with career services on campus (Brown, 2004). While a focus on student-athlete career development among athletics in accordance with the campus career center is possible, certain factors prevent advancing this relationship. First, considering the time commitment and number of obligations they face, it is unlikely that most collegiate student-athletes will proactively seek out the university career center (Sandstedt et al., 2004). Second, even in the case of academically-driven students, the combination of academic and athletic responsibilities can cause career anxiety for student-athletes leaving them disconnected from the overall campus experience (Carodine et al., 2001 & Sandstedt et al., 2004). Lastly, since university career centers are generally located across campus, and away from athletic facilities, student-athletes may perceive the career center to be unreachable to some extent (Martens & Lee, 1998). With the impeding issues hindering university athletics and career centers that

coexist with the demands of a student-athlete's athletic environment, it is clear why career development may not be on the list of priorities for athletic programs and student-athletes (Sandstedt et al., 2004). Moreover, this indicates why there is a need for athletic departments, career practitioners, and student-athletes to gain access to programming that addresses the lack of focus placed on career development by the athletic community. In summary, the campus collaboration between career services and the athletic departments in meeting the needs of student-athletes is important, and this successfully occurred in this study.

Career courses. Reese and Miller (2006) would suggest being creative in university career education and intervention programs. The authors acknowledged the need to increase demand for career services within the college experience by discussing the effects of implementing a career development course. A career development course is mainly available for students who are undecided in their respective fields of study. Shurts and Shoffner (2004) also share that student-athletes have consistently developed at a slower pace than non-student-athletes in college. Therefore, they could be behind the average student in selecting a major to pursue during the undergraduate experience.

A career development course should assist with the overall career education and planning progress of college students enrolled in the course. Researchers Folsom and Reardon (2003) provide an overview of career development courses in their study and even provide a focus on specialty courses. It has been proven that an academic department can assist in a student's career planning process by offering a two-hour academic specialty course in the program. This specialty course should be taught by faculty in the department and supplemented by career professionals in the field (Folsom and Reardon, 2003).

In a study discussed earlier, Fouad (2009) found most college students needed the services provided by career centers, but only half of them knew what those services entailed. A separate study was later conducted by the same investigator measuring the effects of a career development course on college students. The career course students were distributed a questionnaire at the beginning and end of the course to measure the career decision-making process. It was revealed that the semester-long career course had been successful in decreasing the challenges students faced toward making an effective career decision. Also, course participants increased their self-worth and ability to believe in themselves when enduring the career planning process in college (Fouad, 2009).

Career assessments. A career decision-making activity often overlooked is career assessments and evaluations (Brown, 2004). Administering a career assessment to student-athletes may be a productive method to help these individuals determine a prospective career. Carodine (2003) describes the most commonly used assessments for student-athletes in his study. *Sigi-Plus* is a computer-based career assistance program that matches a student's beliefs and well-being with a list of careers that fit the individual's profile. *Discover* is another interactive online program that provides career planning assistance to the participant. This computer-based test is often used by career professionals during orientation because it links prospective occupational roles and academic majors for the participant. College freshmen and sophomores could truly enhance their overall career development by taking the Discover assessment because of the focus placed on academic development (Carodine, 2003).

Carodine (2003) describes *The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* as focusing more on the personality of an individual, and whether or not he or she is an introvert or extrovert. There is not really much depth in terms of career guidance, but this would be a productive initial

assessment for college freshmen to experience. *The Strong Interest Inventory* provides a closer-look at an individual's career values and activities. The strength of this assessment is acknowledging the benefit of the participant's personal and professional aspirations. The relationship between the participant's interests and those interests of successful professionals can be collectively gathered and supported in the results (Carodine, 23, 2003). Historically, progress toward career development has been centered around assessment-based learning, and the interests, attitudes, and skills acquired by an individual while increasing his or her knowledge about vocational opportunities (Rottinghaus, 2009).

Life skills programs. Many collegiate athletic programs have developed departments known as athletic career centers, student-athlete development areas, and life skills programs. The first two areas are more sophisticated and often established at NCAA Division I schools, while the latter, may also be found at NCAA Division II and III schools (Carodine, 2003). At division III schools the life skills designation may represent a single seminar, workshop or event, at a division I school it may consist of an entire department or even part of an academic-based curriculum (Carodine, 2003). The goals of life skills programs are to assist in the total development of student-athletes academically, socially, personally and vocationally (Cox, 2001). In the early 90's, the NCAA developed the initiative and called it Challenging Athletes' Minds for Personal Success (CHAMPS) Life Skills Program that was later adopted by member institutions. There are several core values of the program and at the focal point is career development. Keith Carodine (2003) explained the other core areas of this program during an article focusing on student-athlete success in and out of the educational setting. Aside from career development is the commitment to academic excellence, athletic excellence, personal development and community service. The focus on career development can include resume

writing, cover letter development, job searching strategies, alumni networking, and career educational seminars (Carodine, 2003). The current study involved student-athletes from a division III campus who had not been exposed to this type of professional development. For that reason, these areas were considered for placement in the actual intervention program.

Career advisors. Student-athletes should be very open-minded when receiving career assistance and the advice from campus counselors and advisors. Shurts and Shoffner (2004) explain that the student-athlete should feel like the career planning process is a learning experience, and not a speedy step to choosing a career at that moment. Therefore, career counselors should be creative in relating career information to student-athletes as it could be a sensitive area for the individual (Shurts and Shoffner, 2004). Career advisors might consist of an administrator from either athletics or student affairs on the university side of campus. Academic advisors or athletic coaches are sometimes designated as the career person within athletics depending on the budget and resources of the athletic program (Carodine, 2003). Lastly, at most campuses the student-athletes have access to career services advisors under the department of career services who can also assist with student-athlete driven programs.

Career sessions. Career-related activities administered by athletic departments and career services departments may be provided in a variety of forms. Orientations, semester courses, life skills classes, and workshops are at the forefront of these offerings. These career sessions provide a path for student-athletes to pursue career exploration and career choice (Sandstedt, 2004). An orientation is sometimes provided to student-athletes for the purpose of becoming familiar with athletic eligibility requirements, facilities, and developmental resources in the athletic community. Life skills development is provided to student-athletes to help prepare them for life after college (Carodine, 2003).

Brown (2004) expanded ideas on initiatives such as career seminars among influential people on campus such as athletic academic staff, career center personnel, or a guest speaker. The level of support, feedback, and networking provided from these individuals would certainly not hurt the career development of a student-athlete. Perhaps coaches would also be among potential speakers and seminar presenters in this area. Seminars and workshops offered on campus can focus on one simple topic or theme, while career courses may cover a number of career development areas over an extended period of time (Sandstedt, 2004). Ultimately, Carodine (2003) and Sandstedt (2004) agree with Fouad (2009) that career development courses and seminar sessions alike, provide a chance for college students and athletes to be introduced to how to make the transition from college to career. The host institution for this study had only conducted one seminar or workshop in the last year for its student-athletes. Therefore, this career intervention program was needed by student-athletes, and desired by campus leadership.

Career networking. An important recommendation called by Shurts and Shoffner (2004) when engaging student-athletes was to involve ways that he or she could encounter “chance events”. This meaning describes an event that happens unexpectedly. Some athletic departments require student-athletes to attend career seminars and workshops, or at least strongly encourage them to attend. For this study, student-athletes were made aware of that the program was taking place, and were encouraged by coaches to attend, however were not provided detailed descriptions about the program until upon arrival. Researchers Shurts and Shoffner, would suggest this approach could have been what led to the positive response rate in student-athlete attendance and participation at the program. Athletic personnel should continue to be creative in providing these unexpected events on campus by co-constructing learning opportunities for student-athletes (Shurts and Shoffner, 2004). These learning opportunities can also be identified

as career networking events. Career networking events and opportunities allow student-athletes to connect with former athletes, and possibly even professionals in the field. The intervention provided in this study included a career networking segment as part of the program. Carodine (2003) references University of Texas and its annual “career day” for student-athletes. More than 80 employers participated in this event, allowing college seniors a chance to independently network for career opportunities. These “career days” were conducted the day before or the day after the university-wide career fair, and gave employers a chance to have representation on a separate day and time that fits the demanding schedule of student-athletes. (Carodine, 2003).

The information presented on career development interventions in this section was widespread across the college and university spectrum. Providing interventions like the activities mentioned here help form unique and meaningful career development experiences for college student-athletes (Fouad, 2009). This chapter review overall, shared background knowledge of college student-athletes and their need for career development. It is a solid and responsible practice for career professionals and athletic departments to offer career development courses, seminars, and career networking sessions on campus for its students-athletes. It may be even more meaningful if these interventions were designed to address specific student populations, which did happen in this study of college student-athletes.

Critical Analysis of the Literature

Although the lack of focus on career preparation is anticipated, and affirmed by literature in the field, both athletic programs and student-athletes are likely to miss the mark in addressing the problem (Martens & Cox, 2000; Sanstedt et. al, 2004). According to the 100-page, recent lawsuit (McCants & Ramsay v. NCAA & UNC-Chapel Hill, 2015) against the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC), and the governing body of college sports, National

Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), student-athletes were deprived of a meaningful education. Student-athletes have little time to maintain academic-related opportunities including career development due to weekly practice participation of more than 40 hours a week (Gaston-Gayles & Hu, 2009; NCAA, 2009). Many athletic programs encourage student-athletes to seek career preparation on their own time, rather than athletic-related hours (Beamon et al., 2012). Additionally, few collegiate athletes make sufficient plans to prepare themselves for career transition (Sandstedt, Cox & Martens, 2004).

Regardless of the limited focus placed on career preparation by today's athletic programs and student-athletes, there is a growing sense of responsibility emerging within the problem. Wiechman and Williams (1997) believe career preparation among student-athletes is of utmost importance, because these students depend on the education, they receive to prepare them for life after sport. And, not only are college student-athletes at-risk to limited career growth, but the consequences toward lack of focus on career preparation extend to loss of earnings, underemployment, and poor outlook on early career opportunities (Burns et. al, 2013).

An athletic program's response to the career development challenges that student-athletes face does not have to follow earlier trends. There is much to convey from the influence of academic services on collegiate student-athletes. Access to counselors, mentors, tutors, learning specialists, and strong program support helped shape the foundation for which athletic academic services stands and operates today (Carodine, Almond & Gratto, 2001). A focus on career preparation could open opportunities for student-athletes, and should be planned by the athletic department in partnership with the university career center (Carodine et al., 2001). The potential focus on career preparation by collegiate athletics, though abstract at this stage, can expand student-athletes' views of viable career options (Martens & Lee, 1998).

Conclusion

The concept of this study and program evaluation was formed through the lens of the college student, particularly student-athletes in a small college setting. This chapter provided an extensive review of the literature on college student-athletes and career self-efficacy, a general overview of career development, and solid consideration of common career interventions used in higher education practice. Student-athletes at both small and large institutions have a non-traditional college experience, and this distinct experience, as literature has indicated, has been exposed to both positive and negative spotlights. Unlike the bulk of literature addressing NCAA Division I student-athlete career development, this study focused on college student-athletes competing at the division III level.

In summary, college student-athletes face a challenging situation in improving their own level of career self-efficacy. Today, student-athletes may be concerned more with their college athletic career than their future professional career in their field or discipline (Gaston-Gayles, 2004). Furthermore, they are less likely to become career engaged until after their role as an athlete has come to an end (Cox et al., 2001). By the time student-athletes terminate their respective athletic careers and begin the professional career search, it is at a much later time than their peers on campus (Aries et al., 2004; Gaston-Gayles & Hu, 2009). Even though student-athletes are not as motivated about their future professional careers as they are their current athletic situation, preparing them for life after collegiate athletics is still an important educational responsibility for athletic departments (Shurts & Shoffner, 2004). If college athletes are not engaged in career activities, it will be very challenging for them to become career motivated. We know from previous literature that a student-athlete must first, be engaged academically, and then they will become engaged in other career-related activities (Gaston-Gayles, 2004). This

current study found that student-athletes at a division III institution were already motivated academically, which may have played a role in their positive career development outcomes.

Literature in this chapter provided three central themes to the lack of career development among student-athletes that is worth reviewing. 1) Student-athletes spend more time on their athletic-related activities than campus or career-related actions. 2) The pressure of academics to maintain athletic eligibility places a priority-driven attitude that pushes the career piece further away. 3) The role of having a high-athletic identity causes high-anxiety that forces college athletes in the opposite direction of securing the motivation to pursue relevant career goals as needed. In order to increase the career development of this demographic, practitioners may want to observe if their student-athletes have a lower-athletic identity role. The least likely a student-athlete believes in going pro in their sport; the more likely they are to take their own career development plan serious (Wang et al., 2006). These explanations are what laid the foundation for this study, as well as, the design and implementation of an intervention program on campus.

As Maslow (1970) discussed the basic needs for an individual to know and to understand, college student-athletes must understand their chances are not very strong they will go pro in their respective sport (NCAA, 2016). This reality check may unleash a true sense of self-actualization at that point. For some individuals this reality may strike during their junior year, and for some athletes, it may not crossover until their senior year. Once college athletes have come to the realization that they need to move on from the collegiate athletic experience and focus on their career life after sports, then they may begin to get creative and think about the best options career wise. The good thing about self-actualization is there is plenty of room for creativity, problem-solving, independence, and confidence (Maslow, 2011). These non-cognitive

areas became the experience of student-athletes who participated in the career intervention program implemented in this study, which is broken down in detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

THE LIFE AFTER SPORT TRANSITION PROGRAM

This chapter describes the design and delivery of the career intervention, and how the program was implemented. The career session was conducted in November 2019, and prior to the session, student-athlete participants completed consent forms, demographics questionnaires, and pre-test measures (Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Scale). Immediately following the program, an evaluation form, and post-test measures (Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Scale) was administered to student-athlete program participants. There were 169 students who attended the session. This number consisted of both student-athletes and non-athletes as the institution opened the program to all students within the entire campus community who wished to participate. This extended effort was offered due to the NCAA compliance policy regarding student-athletes and perceived extra benefits among NCAA Division III institutions. There were 156 student-athletes (and 13 non-athletes) that participated in the session. Upon completion of the program, 98 program participants (63%) fully completed both the pre-test and post-test measures, and became the actual sample size for this study. Since the last segment of the program was an open networking forum similar to a traditional campus career fair, it was a challenge to administer the post-test to all program participants and ensure their completion of the post-test as student-athletes were allowed to exit the venue after networking with the employers at their career booths. The researcher and career services director met with coaches, and athletic administrators prior to the program to discuss the importance of student-athlete attendance. Many coaches strongly encouraged the attendance of their team, and several made program attendance mandatory. The corresponding sections in this chapter provide an overview

of the intervention program along with the setup, design, and implementation process as developed and maintained by the researcher.

The Research Setting

The site of this study was Concordia University Chicago (CUC) located in River Forest, Illinois. Concordia is a private, four-year, liberal arts university founded in 1864 that occupies a 40-acre main campus, and operates under the Lutheran Church and Concordia University System. The west suburbs campus sits 10 miles from downtown Chicago, and as of 2017 River Forest's population was over 11,000 (U.S. Census, 2017). There are more than 400 staff employees within the Concordia University Chicago campus and annual enrollment is just over 6,000 students for both the graduate and undergraduate programs (Undergraduate Fast Facts, 2018). There are more than 200 full-time and part-time faculty members, and a nearly equal gender distribution between them. The student to faculty ratio is 10 to 1, and the institution offers more than 100 programs of study leading to a certificate, bachelor's degree, and master's degree. The school has 80% of its classes with fewer than 20 students. Additionally, there are specialist programs, and doctoral programs offered both through on-campus and online learning. Approximately 100% of full-time traditional undergraduate students receive some level of financial support from the university. The university's freshman to sophomore retention rate was 67% from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017, and the six-year graduation rate was 50% for 2009 cohort (Academics and Athletics, 2018).

Concordia students represent 37 states and 7 foreign countries and 57% of undergraduate students on campus are female and 43% are males. Additionally, 46% of Concordia students are white/Caucasian, 33% Hispanic or Latino, 11% black/African-American, 4% Asian or Pacific Islander, 4% Multiethnic or other and 2% unknown. There is 68% of the undergraduate student

population from Illinois, and a significant presence from nearby Midwestern states including Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, Missouri, and Ohio. The institution is fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (Undergraduate Fast Facts, 2018).

Concordia University is considered a larger athletic program for NCAA Division III institutions, partly because of its sponsorship of football and baseball teams. The campus has 19 athletic programs and nearly 400 student-athletes out of 1,559 undergraduates. Concordia University Chicago is home to more than 20 athletic staff members and 50 coaches represented in the athletic department. Currently, Concordia Athletics compete in the Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference, and is one of its charter members since 2006 (Athletics Homepage, 2018). The mission of Concordia University is to equip men and women to serve, lead, and interconnect globally through distinction, and innovation while engaging in the Christian heritage of engaging knowledge, faith, and discovery. (Our Mission, 2018).

Participants

This study included participation from campus administrators and the student-athlete community. Campus leaders in both the Office of Student Affairs and intercollegiate athletics were instrumental in building the concept of this program study. There were also several key stakeholders across the athletics department who were involved that handle student-athlete academic services and well-being; including leadership, community service and career development. Concordia Athletics program participation was spread across all academic classifications including freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors. Fifth-year student-athletes were invited to participate in the program, which included those who had exhausted their athletic eligibility, but had a remaining semester or two on their academic schedule. The student-athlete

participants represented males and females from sports and teams at the NCAA Division III level (Athletics Homepage, 2018).

For this dissertation Maher's (2012) program planning and evaluation framework was used as the primary method for designing, implementing and evaluating the Life After Sport Transition (LAST) career program. His framework follows four distinct phases (1) Clarification, (2) Program Design, (3) Program Implementation, and (4) Program Evaluation. Following this framework and considering each phase supported the researcher's effort to deliver a career intervention program that was valuable to collegiate student-athlete participants, as well as, other potential college student populations in the future (Maher, 2012).

Clarification Phase

Without a clear understanding of how to plan an intervention program and completing the necessary steps, it is challenging to add value to college student-athletes, or any human services initiative (Maher, 2012). The Clarification Phase is the first of four, and provides clarity to the current situation by 1) specifying the target population, 2) gaining an understanding of its needs, and 3) explaining the contextual information related to the program evaluation (Maher, 2012).

The researcher met with senior university leadership on campus including the Vice President of Student Affairs & Dean of Students, Athletic Director, Senior Woman administrator, and Director of Career Services to explore the potential target population based on which student-athletes would be a better fit for the career intervention program. This group was also known as the intervention program planning committee. It was determined by the committee that the program would be implemented for student-athletes of all academic classifications (i.e. freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors) including 5th-year student-athletes who might have exhausted their athletic eligibility, but finishing their final semester of

academic coursework toward degree completion. As stated earlier, the committee decided that program attendance for participants would be strongly encouraged, and if coaches were willing to make the program mandatory for teams that would be acceptable as well. Due to competing evening courses, student work schedules, and team competition travel schedules, a goal of 200 student-athletes participating in the career session was set and deemed achievable by the committee.

Concordia University's student-athlete career-related needs were initially examined through an open, focus group session across all academic classifications and sports teams. The focus group was administered by the career services offices at an athletic department sponsored meeting in 2018. More than 50 Concordia University student-athletes contributed feedback to the focus group, which showed that nearly 60% of them had never sought out career services or activities related to internships, job placement, and resume building on campus. The planning committee insisted that student-athletes needed to know how to navigate the career transition from college to the workplace and acknowledged that more should be done immediately in this area. Relatedly, 90% of the focus group participants believed they would benefit from a specialized career session designed to assist student-athletes, and the committee acknowledged this effort had never been put forth by the department in past years. The committee determined that career-related satisfaction outcomes of its student-athletes should be addressed, in addition to their career self-efficacy beliefs. Those areas were approved by the committee and defined through standards of the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) in the design phase of this chapter.

The Division of Intercollegiate Athletics' readiness to implement a career intervention program was assessed using Maher's (2012) AVICTORY framework to structure historical

information into an understandable plan. It represents a set of considerations that relevant contextual information may be acquired in an advanced step by step manner with the organization and its stakeholders (Maher, 2012, p. 28). AVICTORY in this context explains an athletic department's *Ability* to commit resources (faculty, facilities, funding, etc.) to a human services program for student-athletes, the *Values* held by both university administration and athletic administrators, understanding the *Ideas* that athletics have about student-athletes and their needs, determining the *Circumstances* of the structure and direction of the athletic department, judging the extent to which the *Timing* of the career intervention program is appropriate, looking at the *Obligation* that athletic administrators have to assist student-athletes and their needs programmatically, understanding the *Resistance* that may occur when assisting such a unique subset of the college student population, while finally, assessing the *Yield* (benefit) university administrators believe should result as a consequence of program implementation (Maher, 2012, p. 28).

Ability. During the summer of 2018, when the concept of a career intervention program and its design was in its most developmental stages; the university was experiencing a shortage of student commitments to campus the upcoming school year, among other financial challenges. Stakeholders, however, agreed to provide time for consultation, complementary instructional resources, and facilities as needed for the career intervention program. The researcher, the author of this dissertation, committed to undertaking program design and implementation for the institution without any type of remuneration for anticipated time and services that would be provided. The stakeholders did not show any signs of concern or risk that the career intervention program would not be conducted due to limited resources and budgetary constraints.

Values. The belief of the planning committee was that the Life After Sport Transition (LAST) career program would be a valuable and satisfying experience for student-athlete participants. The researcher thought the institution's top stakeholders appeared to have their students' best interests in mind, which was evident in their communication and preparation of the program across the entire campus. The researcher was impressed with the coaches' interest from revenue-generating sports such as football, basketball, and baseball, as well as, how the program was received by faculty especially within the College of Business and College of Arts and Sciences, two schools that historically have a substantial number of student-athlete degree seekers. Furthermore, in a personal conversation between the researcher and campus leadership, it was suggested that the institution relies heavily on admissions and enrollment from the student-athlete population each year. Intercollegiate athletics on campus allowed opportunities for its students, and enhanced the campus experience and culture. A positive outcome of these collaborative conversations across the entire campus allowed the researcher and program planning committee to pursue program design and implementation without disruption from any university campus departments.

Ideas. Athletic administrators and career services staff had previously discussed a single workshop for student-athletes, but offering something a little more robust across a variety of career topics had not been deemed possible due to the lack of time, expertise, and administration approval needed. The student-athlete support services personnel within the athletics department shared areas of concern that had been brought to their attention by student-athletes in the past regarding the career transition from college to the workplace. Finding opportunities in their areas of interest, and outside the city of Chicago were both mentioned in that meeting.

Additionally, the Director of Career Services presented concerns around the basic career knowledge, skills, and abilities that all Concordia students needed to acquire prior to graduation.

Circumstances. The circumstances section of the AVICTORY framework is designed to aid in the understanding of how stable the organization is relating to its administration, leadership and personnel. In the Fall of 2018, when the career intervention program was in its most infant stage, it was thought that leadership was stable. The Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students along with the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics both had been at the institution for many years. Recently, there was a national presidential search for the university chief executive officer of the Board of Regents and administrative head of the institution. This search did not create any uncertainty within the athletic department about its chances of executing the design and implementation of the career intervention program. In fact, the researcher met with the Vice President for Student Affairs on multiple occasions, and the campus continued to show support for this initiative and its future implications. The Director of Athletics described the career intervention program as relating to its overall mission to advance service and learning efforts, develop courageous leadership skills, and provide practical examples of excellence in a competitive, educational environment.

Timing. Due to the institutional-wide interest of campus leadership, and willingness of the researcher to design and implement the program at no-cost, a Fall 2019 program implementation was determined to be appropriate and doable. Athletic administrators targeted mid-November when athletic travel was light and where the session would have the greatest chance of achieving solid coaches support and student-athlete attendance. Since graduation would occur in the Spring 2020 semester, a program like this was appropriate, and timely for

senior student-athletes to take advantage of the experience for their own career transition down the road.

Obligation. As noted above, the stakeholders within the Athletics Department showed high interest in the career intervention program. Therefore, they were willing to assist the researcher with acquiring the facility space to conduct the career session as well as push for strong student-athlete participation in the program. However, the university and athletic administrators chose to stay out of the presentation and delivery of the career segment, but were involved in the decision-making process and development of content utilized in the program. Despite university stakeholders' non-interest in presenting material throughout the session, several high-ranking corporate executives at large organizations showed interest in presenting and addressing the career development needs of student-athletes. Most importantly, student-athletes had shown great interest in taking advantage of this topic at previously-run workshops hosted by university career services and the athletic department.

Resistance. The program planning committee did not run into any signs of resistance or friction among the target population. To the contrary, the belief was this or a similar program could be implemented long-term if student-athletes found it to be a valuable and satisfying experience. The stakeholders anticipated student-athletes would identify areas of improvement and necessary actions for future program development. Moreover, they believed there would not be any resistance to the program beyond traditional time limitations and inevitable schedule conflicts among this busy student-athlete community.

Yield. Campus leadership and athletic administrators had high expectations toward the potential success of the career intervention program, and believed student-athletes would positively benefit from it. They expected to receive insights on the demographics and

characteristics of student-athletes who participated in the program, the understanding of whether or not the program did what it was intended to do, as well as, if student-athletes found it to be a valuable and satisfying experience. Campus leadership on both the university and athletics side were extremely supportive of the program since its inception, and initial discussions. The program evaluation was conducted and aligned with appropriate data collection and analysis, which would also provide program recommendations to campus leadership.

Design Phase

The Program Design took place in order to document the strategy, purpose, and plan based on the specified target population and its needs identified in the Clarification Phase. According to Maher (2012) the Design Phase was a blueprint that supported the development of essential elements of the intervention program including its major components and activities. There were four major activities of this phase: 1) the description of program purpose and goals, 2) the consideration of program design alternatives, 3) the development of the intervention program, and 4) the documentation of the program design. Overall, the goal of the program design was to set conditions for understanding the program's worth, as well as, its ability to be improved, and in this case, possibly expand across other student populations (Maher, 2012). The above four activities were interrelated in sequential order as one activity set to influence the next activity including the methods and materials that were used as part of the program (Maher, 2012).

Program statement of purpose. According to Maher's (2012) framework a statement of the program's purpose and goals were established to clarify what value the career intervention program is intended to have on participating student-athletes. The program's purpose was developed through learning the assessed needs of the student-athletes during the Clarification

Phase. The program was designed to improve career self-efficacy scores of student-athlete participants, and garner satisfaction outcomes related to life after athletics career transition. Through the program, each student-athlete were exposed to career-related activities that could assist them with the transition from college to the workplace.

Program goals. The program purpose and goals developed from conversations between the researcher and senior staff within the athletics department. From these meetings, and other activities including the needs assessment, and review of literature – three interrelated goals were identified based on the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) acquired set of competencies, which widely-prepares graduates for a successful career transition into the workplace (Career Readiness, 2017). There were several expected competencies mentioned in program development meetings and the following four were established 1) leadership, 2) professionalism/work ethic, 3) career management, and 4) digital technology as critical foundations to address challenges faced by its student-athletes in acquiring knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to make the transition from college to career.

These four competencies were based on the NACE definition of career readiness and illustrated the foundation that should be acquired by college graduates as agreed upon by the planning committee as part of the program's goals. The four expected competencies of career readiness, according to NACE (2017) were:

- *Leadership:*
Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals, and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others. The individual can assess and manage his/her emotions and those of others; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize, and delegate work.
- *Career Management:*
Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals, and identify areas necessary for professional growth. The individual can navigate and explore job options, understands and can take the steps

necessary to pursue opportunities, and understands how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace.

- *Professionalism/Work Ethic:*
Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits, e.g., punctuality, working productively with others, and time workload management, and understand the impact of non-verbal communication on professional work image. The individual demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, and can learn from his/her mistakes.
- *Digital Technology:*
Leverage existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks, and accomplish goals. The individual demonstrates effective adaptability to new and emerging technologies.

These core areas were discussed in several meetings with university staff, faculty, athletic administrators, and coaches who insisted on the use of these proficiencies as probable outcomes within the program design. This is where the committee's selected satisfaction outcomes originated as part of the overall program goals.

1. To learn if program components and career-related content covered during the program met the expectations of program participants
2. To understand the effect of the career intervention program on career self-efficacy beliefs of student-athlete participants
3. To identify what type of student-athletes would participate, and which athletic teams would be represented most at the program.

The goals were discussed at length with campus leadership. The evaluation results will inform stakeholders, and necessary decisions about the program's future. The senior staff within the athletic department had final approval over essential program elements including program length, cohort size, and expected career content to be delivered. They agreed on the original format presented by the researcher and planning committee.

Program design alternatives. The program format was a three-hour, integrated career session that took place in an athletic-wide group setting on campus. The initial stance of the committee was to conduct three separate sessions, but athletic administrators and coaches were concerned about the overall program length and time commitment required to place student-athletes at all sessions. Therefore, an integrated approach and comprehensive version of a variety of learning style formats became the efficient and most practical solution. There was also a discussion around hosting sessions in a lecture-style format, but administrators decided against that idea due to the lack of interaction involved. The robust approach of integrating several engaging segments was determined to be a better fit for the busy student-athlete, coaches and respective team schedules. This was presented as an opportunity for participants to use what they learned toward making the life after sport transition and putting that career-related knowledge into practice.

The location for the session was discussed and available space within the athletic-related facilities was thought to be the best choice. However, due to the need for indoor practices already scheduled during the winter semester, the event was held at the Student Union Building on campus in the ballroom and open annex areas. This allowed student-athletes to feel comfortable in attending sessions immediately after or in between classes and practice.

Finally, athletic administrators strongly considered gathering data to compare on both student-athletes and non-athletes on campus, but decided it would be challenging to ensure non-athlete participation to the same extent as a solid accountability system was already in place for the NCAA coaches. The committee agreed to open the program to all students on campus, but the study would only focus on findings from the student-athlete participants. This alternative

comparison and data analysis on student inclusion is considered among future implications of extending the program to other groups across campus.

Development of the Program. The career-related activities acknowledged in the career intervention program were formed by the program planning committee, which comprised of the university athletic department and senior staff, among other campus leaders. The committee established program content and integrated career topics based on a model that was practical, relevant and already validated in the area of career development. The program outcomes fit into a framework that explored career readiness and had been defined by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) as the acquired set of competencies that widely-prepared graduates for a successful career transition into the workplace (Career Readiness, 2017). These competencies were highlighted earlier in this section.

Documentation of the Program. Throughout the development of a human services program the planning, and evaluation activities should be documented as part of the design phase (Maher, 2012). After this career intervention program was initially designed, the researcher recorded the design in a Microsoft Word document, which included the elements associated with the program design process beyond the program's purpose and goals.

Following the completion of the design phase the Life After Sport Transition (LAST) career program moved into the implementation phase.

Implementation Phase

The foundation of the components and activities of the career intervention session originated from the framework of NACE's (2013) Professional Standards for Colleges and University Career Services. These standards provided a road map to how the career topics and integrated segments were conducted for this program evaluation. NACE was established in

1956, and later revealed standards for career counseling and placement nationally for American colleges and universities (NACE, 2013). These standards pertain to programs versus career staff, and demonstrate program performance and quality on a college campus (NACE, 2013). The use of professional standards to outline the career intervention used in this program evaluation provide validity to this study and cover the following at the research setting:

The standards were written to reflect an institution's responsibilities for career services. Some program components may be provided by the institution in a department other than career services. Individual career services offices may not have responsibility for certain programs or services identified as career services within these professional standards; however, the institution does bear final responsibility for delivery of career services, in whatever fashion they are administered within the institution. Evaluators may be required to collect and evaluate data from several different offices at an institution to conduct a thorough evaluation (NACE, p.4, 2013).

The career intervention was defined in this study as a variety of career development topics and integrated segments focused specifically on student-athlete career development within a structured program setting. The development of career topics and integrated segments was formed from program components selected by NACE and known as essential for any career services model implemented by an institution (NACE, 2013). The following six components were also operationalized as important variables of this study: career information, employment services, career advising/career counseling, graduate/professional school planning, online/distance career services, and experiential learning.

These program components were included as part of the integrated segment to ensure accountability and that implementation was in accordance with the needs and interests of the students, institution, and external constituents (NACE, 2013). There were 25 local, regional, and national organizations that participated in a career informational panel, employment services round-table talks, and overall student-athlete/employer networking segment. Senior recruiting executives attended this session representing top organizations including Enterprise,

Northwestern Mutual, Chicago Police Department, U.S. Marines, Stryker, Chicago Public Schools, BD Healthcare, City Year, etc. Organizations were committed to sharing career insights and employment strategies with program participants. Each employer had at least one representative to meet with the researcher prior to their involvement in the session. Student-athlete inspired questions were reserved for a pre-designated time within the intervention and was communicated to participants at the beginning of the program. All topics, employers, and areas of focus were approved by campus stakeholders. The following areas, also known as the study's satisfaction outcomes, were covered as it related to student-athlete career development.

Career Information and Employment Services. The overall objective of covering these topics was to assist student-athletes in exploring a full range of career and work options, while learning how to make effective career decisions (NACE, 2013, p.10). This area was designed to set the tone for the remaining areas of the career transition program. This allowed for career information and employment services outcomes to be gained through an extensive, interactive format with employers. This area was important to help participants consider what to think about when navigating the job market including internships and informational interviewing, along with specialized tasks associated with the overall career and job employment search. An opportunity was provided to work on crafting a personal 'elevator' pitch, while developing other intangible skills such as delivering a firm handshake, making eye contact and stepping outside the professional networking comfort zone.

This approach assisted participants in understanding the various employment and industry-specific categories while allowing professional conversations about employment opportunities to happen 'real-time'. Student-athletes were compelled to listen to and evaluate

first-hand, career information from employers regardless of their major and professional career interests.

Career Advising and Graduate School Planning. The overall objective of covering these topics was to encourage student-athletes to take advantage of available career services on and off campus while identifying graduate or professional school programs that match their career goals (NACE, 2013, p. 11). This area addressed the leadership-oriented foundation in leveraging strengths, leadership, and traits acquired in athletics to achieve focus on common goals and planning (Career Readiness, 2017).

First, basic foundations of career development were introduced including career advising, counseling, exploration and other critical components designed to help participants understand their personal strengths, athletic-driven traits, and unique set of skills potentially gained from participating in collegiate athletics. Second, the graduate and professional school planning process was covered, highlighting best practices from how to identify and pursue relevant programs, to understanding the application process, timeline, and what to expect upon completion of an advanced degree. The researcher invited campus career services to share insights as well, and met with the director prior to his involvement in the program.

Online Networking and Experiential Learning. The overall objective of covering these topics was to address the most current tech platforms and relevant online tools to help with student-athlete career development, while also supporting social learning initiatives such as mentorships, professional networking, and experiential learning programs (NACE, 2013, p. 11). This approach covered establishing an online career presence, embracing practical use of social networks in the professional setting, and engaging with online career search engines and niche

networking platforms. This method allowed for student-athletes to ask questions and interact with employers for additional support toward their own personal growth and development.

Overall, this comprehensive career intervention challenged student-athletes to think outside the box, keep an open-mind and learn about employment opportunities they may have never known existed. Attending participants were encouraged to network, ask questions, and articulate their interest in real-time opportunities. Employers who attended were serious about hiring interns and prospective employees at their organizations. The range and diversity of employers were vast, hitting on business, finance, insurance, healthcare, education, sports, public service, and non-profit career paths among others. The interaction from panelists, to round-table speed talks to open networking was an engaging format and pace. A detailed layout of the program, curriculum, and integrated segments can be found in the Appendix section of this study.

Evaluation Phase

The athletic administration was interested in collecting information across a variety of anticipated program areas. A needs review with senior administrators indicated that Concordia University Chicago student-athletes desired participating in career-related activities that support the shift toward a professional career after collegiate athletics. The Life After Sport Transition (LAST) career program progressed immediately after this review and upon completion of a student-athlete focus group session. Although the anticipated content was designed to address career self-efficacy beliefs and career satisfaction outcomes, the institution lacked proof that the program would actually achieve this expectancy (current state of affairs). The athletic staff believed this approach would improve career confidence of their student-athletes and participants would be satisfied with the overall program experience (desired state of affairs).

Campus leadership and athletic staff were interested in learning the career transition program's value or worth, and potential areas of improvement in case they chose to replicate the program in future semesters. The researcher identified if the career intervention overall had an impact on the career self-efficacy beliefs of participating student-athletes.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The logic of program evaluation can be quite simple, and may inspire reasonable action in its most basic form (Twombly, 2016). Evaluation is often referred to as drawing conclusions about the worth or effectiveness of a program based on the information gathered in a study, and the overall way program stakeholders are engaged (Twombly, 2016). An initial step in program evaluation is identifying the key characteristics, also known as the criteria of the program, because without it, a program is not a program (Twombly, 2016). Twombly (2016) refers to a variety of criteria components that makeup the foundation of a program. The criteria for this program consisted of participation, career self-efficacy, and program satisfaction. It will be determined if these key aspects of the intervention and career program were successful or not. The framework of NACE's (2013) Professional Standards for Colleges and University Career Services provides the specific road map in determining program components and career-related content. The program evaluation also guided suggested areas of improvement and career-related satisfaction data informed by program participants.

Worthen, Sanders, and Fitzpatrick (1997) provide two basic distinctions in evaluation, formative and summative. The former is conducted to provide program staff adequate information useful in improving a program. The latter is conducted to provide decision makers and potential consumers with overall judgements about the program's merit relative to expected goals and objectives (Worthen et al., 1997). In formative evaluation, the audience is typically administrative staff and program personnel. In summative evaluation, the audience is typically students and extended departmental groups that could adopt the program. For example,

university athletics and career services could adopt the program or an adopted version at Concordia University Chicago. Therefore, the current study may be considered both formative and summative, because the information gathered could be used to both improve the program and ultimately determine its overall worth based on specific outcomes (Worthen et al., 1997). Twombly (2016) cautions against trying to place any single program evaluation in either the formative or summative category. In practice, formative – summative evaluations coexist on a continuum, and evaluations in higher education may serve both purposes, just one more than the other at times (Twombly, pg. 20, 2016).

There are five types of approaches or key purposes that evaluations generally seek to meet, which can best be described as: 1) assessing need, 2) assessing a program's theory of action, 3) assessing program design, delivery, and utilization, 4) assessing outcomes and impact, and 5) assessing program efficiency (Twombly, 2016, p. 17). Since this evaluation is focused on delivering feedback on the effectiveness, and overall worth of the program, it is best to consider the 4th approach in assessing outcomes and impact for this research setting. According to Twombly (2016), "the goal of most evaluations and assessments is to determine outcomes of interventions, and to what extent those outcomes are a result of the program or intervention, and not some outside influenced factor" (p. 25). Although there are various types of outcomes that can be described from program evaluation research, this setting will focus on impact assessment as it is most commonly conducted to make summative decisions about the merit of a program (Twombly, 2016).

According to Worthen, Sanders, and Fitzpatrick (1997), program evaluation as a study design, has been applied extensively, and used in a variety of ways in the education field including; delineating program value, judging curriculum quality, and providing evidence of

successful outcomes. Reasonably, the researcher and the institution are interested in identifying if the interventions or series of career sessions are effective in providing value toward student-athlete career development. Therefore, program evaluation as a study design has been identified as most acceptable as the purpose is to collect data that would aid decision making including determining if the program should be implemented across campus or at a minimum for student-athletes of all classifications (Worthen et al., 1997).

Procedures & Instrumentation

Approval from the Institutional Review Board at the University of Kansas was obtained prior to data collection, as well as, from the Office for Institutional Effectiveness at the research site of the career intervention. The athletic department gave the researcher verbal and written approval to gather data in the athletic facilities where the intervention took place, and agreed to communicate program dates with coaches and student-athletes. The researcher explained the purpose of the study, and informed potential student-athlete participants that participation in the program study is completely voluntary. Student-athletes were given an opportunity to ask questions about the research study prior to completing the forms, and students who declined to participate did not have to complete any forms. Program participants completed the following forms for this study:

Athlete Participant Information (API) Form. This questionnaire consisted of items that required program participants to verify individual descriptive information and student-athlete characteristics. The data collection variables consisted of the following:

- Race/Ethnicity
- Academic Class (Fr, Soph, Jr, or Sr)
- Academic Major

- Overall GPA
- Sport/Team
- Academic Scholarship
- Gender
- Age

The Athlete Participant Information (API) form was distributed to student-athletes prior to the program start, and adequate time was provided for program participants to complete the form. The data collection methods included an extensive review of student-athlete descriptive characteristics to obtain information about the individual makeup of program participants. Data was collected and recorded into the *Athlete Information Record* using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) by the researcher for all student-athletes participating in the program.

Athlete Participant Evaluation (APE) Form. This form consisted of several items that required respondents to identify what program components, and career-related areas student-athletes perceived themselves as achieving most from the career program. Various other aspects of the program were also covered to allow participants to rate their level of satisfaction with the overall program experience. The data collection variables consisted of the following satisfaction outcomes, which are also referred to as program components, and operationalized as the independent variables in the data analysis plan:

- Career Information
- Employment Services
- Career Advising and Career Counseling
- Graduate/Professional School Planning
- Online/Distance Career Services

- Experiential Learning

The Athlete Participant Evaluation (APE) form was completed by student-athletes at the end of program. The form was distributed after the final networking segment with employers, and adequate time was provided for program participants to complete the evaluation. The data collection method consisted of distributing, participants completing, and final collecting of this questionnaire, which provided program participant feedback. Data were collected and recorded into the *Athlete Evaluation Record* using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) by the researcher for all student-athletes participating in the program.

Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Scale. There are two major reasons for focusing on the career self-efficacy of collegiate student-athletes. First, because student-athletes tend to progress slower toward career readiness than their non-athlete counterparts, and second, because an individual must first believe in his or her ability to complete a given task before completion of that task is actually generated (Sandstedt et al., 2004; Martens & Cox, 2000). Before researchers can effectively evaluate the career motivation of student-athletes in the literature it is important to determine the rate at which student-athletes believe they can produce positive career-related behaviors (Sandstedt et al., 2004). Therefore, the measurement of this study relies on two main variables the career intervention and the career self-efficacy among collegiate student-athletes at a small, private institution.

The primary purpose of this research was to measure how the career intervention may affect career self-efficacy. The main instrument used to deliver this outcome was the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Scale – Short Form (CDMSE-SF). According to Betz (1996) and team of investigators, the CDMSE-SF measures an individual's belief in the ability to effectively complete career-related tasks to advance his or her professional career. The original

CDMSE contained a 50-item measurement, and the short form a 25-item measurement. A condensed version of the short form containing 10 items was used for this study. This abbreviated approach was taken with the planning committee's approval and recommendation to solely place focus on items within the instrument that truly captured career-related tasks or behaviors. This scale has been used in a significant amount of research designs to measure a variety of career-based actions. College student-athletes were asked to rate their level of confidence (self-efficacy) in completing the arranged items on a scale of 1 (low confidence) to 5 (high confidence) based on their participation and satisfaction of the career intervention program. The higher accumulation of points on the scale will directly correlate to the level of satisfaction toward a career-related task or behavior (Betz et al., 1996). The author of this dissertation did not run a separate reliability analysis from the original study assessed by Taylor and Betz (1983), which reported an alpha range of .83 to .89 during a 6-week retest reliability measures test. Additionally, the researcher in the current study also tested the same group of students twice, and only used data from student-athletes who participated in the pre-test and post-test measures. Therefore, given this study is drawing from the work of Taylor and Betz (1983), and since survey items and scores did not significantly change, a high degree of reliability can be assumed.

Data Collection

Students who participated in this comprehensive, career intervention program were given time prior to the program start to complete a written consent form to confirm their participation, along with the Athlete Participant Information (API) form and Athlete Participant Evaluation (APE) form. Lastly, all student-athletes in the program were asked to participate in a pretest, posttest measure of the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy – Short Form (CDMSE-SF). Students who agreed to participate were asked to sign the consent form at the beginning of the

program. The researcher collected the consent forms, and placed them in an envelope to protect program participants' confidentiality. The consent forms were kept in a secure location after the intervention program, and study was conducted. Program participants were asked to code the API, APE, and CDMSE-SF forms with the last four digits of their personal cell phone number. This individualized ID number allowed the researcher to match the API and APE forms with the pretests of the CDMSE-SF for each student-athlete participant. Immediately following the intervention, the researcher provided the posttest, and program participants were asked a second time to code their CDMSE-SF forms with their personal ID numbers to allow the researcher to match the completed posttest with the corresponding pretest for each student-athlete. It is also important to note that every pretest was marked with an A, and every posttest was marked with a B so the researcher could effectively indicate Time 1 and Time 2 of the administered assessments.

Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26.0 software was used to analyze the data for this study. SPSS was used to calculate descriptive statistics, and run paired sample t-tests and independent sample t-tests. Descriptive statistics were calculated to describe the sample, and provide a better understanding of the frequencies (Freq) and percentages (%) of the demographic characteristics including the gender, race/ethnicity, and international status. Descriptive statistics regarding the academic characteristics were also assessed including class, college of study, academic aid, and grade point average. Paired sample t-tests were used to identify statistically significant differences between pre-test and post-test mean scores related to career self-efficacy as a result of the intervention – the LAST program. Independent sample t-tests were used to identify statistically significant differences between male versus female

student-athletes, revenue versus non-revenue sports, underclassmen versus upperclassmen, and Arts/Sciences versus Business students. Once data collection was complete, the data from the paper surveys were entered into SPSS, and both the pre-test and posttest results were entered into the same dataset. The following analysis was helpful in assessing the implementation and accuracy of the program as it relates to its creation and development. Satisfaction and other outcome data are also shared both in the results and discussion chapters of the study.

Delimitations

During the planning of this study, a few intentional decisions were made and agreed upon by both the researcher and campus senior leadership team. These choices should be noted for creating certain boundaries that could limit the study and ultimately, its findings. Using self-reported measures on the confidence level or beliefs of individuals forced the assumption that participants in the study completed study measures honestly. Another boundary created is the data were gathered from some student-athletes who were required to attend and participate in parts of the program. This approach may invoke a pre-conceived notion positively or negatively about the overall worth of the program, which in return, could also have an impact on self-reported measures.

Attrition is an important consideration of this program evaluation as well. Attrition is a factor because the study required two different data collection periods. All participants who completed the pretest measures did not participate in the full length of the program. Moreover, all individuals who completed the pretest did not complete the posttest. Since the intervention period took place over the course of three hours, the posttest occurred much later and not until the end of the program. This made the completion and collection of posttest measures a challenge. Additionally, the researcher assumed that all participants who participated in the

study did so with full effort; however, the high-demands on a student-athlete's time could have led to less engaged participants during the intervention period and completion of intended assessments.

Another delimitation is that this study was a program evaluation, which focused on one academic institution and athletic program. Therefore, the study's findings will not be generalized for larger institutions and athletic departments. Also, the assumption that student-athletes would be required by the athletic department to participate in the program should be mentioned as a delimitation of the study. This effort could have jeopardized the authenticity of the target population's feedback. However, making the program intentional and mandatory for a specific subset group of student-athletes could have also been beneficial to the study. It helped ensure a larger number of participants for the program, which attributed to a higher-level of dependability of results.

Finally, the evaluator who was also the main researcher, and chief investigator of this program evaluation should be added to the list of delimitations. This created a situation in which the evaluator could have acted in his own best interests, and not the best interests of the stakeholders associated with the program initiative (i.e. university administration, athletics, career services, student-athletes). This notion was addressed by including an intervention program planning committee, made up of campus administrators from the very start of the design and development process.

It is also important to note that program evaluation is not just one method or approach, but may consist of multiple models designed to address the organization's problem (Twombly, 2016). An identified limitation with this study could be that the evaluation was individually-driven, so the evaluator could have responded or acted according to his own individual

experiences versus having the reflection of a group of experiences. In this sense, the evaluator could risk becoming too limited and narrow focused, resulting in the potential miss of other important evaluation questions and perspectives. It also could bring forth pre-conceived biases the evaluator already has about the sample population (Worthen et al., 1997). Since the career intervention was implemented on campus at the hosting institution, this added the advantages of having other stakeholders involved such as administrators and career services personnel. Additionally, it is important to note the evaluator's appointment of speakers and panelists for each segment to support a well-rounded approach to content delivery instead of relying on the researcher or campus personnel as the presenters. Various subject-matter experts, and hiring professionals delivered the content, interacted and engaged with the student-athletes while the evaluator simply facilitated the program and segment transitions. This format ensured designated topics and areas of interest were addressed according to the design and implementation phase of the program evaluation discussed in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS

This chapter explores the results of the data analysis, and the program evaluation's outcomes, which were driven by the following research questions:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of the student-athletes who participated in the program?
2. Did participating in the Life After Sport Transition (LAST) program improve the career self-efficacy of the student-athletes?
3. What was the overall satisfaction level of the student-athletes who participated in the program?

One hundred and fifty-six student-athletes participated in the intervention program, and 98 participants completed both pre-test and post-test forms to round out a 63% response rate and adequate sample size.

The primary form of analysis took place through a calculation of descriptive statistics used to describe the demographic characteristics of the student-athletes who participated in the program. Another form of analysis took place through paired sample t-tests used to identify statistically significant differences between pre-test and post-test mean scores related to career self-efficacy beliefs among student-athletes. The last form of analysis took place through independent sample t-tests used to identify statistically significant differences between groups including: male versus female student-athletes, revenue versus non-revenue sports, and underclassmen versus upperclassmen students.

Intervention Program Participants

Table 1 describes the demographic characteristics of the sample who answered both pre-test and post-test questions, with a focus on gender, ethnicity, and international status. Male participants comprised 60% of the sample, and female students comprised 40%. These data compare well with athletic participation by gender at Concordia University Chicago as males make up 58% of the total student-athlete population, and females make up 42%. Consequently, the sample of this study reflects the overall student-athlete population by gender on campus. Most respondents in the study were White (71%), Black (9%), or Hispanic (13%). Smaller proportions of the sample were Multi-Ethnic (5%) or Other (1%). Only two students were International (2%). Most students were around 19 years old ($M = 19.65$, $Median = 19.50$, $SD = 1.33$).

Table 1

Descriptive statistics: Demographic characteristics of the sample (n = 98)

Variable	Percentage (%)	Frequency (N)
Gender		
Female	39.8	39
Male	60.2	59
Ethnicity		
White	71.4	70
Black	9.2	9
Hispanic	13.3	13
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0
Multi-Ethnic	5.1	5
Other	1.0	1
International Status		
International student	2.0	2
Domestic student	98.0	96

Table 2 describes the academic characteristics of the sample with a focus on classification, college, academic aid, and grade point average. Freshman respondents represented 31% of the sample, sophomore students represented 23% of the sample, junior respondents represented 28%, and senior students represented 18%. These data compare well with athletic participation by class at Concordia University as underclassmen make up 55% of the total student-athlete population, and upperclassmen make up 45%. Thus, the sample of this study reflects the overall student-athlete population on campus regarding academic classification.

Most respondents represented the College of Arts and Sciences (40%), College of Business (42%), and College of Education (15%). Smaller proportions of the sample represented both Arts/Sciences and Business (1%), as well as, Graduate Studies (1%). The majority of students reported receiving partial merit-based aid (88%), while many fewer reported receiving full financial aid (6%), or no aid at all (6%). Most respondents reported earning a GPA range of 3.5 – 3.99 (31%) or 3.0 – 3.49 (43%), while some students reported earning a GPA range of 2.5 – 2.99 (16%). Smaller proportions of the sample reported a range of 2.0 – 2.49 (4%), or a GPA of 4.0 (4%). According to CUC Athletics and its Fall 2019 reporting, 54% of student-athletes earned a 3.0 GPA or higher. The sample of program participants in this study reported that 74% of them earned higher than a 3.0 GPA. Since the majority of student-athletes who participated in the program had higher GPA scores than the average student-athlete on campus, the sample population's GPA was not as reflective of the overall student-athlete community on campus.

Table 3 describes the sport breakdown with a focus on both men's and women's teams of the sample. The most popular men's sports were baseball (34%) and football (15%). Male student-athletes from other sports made up 5% of the sample for basketball, and 3% for volleyball, while lacrosse, tennis and track and field teams each accounted for 1% of the overall

sample. The most popular women's sports were softball (18%) and volleyball (12%). Female student-athletes from other sports made up 4% of the sample for basketball and 3% for dance and cheer, while lacrosse and track and field teams each account for 1% of the overall sample.

Table 2

Descriptive statistics: Academic characteristics of the sample (n = 98)

Variable	Percentage (%)	Frequency (N)
Class		
Freshman	30.6	30
Sophomore	23.5	23
Junior	27.6	27
Senior	18.4	18
College		
Arts & Sciences	39.8	39
Arts/Business	1.0	1
Business	41.8	41
Education	15.3	15
Graduate Studies	1.0	1
None	1.0	1
Merit Aid		
Full aid	6.1	6
Partial aid	87.8	86
No aid	6.1	6
GPA		
4.0	4.1	4
3.50-3.99	30.6	30
3.0-3.49	42.9	42
2.50-2.99	16.3	16
2.00-2.49	4.1	4

Table 3

Descriptive statistics: Sport breakdown of the sample (n = 98)

Variable	Percentage (%)	Frequency (N)
Men's Sports		
Baseball	33.7	33
Football	15.3	15
Lacrosse	1.0	1
Basketball	5.1	5
Tennis	1.0	1
Track and Field	1.0	1
Volleyball	3.1	3
Women's Sports		
Softball	18.4	18
Basketball	4.1	4
Lacrosse	1.0	1
Track and Field	1.0	1
Volleyball	12.2	12
Dance and Cheer	3.1	3

Student-Athlete Career Self-Efficacy

Table 4 presents the mean scores and standard deviation related to student-athletes' self-efficacy beliefs in completing career-related tasks before and after the intervention. The overall mean score of career self-efficacy beliefs before the intervention was 40.06 (SD = 5.25) out of a possible 50 points, and the overall mean score of career self-efficacy beliefs after the intervention was 41.21 (SD = 5.6) out of a possible 50 points. This was a high career self-efficacy score to begin with, and that score improved with the intervention. Overall, student-athlete participants had greater degree of confidence in their career abilities after the intervention as shown in Table 6, and this increase was statistically significant. However, it is important to not only highlight the high level of confidence, but also the specific career-related tasks for which the confidence increase occurred. The belief in finding out employment trends for an occupation, making an effective career decision, and managing the job interview process were

among those areas that received higher spikes in confidence levels among participants as presented in Table 4.

Although higher confidence levels were observed among all items initially, largely speaking, there was more room for increase in career self-efficacy among the above-mentioned areas. One exception was the response; “use the internet to find information about occupations that interest you,” which scores declined after the intervention for program participants.

Table 4

Descriptive statistics: Pre-CDMSE and post-CDMSE item scores (n = 98)

Item	Pre-Test Mean (SD)	Post-Test Mean (SD)
1. Use the internet to find information about occupations that interest you.	4.54 (0.61)	4.43 (0.67)
2. Find the average yearly earnings of people in an occupation.	4.26 (0.75)	4.30 (0.77)
3. Find out employment trends for an occupation over the next 10 years.	3.57 (0.97)	3.81 (0.86)
4. Find information about graduate or professional schools.	4.08 (0.72)	4.24 (0.74)
5. Talk with a person already employed in a field of your interest.	4.28 (0.94)	4.29 (0.96)
6. Prepare a good resume to be considered by employers.	3.91 (0.83)	4.17 (0.73)
7. Make a career decision and then not worry whether it was right or wrong.	3.62 (0.92)	3.82 (0.88)
8. Successfully manage the job interview process.	3.76 (0.84)	3.98 (0.83)
9. Identify employers relevant to your career possibilities.	4.03 (0.79)	4.12 (0.86)
10. Determine what your ideal job would be.	3.93 (0.91)	4.08 (0.93)
Overall score and values from all items	40.06 (5.25)	41.21 (5.6)

Program Evaluation and Satisfaction

The final descriptive statistics covered the overall evaluation and satisfaction of the career intervention program. Student-athletes were asked to address statements about their future career transition after participating in the program. Table 5 presents the individual scores for each item represented on the Athlete Participant Evaluation (APE) form. These scores were known as the evaluation and satisfaction variables of the study, and were measured on a self-report Likert scale from 1 to 5 (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree).

Response items 1-6 represented scores that suggested evaluation outcomes of the study. On a Likert-scale with 1 indicating strongly disagree and 5 indicating strongly agree, the mean for overall program evaluation was 4.19. This mean score indicated the sample in general agreed the program successfully achieved its evaluation goals. The highest mean score among the evaluation variables was the response, “allowed me to learn about career options outside my academic major.” This belief suggested the intervention program was successful in providing exposure to career options beyond participants’ academic areas. The response, “was delivered at a comfortable pace and format” was the lowest mean score among evaluation variables, but the score (4.01), still suggested participants agreed with the structure of the intervention program.

Response items 7-14 represented scores that suggested satisfaction outcomes of the study. On a Likert-scale with 1 indicating strongly disagree and 5 indicating strongly agree, the mean for overall program satisfaction was 4.02. This indicated the sample in general were satisfied with the career intervention program. The highest mean score among the satisfaction variables was the response, “should continue to be offered for student-athletes in future academic semesters.” The lowest mean score among the satisfaction variables was the response, “met my expectations in the area of graduate and professional school planning.”

Table 5

Descriptive statistics: Athlete participation evaluation (APE) satisfaction scores (n = 98)

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. Prepared me for life after sport career transition.	4.13	0.72
2. Assisted me in developing skills to interact with employers in the professional setting.	4.24	0.65
3. Provided career-related information I had never received prior to this experience.	4.17	0.78
4. Allowed me to learn about career options outside my academic major.	4.41	0.67
5. Inspired me to do my own personal networking in the future.	4.18	0.72
6. Was delivered at a comfortable pace and format.	4.01	0.90
7. Met my expectations in the area of Career Information.	4.04	0.85
8. Met my expectations in the area of Employment Services.	3.91	0.90
9. Met my expectations in the area of Career Advising/Counseling.	4.00	0.83
10. Met my expectations in the area of Graduate and Professional School Planning.	3.67	1.01
11. Met my expectations in the area of Online Networking and Extended Career Services	3.90	.095
12. Met my expectations in the area of Internships and Experiential Learning.	4.02	0.83
13. Was worth my time and investment toward my own personal and professional development.	4.19	0.83
14. Should continue to be offered for student-athletes in future academic semesters.	4.48	0.59

Improvements in Career Self-Efficacy

Research results for the 98 program participants revealed interesting trends in the data when analyzing each outcome variable through 11 paired samples t-tests. For the full data set, the CDMSE mean pretest and posttest scores were examined to determine if there were statistically significant differences in students' career self-efficacy beliefs before and after the intervention. Table 6 describes the results, which indicated the CDMSE overall score on career

self-efficacy beliefs before the career intervention ($M = 40.06$, $SD = 5.25$) significantly improved after the student-athletes participated in the career intervention program ($M = 41.21$, $SD = 5.60$) at the .05 level of significance ($t = -2.29$, $df = 97$, $p = .02$). The following sections look at growth in each item separately.

Use the internet to find information about occupations that interest you. The participants' career self-efficacy scores in using the internet to find information about occupations of interest decreased from pretest ($M = 4.54$, $SD = 0.61$) to posttest ($M = 4.43$, $SD = 0.67$). As reflected in Table 6, these changes were not statistically significant at the .05 alpha level ($t = 1.52$, $df = 97$, $p = .13$), and this was the only outcome variable with a dip in score after the intervention.

Find the average yearly earnings of people in an occupation. Participants' career self-efficacy beliefs in finding the average yearly earnings of people in an occupation before the intervention ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 0.75$) increased after the intervention ($M = 4.30$, $SD = 0.77$). However, this increase was not statistically significant at the .05 alpha level ($t = -0.48$, $df = 97$, $p = .63$). The results of the tests indicated that student-athletes' mean scores on the pre-test and post-test did not significantly change from time 1 to time 2 as a result of the intervention.

Find out employment trends for an occupation over the next 10 years. Table 6 shows participants' career self-efficacy beliefs toward their own ability to identify employment trends for an occupation significantly increased from pretest ($M = 3.57$, $SD = 0.97$) to posttest ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 0.86$). As suggested in Table 6, these changes were statistically significant at the .05 alpha level ($t = -2.77$, $df = 97$, $p = .007$).

Table 6

Results of t-test for career self-efficacy before and after the career intervention (n=98)

CDMSE Item	Pretest		Posttest		Sig.	t
	M	SD	M	SD		
Use the internet to find information about occupations that interest you.	4.54	0.61	4.43	0.67	.131	1.52
Find the average yearly earnings of people in an occupation.	4.26	0.75	4.30	0.77	.630	-0.48
Find out employment trends for an occupation over the next 10 years.	3.57	0.97	3.81	0.86	.007**	-2.77
Find information about graduate or professional schools.	4.08	0.72	4.24	0.74	.063	-1.88
Talk with a person already employed in a field of your interest.	4.28	0.94	4.29	0.96	.929	-0.09
Prepare a good resume to be considered by employers.	3.91	0.83	4.17	0.73	.003**	-3.09**
Make a career decision and then not worry whether it was right or wrong.	3.62	0.92	3.82	0.88	.063	-1.88
Successfully manage the job interview process.	3.76	0.84	3.98	0.83	.018*	-2.40**
Identify employers relevant to your career possibilities.	4.03	0.79	4.12	0.86	.353	-0.93
Determine what your ideal job would be.	3.93	0.91	4.08	0.93	.150	-1.45
Overall score and values from all items	40.06	5.25	41.21	5.60	.024*	-2.29**

***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

Find information about graduate or professional schools. The participants' career self-efficacy beliefs toward finding information about graduate or professional schools before the intervention (M = 4.08, SD = 0.72) improved after the student-athletes participated in the career

program ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 0.74$), but this increase was not significant at the .05 alpha level ($t = -1.88$, $df = 97$, $p = .06$).

Talk with a person already employed in a field of your interest. Although participants' career self-efficacy beliefs before the intervention ($M = 4.28$, $SD = 0.94$) increased after the intervention ($M = 4.29$, $SD = 0.96$) in talking with a person already employed in a field of interest, this increase was not statistically significant at the .05 alpha level ($t = -0.09$, $df = 97$, $p = .929$).

Prepare a good resume to be considered by employers. The participants' scores of career self-efficacy beliefs in the ability to prepare a good resume to be considered by employers significantly improved from pretest ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 0.83$) to posttest ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 0.73$). As reflected in Table 6, these changes were statistically significant at the .05 alpha level ($t = 3.09$, $df = 97$, $p = .003$).

Make a career decision and then not worry whether it was right or wrong. Table 6 shows participants' career self-efficacy beliefs toward their own ability to make a career decision and then not worry whether it was right or wrong improved from pretest ($M = 3.62$, $SD = 0.92$) to posttest ($M = 3.82$, $SD = 0.88$). These changes were not statistically significant at the .05 alpha level ($t = -1.88$, $df = 97$, $p = .06$).

Successfully manage the job interview process. Table 6 shows the score on career self-efficacy beliefs toward successfully managing the job interview process before the intervention ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 0.84$) significantly increased after the student-athletes participated in the career program ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 0.83$) at the .05 level of significance ($t = -2.40$, $df = 97$, $p = .01$).

Identify employers relevant to your career possibilities. Although participants' career self-efficacy beliefs before the intervention ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 0.79$) increased after the

intervention ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.86$) in identifying employers relevant to one's own career possibilities, this increase was not statistically significant at the .05 alpha level ($t = -0.93$, $df = 97$, $p = .35$).

Determine what your ideal job would be. Although participants' career self-efficacy beliefs before the intervention ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 0.91$) increased after the intervention ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 0.93$) in determining what their ideal job would be, this increase was not statistically significant at the .05 alpha level ($t = -1.45$, $df = 97$, $p = .15$).

Overall score and values from all items. The participants' overall scores of career self-efficacy beliefs significantly improved from pretest ($M = 40.06$, $SD = 5.25$) to posttest ($M = 41.21$, $SD = 5.60$). As reflected in Table 6, these changes were statistically significant at the .05 level of significance ($t = -2.29$, $df = 97$, $p = .02$).

In summary, there were three individual areas where scores significantly improved after the intervention program. This revealed higher career self-efficacy growth among student-athletes and their ability to identify employment trends for the next 10 years, prepare a good resume for employers, and manage the job interview process. Overall, student-athlete participants were satisfied with the intervention, and valued the program.

Differences between Groups on Career Self-Efficacy

Independent sample t-tests were used to identify statistically significant differences between groups. T-tests were run for male versus female student-athletes, revenue versus non-revenue sports, and underclassmen versus upperclassmen student participants. Tables 7 and 8 explain the results of independent sample t-tests to determine if there were statistically significant differences in male and female students' career self-efficacy beliefs before and after the intervention. The CDMSE mean pretest and posttest scores were explored, and research

results for both male ($n=59$) and female ($n = 39$) program participants were presented for both time 1 and time 2. The men's overall score ($M = 39.85$, $SD = 5.24$) increased after the intervention ($M = 41.17$, $SD = 5.79$), and the women's overall score ($M = 40.38$, $SD = 5.34$) increased after the intervention ($M = 41.28$, $SD = 5.37$). Although there were reported increases after the intervention, there were no significant differences among scores and overall career self-efficacy beliefs based on gender.

Table 7

Results of t-test for male ($n=59$) and female ($n = 39$) career self-efficacy before the career intervention

CDMSE Pre-test Item	Male		Females		t-test
	M	SD	M	SD	
Overall score and values from 10 items	39.85	5.24	40.38	5.34	.491

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .10$

Table 8

Results of t-test for male ($n=59$) and female ($n = 39$) career self-efficacy after the career intervention

CDMSE Post-test Item	Male		Females		t-test
	M	SD	M	SD	
Overall score and values from all 10 items	41.17	5.79	41.28	5.37	.098

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .10$

Revenue vs Non-revenue Sports

An independent sample t-test was used to identify statistically significant differences in student-athletes from revenue and non-revenue sports based on their career self-efficacy beliefs before and after the intervention. The CDMSE mean pretest and posttest scores were explored, and research results for the revenue ($n=58$) and non-revenue ($n = 48$) sport participants were presented for time 1 and time 2. Revenue sports at the intervention institution were men's and

women's basketball, football, and baseball teams. Non-revenue sports at the intervention institution consisted of all other sports identified in the study. The overall score for student-athletes participating in revenue sports ($M = 40.39$, $SD = 5.11$) increased after the intervention ($M = 41.98$, $SD = 5.66$), and the non-revenue sport participants' overall score ($M = 39.58$, $SD = 5.49$) increased after the intervention ($M = 40.10$, $SD = 5.38$). Although there were reported increases after the intervention, there were no significant differences among scores and overall career self-efficacy beliefs based on revenue or non-revenue sport participation.

Table 9

Results of t-test for revenue ($n=58$) and non-revenue ($n = 40$) sport participants on career self-efficacy before the career intervention

CDMSE Pre-test Item	Revenue		Non-revenue		t-test
	M	SD	M	SD	
Overall score and values from all 10 items	40.39	5.11	39.58	5.49	.749

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .10$

Table 10

Results of t-test for revenue ($n=58$) and non-revenue ($n = 40$) sport participants on career self-efficacy after the career intervention

CDMSE Post-test Item	Revenue		Non-revenue		t-test
	M	SD	M	SD	
Overall score and values from all 10 items	41.98	5.66	40.10	5.38	1.67

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .10$

Upperclassmen vs Underclassmen

An independent sample t-test was used to identify statistically significant differences in underclassmen and upperclassmen student-athletes based on their career self-efficacy beliefs before and after the intervention. The CDMSE mean pretest and posttest scores were explored, and research results for the underclassmen ($n = 54$) and upperclassmen ($n = 44$) were presented for time 1 and time 2. Tables 11 and 12 explain the results of independent sample t-tests for both

under and upper-class student-athletes who participated in the intervention. Underclassmen student-athlete participants were identified as freshmen and sophomores. Upperclassmen student-athlete participants were identified as juniors and seniors.

The upperclassmen's overall score ($M = 39.68$, $SD = 5.29$) increased after the intervention ($M = 40.93$, $SD = 6.01$), and the underclassmen's overall score ($M = 40.37$, $SD = 5.26$) increased after the intervention ($M = 41.44$, $SD = 5.29$). Results concluded, neither group indicated significant differences in their scores and overall career self-efficacy beliefs after completing the intervention program.

Table 11

Results of t-test for upperclassmen ($n=44$) and underclassmen ($n = 54$) student-athletes on career self-efficacy before the career intervention

CDMSE Pre-test Item	Upperclassmen		Underclassmen		t-test
	M	SD	M	SD	
Overall score and values from all 10 items	39.68	5.29	40.37	5.26	.642

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .10$

Table 12

Results of t-test for upperclassmen ($n = 44$) and underclassmen ($n = 54$) student-athletes on career self-efficacy after the career intervention

CDMSE Post-test Item	Upperclassmen		Underclassmen		t-test
	M	SD	M	SD	
Overall score and values from all 10 items	40.93	6.01	41.44	5.29	.443

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .10$

Conclusion

Overall, participating in the Life After Sport Transition (LAST) program improved career self-efficacy beliefs of college student-athletes as evidenced by scores on the CDMSE scale.

Among the 98 participants who completed pre-test and post-test measures, there was statistically

significant growth made after the career intervention in the following areas: 1) identifying employment trends over the next 10 years, 2) preparing a good resume for employers, and 3) successfully managing the job interview process. The intervention did not produce statistically significant growth from pre-test to post-test in the following areas, although scores still improved: 4) finding occupational yearly earnings, 5) finding information about graduate schools, 6) talking with employed people in related fields, 7) making effective career decisions, 8) identifying relevant employers, and 9) determining what an ideal job would be.

The only area where career self-efficacy scores decreased was in the program participant's ability to 10) use the internet to find out occupational info that interested them. The drop in score was not statistically significant nor was this outcome a major concern to the researcher, because the entire intervention was in-person versus online/virtual, which could have been a contributing factor for the decrease.

Findings regarding group differences among student-athletes who participated in the intervention program indicated that males and females increased their career self-efficacy scores from time 1 to time 2. Females in this study were more confident than males regarding their career self-efficacy. This was not surprising to the researcher, as literature suggested males, who are likely to think they are going pro, will have a lower association with their own career development (Martens & Cox, 2000; Martens & Lee, 1998; Murphy, Petitpas, & Brewer, 1996; Sanstedt et al., 2004; Wiechman & Williams, 1997).

As a group, revenue and non-revenue sport participants also increased their career self-efficacy scores from time 1 to time 2. Overall, student-athlete participants from revenue sports reported higher confidence levels than their peers from non-revenue sports. With regards to the findings among upperclassmen and underclassmen program participants. Both groups improved

their career self-efficacy beliefs from time 1 to time 2, but underclassmen student-athletes had higher scores and greater increases than their upperclassmen peers.

Based on the results, there are two specific conclusions that can be formed regarding program participants and their confidence levels before and after the career intervention. The first is that student-athletes in this study indicated strong career self-efficacy beliefs before the intervention even took place. The other is although career self-efficacy scores were high to begin with, growth was still reported in all area with the exception of one measured item. Therefore, it may be concluded that student-athletes at this institution were already confident about their own career self-efficacy, and after the program they became even more confident in their ability to make effective career decisions in the future. The current chapter outlined the results for three forms of analysis conducted in this study with descriptive statistics, paired sample t-tests, and independent sample t-tests. The final chapter will discuss and interpret these results, as well as, present suggestions for future intervention improvement as aligned with overall program evaluation goals.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to design, implement, and evaluate a career transition program and determine its effect on the career self-efficacy of student-athletes at a private liberal arts college in the greater Chicago area. There were 98 student-athletes who participated in the intervention program who completed both pre-test and post-test forms. In this chapter, answers to the evaluation questions are used to inform conclusions based on the findings and make future recommendations for the Life After Sports Transition (LAST) curricula and related programs.

The researcher's primary task was to evaluate the actual program conducted rather than focus on positive or negative effects of the intervention. However, there were discoveries that suggested the intervention achieved its goals as the study found, significant relationships in career self-efficacy for student-athletes who participated in the program. The study addressed the sample's demographics, projected program goals, and overall satisfaction among program participants. Furthermore, this study answered the following research questions:

4. What are the demographic characteristics of the student-athletes who participated in the program?
5. Did participating in the Life After Sport Transition (LAST) program improve the career self-efficacy of the student-athletes?
6. What was the overall satisfaction level of the student-athletes who participated in the program?

Coach Commitment and Student-Athlete Participation

This study consisted of 60% male participants and 40% female participants, and part of the male-driven participation was due to men's football and baseball teams. These two teams

accounted for 50% of the overall student-athlete program participation. All but three student-athletes on the baseball team completed the program, which suggested the head coach made student-athlete attendance a priority for the entire team. The women's softball and volleyball teams accounted for 30% of the overall program participation, and nearly all of their team members were present. Both coaches expressed their commitment toward student-athlete attendance to the researcher and career services director prior to the program's start. The football program's turnout was mainly due to the large number of student-athletes who participate in the sport to begin with. While there were a large number of football players in attendance, given the numbers on the team they were not highly represented. For future program consideration, the athletic department should do more than strongly encourage student-athlete attendance to similar events. Participation numbers in this study suggested that some coaches made this program a priority, but some coaches did not. It is believed that coaches who encouraged their team to participate in the program had better attendance numbers. A stronger commitment from coaches across more sports and teams in the future could lead to improved fidelity for the study and overall program participation.

While coach commitment seemed to influence student-athlete participation, academic achievement may have been important to the study as well. Most respondents (40%) in this study represented the College of Arts & Sciences, or the College of Business (42%). The majority of the program participants (78%) reported earning a 3.0 GPA or higher, and when compared to Fall 2019 reporting, CUC Athletics found that 54% of the entire student-athlete population on campus earned a 3.0 GPA or higher. Therefore, student-athlete reported GPA's were higher for this study than expected. This finding could suggest that more academically-driven student-athletes participated in the program, or maybe that student-athletes who

participated inflated their GPA's as this was a self-reported element of the study. Since student-athlete GPA's were high to begin with it sparks the question; if program participants entered the intervention with lower GPA's on average, would there have been a greater increase in career self-efficacy scores? Research studies show that student-athletes who do not achieve high academic success may benefit more from career interventions than their academically productive peers (Martens & Cox, 2000; Martens & Lee, 1998; Murphy, Petitpas, & Brewer, 1996; Sanstedt et al., 2004; Wiechman & Williams, 1997).

Program Satisfaction Achieved

Overall, this study found participants to be satisfied with the program, and that the intervention demonstrated significantly increased student-athlete career self-efficacy scores. The highest mean score among the evaluation variables was the response, "allowed me to learn about career options outside my academic major." This belief suggested the intervention program was successful in providing exposure to career options beyond participants' academic areas. The response, "was delivered at a comfortable pace and format" was the lowest mean score among evaluation variables, yet the score (4.01) suggested participants still agreed with the structure of the intervention program. Although program participants agreed the session was delivered at a comfortable pace and format, it was not surprising to the researcher that this was the most challenged area of evaluated items. This was due to the complex nature of the program's structure and format. The intervention consisted of four individual transitions or styles of delivery. It opened with a lecture style format, transitioned to a panel segment, then to speed networking and round-table talks, and closed with career fair booth networking. These separate segments are often conducted as a single career event across many college campuses (CRWG, 2010). The possibility that all four styles could be integrated into one comprehensive session

may be an important solution to the limitations of time and effort placed on career development by student-athletes, which is highlighted in this study's review of literature (Carodine, 2003; Gaston-Gayles, 2005; Martens, 1998).

The highest mean score among the satisfaction variables was the response, "should continue to be offered for student-athletes in future academic semesters." This belief revealed that not only was the intervention program a satisfying experience, but an experience that could be replicated and continued for future student-athletes. This also indicated just how much participants felt the program was beneficial to them, and well worth their overall time and effort. The lowest mean score among the satisfaction variables was the response, "met my expectations in the area of graduate and professional school planning." This belief indicated that although expectations were met in this area, according to participants, it was the least satisfying area of the intervention. This did not surprise the researcher as fewer graduate programs were asked to participate in the career intervention program. To improve coverage in this area for future program consideration, there should be an increase in efforts regarding graduate programs. In general, program participants agreed that outcomes associated with the program met expectations during the intervention, and the most satisfying experiences were captured by the areas of career information, internships, and experiential learning.

Improvements in Career Self-Efficacy

Two key findings emerge from this study: 1) student-athlete participants were already confident in their own career self-efficacy before the intervention, and 2) that level of confidence grew significantly after the intervention. The fact that student-athletes in this study entered the program with relatively high confidence levels could be backed by their participation in NCAA Division III athletics (NCAA, 2016). Unlike NCAA Division I and Division II, student-athletes

at this level are not provided athletic scholarships during their college career (NCAA, 2016). While student-athletes at division III schools still spend a considerable amount of time on their sport, they tend to focus more on academics than their peers at other divisions (NCAA, 2016). This focus often leads to a higher-grade point average, and higher academic identity than their division I and II counterparts (NCAA, 2016). Literature suggests that student-athletes with a higher academic identity, and lower athletic identity may have high career self-efficacy beliefs to begin with (Martens & Cox, 2000; Martens & Lee, 1998; Murphy, Petitpas, & Brewer, 1996; Sanstedt et al., 2004; Wiechman & Williams, 1997). As shown early in this chapter, the majority of participants in this study reported high grade point averages, which indicated either their academic success, or overstatement of reported GPA's.

Findings in this study reveal that student-athlete participants enhanced their own career self-efficacy beliefs and grew their level of confidence after the intervention. Some of this growth could be attributed to the program's multi-segment format, and content coverage, which did lead to participants achieving satisfaction with career-related activities. Regarding the format, colleges and universities of all sizes typically host campus career fairs as exclusive events, so incorporating a lecture, panel, and table talks into the mix was certainly a rare approach for these participants. With respect to content coverage, program components including a) career information, b) employment services, c) career advising/counseling, d) graduate school planning, e) online networking, and f) internships/experiential learning met student-athlete expectations, and participants recommended this curriculum be offered in future academic semesters.

While the majority of this discussion will focus on career self-efficacy growth, it is imperative to observe where career self-efficacy did not improve, which is the response, use the

internet to find information about occupations that interest you. This was the only item in the study that did not result in an increase in career self-efficacy for student-athletes. This decline in score can be attributed to the intervention's lack of inclusion of online-related content and focusing more on in-person development of program participants. Additionally, the fact that career self-efficacy beliefs were examined immediately following the intervention left no time to allocate toward the use of online resources from time 1 to time 2 of the measurement. Scores might have improved in this area if participants were able to access the internet as part of the program.

The next conclusion supports the significant increases in career self-efficacy scores among student-athlete participants in these respective areas. There were three career self-efficacy beliefs that revealed a significant increase in scores from pre-test to post-test. After the intervention, student-athletes had more confidence in their ability to 1) find out employment trends for an occupation over the next 10 years, 2) prepare a good resume to be considered by employers, and 3) successfully manage the job interview process.

Find out employment trends for an occupation over the next 10 years. There are several explanations for the increase of career self-efficacy beliefs in this area. First and foremost, the intervention called for a reverse, networking-style approach as one of the segments of the program. In most career events involving employers, students select the employers they network with, whereas, the intervention allowed for participants and employers to network without choice. Next, the significant increase in confidence among participants could be due to the employment insights and actual content offered by the organizations during this segment. Companies could present opportunities and challenges facing both employers and candidates as desired, which likely led to more advice on employment and hiring trends. Third, this segment

was conducted in a speed-networking, style format consisting of table rotations every five minutes, which granted employers coverage of mass student-athletes in a small amount of time. Finally, these rotations allowed a more personalized attempt to offer career advice to student-athletes across a variety of areas, including employment services, opportunities, and trends.

Prepare a good resume to be considered by employers. The results of the assessment reveal that student-athletes' mean scores on the pre-test and post-test for this item were significantly correlated, and they significantly increased from time 1 to time 2 as a result of the intervention. This increase could be a result of the direct coverage that employers were instructed to share about resume preparation and what employers look for on a resume. During the career fair networking segment, program participants had open and frank dialogue with employers about their own personal qualifications and experiences. Employers were encouraged to offer advice to participants who brought their resumes to the program, which resulted in real-time feedback throughout the intervention. During and immediately following the networking segment, campus career services was also on-hand to cover resume preparation. The office offered participants additional materials and resources regarding resume preparation. Student-athletes were also urged to stop by their office on campus at a later date for resume critiquing and general, career advising sessions.

Successfully manage the job interview process. The results of the assessment reveal that student-athletes' mean scores on the pre-test and post-test for this item were already high, but the scores significantly improved from time 1 to time 2. This improvement could be a result of the panel segment and discussion directly surrounding the employment interview process. Recruiting managers and corporate executives were instructed to share best practices and how-to standout in an interview. Student-athletes were also able to ask direct questions about

interviewing with employers during the intervention. It is likely that information regarding employment services and job interviews were based on real-world experiences led by the employers instead of hypothetical experiences covered in the classroom, and this approach may have been valuable to the program. Participants were encouraged to request and ask for employer-driven interviews on the spot for future dates and times. Several of these meetings were successfully arranged and confirmed as part of the event that evening.

The study indicated a rise in scores from pre-test to post-test for the final six career self-efficacy beliefs, yet that growth was not significant. After the intervention, student-athletes had more confidence in their ability to 1) find average yearly earnings, 2) find information about graduate schools, 3) talk with a person in their field of interest, 4) make an effective career decision, 5) identify relevant employers, and 6) determine their ideal job. The next discussion explains the additional findings and how the intervention may have played a role in each increased outcome.

Find the average yearly earnings of people in an occupation. During the speed networking talks, employers were encouraged to share starting salaries for their entry-level hiring programs. This approach allowed students to become more informed about annual compensation in different areas for participating companies. The content shared by employers as part of the program was specific to those organizations. However, this item measured beliefs in finding the average earnings in an occupation, and most employers did not specifically speak to what salaries students should expect from respective industries, just their company alone. This may suggest why there was improvement in this area for student-athletes but the change was not as significant as the earlier mentioned items in the study.

Find information about graduate or professional schools. Representatives from Concordia's graduate studies program were encouraged to share a relevant timeline, and information about the overall application process. They were also asked to address how students can consider if pursuing graduate studies or starting a job with an organization is the best first step after college. Representatives were not asked to cover information on other graduate or professional schools, because they were not experienced in that area. This may be part of the reason why there was not significant growth in this area for student-athlete participants. Another reason is there was undoubtedly, a lack of graduate school presence at the event as well. Only one group out of all the organizations in attendance solely focused on graduate education. However, employers were encouraged to offer advice to participants about graduate school, specifically regarding whether it should occur before or after gaining real work experience. Career Services was also on-hand to cover graduate school interest and encouraged participants to drop by their offices for follow-up in this area. Several graduate programs were invited, and expected to attend, but the limited presence was definitely a weakness of the program.

Talk with a person already employed in a field of your interest. According to program participants, a strength of the intervention was the concept of learning about career options outside their academic majors. The diversity of employers across multiple industries also seemed to be well-received as results indicated that participants acquired career-related information they had never received prior to this experience. Although the coverage of employer industries was vast, there were limited employers in certain areas, which could have affected the ability to meet people in specific fields of interest. For example, healthcare and non-profit organizations were represented, but not as much as education, business, and other career-related fields. It is also possible that some student-athletes, particularly underclassmen, may not have

decided on a specific field of interest prior to the intervention. These reasons may support why there was growth between time 1 and time 2 among program participants. The appendix has a comprehensive list of employers who participated in the program.

Make a career decision and then not worry whether it was right or wrong. The increase in career self-efficacy scores for this belief may be a result of the participants' curiosity and ability to ask questions during the intervention. The last segment of the intervention consisted of student-led discussions at the employer booths and tables. Participants were urged to address their interests in certain organizations, as well as, their intentions and next steps career wise. Employers were supportive in having open and honest dialogue with student-athletes regarding their career decision-making or lack thereof. This could have played a role in the improved confidence levels after the intervention. One critique of the intervention would be that it did not allow enough time for student-athletes to actually act on potential career decisions following the program. This means it truly would be difficult to measure their ability to decide if a move was right or wrong when attempts had yet to occur.

Identify employers relevant to your career possibilities. Given the fact that more organizations represented business-type careers, and that business was the most common field of interest among program participants, the program was relatively aligned from the beginning. Although the coverage of employer career opportunities was in the hundreds, this non-significant change could be due to limitations among the range of career opportunities offered in specific areas. For example, sports careers were not as obtainable as education careers were, and education careers did not exist quite as frequent as business careers did during the intervention. Having a better presence of non-business employers would likely provide the possibility of more

careers in other areas at the intervention. This adjustment alone may help the growth become more significant among program participants.

Determine what your ideal job would be. Participants in this study were able to learn about hundreds of various jobs for three hours as part of the program. This may be adequate time for some student-athletes, but for others more time and conversations may be needed to make this determination. This could point to why the growth was not as significant. Another reason could be simply due to the lack of content covered in this particular area. The curriculum was not set to teach participants how to identify what their ideal job would be, but rather inform on the many different opportunities available that they may have never learned about. Several organizations represented workplace cultures that focused on an office and desk-style jobs. Other employers highlighted their opportunities allowed for employees to be out in the field versus confined to an office. It is possible that student-athlete participants may be able to determine the type of professional setting they'd prefer inside vs outside, and perhaps that belief would have significant growth from pre-test to post-test if measured as part of the study.

In summary, program content and career self-efficacy beliefs measured before and after the intervention were not only addressed by organizations across numerous industries, but also by specialists of various levels. Vice presidents, human resource directors, talent acquisition managers, and corporate recruiters were among the titles of some employer representatives. This diversity among hiring professionals presented different levels of communication and career advice that might be shared with student-athletes. For example, a corporate recruiter for an organization might bring a wealth of knowledge about a specific, signature program (i.e. sales development), while a human resource director may bring an understanding of a variety of programs across many sectors (i.e. marketing, communications, operations, sales, etc.).

Ultimately, there was an apparent gap between student-athletes and employers regarding career transition to the workplace. Student-athletes in this study had less of a grasp on what was expected of them regarding employment trends, resumes, and the interview process, and the results suggest employers helped bridge that gap during the career intervention program.

Contributions to the Literature

There are several contributions to the literature on career development gained from this study. First, literature on student-athlete career self-efficacy has historically, covered NCAA Division I and Division II student-athletes. This study adds new contributions to the literature on career self-efficacy based on evidence that NCAA Division III student-athletes also benefit from career intervention programs. Second, literature also points out how customary it is for career interventions to occur over large periods of time, for instance weeks, months, or an entire academic semester. This extended intervention time would possibly have made this program and its outcomes even better. Furthermore, literature that exists on career intervention programs is often based on one medium of delivery to an audience; a seminar, a course, an online assessment or in-person counseling session to name a few. However, this study adds a fresh perspective to the literature based on a one-day, 3-hour intervention program that involves several media including a lecture, a panel, table talks, and open networking segments. Finally, literature regarding career interventions presents most mediation as instructor or counselor driven. However, this study integrated both employer-led and student-led segments into the same program, which may have been unusual, but productive for this short-style intervention.

Practical Implications for Concordia University

The findings in this study setup several important implications for policy and practice that should be considered. First, practical implications for Concordia University Chicago and its

athletic program are specifically reviewed and recommended. Then, the policy implications are discussed for higher education institutions and other NCAA Division III athletic programs representing similar campus size, budgets, and level of competition.

As indicated above, the descriptive results of the study support the idea that the Life After Sport Transition (LAST) program met student-athlete expectations, and overall, the participants are satisfied with the experience. Furthermore, findings suggest that career-related outcomes were acquired from the program as intended. Aspects of the program including life after sport career transition, learning about alternative career options, and developing skills to interact with employers in the professional setting were achieved according to the participants. The student-athletes reported it was worth their time and investment toward their own personal and professional development, and the program should continue to be offered on campus in future academic semesters.

Practically speaking, the synopsis above backs the notion that the LAST program provided adequate support to participating student-athletes at Concordia University Chicago. Now that we know the LAST program was successful, we should consider offering the program again in the future and its frequency. The institution could consider hosting the program on an annual, rolling basis if desired. The costs to facilitate the program were minimum, and given that most seniors are graduating each spring, the recommendation would be to implement the program on an annual basis. There is an opportunity to offer future programming in the spring semester as it would be closer to graduation, but also there is perceived value in keeping the program aligned with the fall semester so participants have more time before graduation to apply what they have learned in making the career transition.

In communication with employers, the feedback verbally received by the researcher and career services director seemed to point to interest in returning to campus to participate in the program. However, the current study did not measure and follow-up on data to support that possible conclusion. We can gather from the data that requiring student-athlete participation and making it a priority among coaches would be an important change to make for future programming. Also, encouraging more student-athletes from other sports and teams to participate would enhance the study, and make it an even more representative sample the next time around. Another implication for Concordia University Chicago is to encourage greater participation from students who do not compete in college athletics. This inclusion-driven effort would open the door to research that examines student-athletes and non-athletes in terms of gains and outcomes across the intervention. This would provide a wider strategy to educate and support more students using the same resources in one centralized setting, which could be a productive practice for small, private institutions with limited resources in general.

Additionally, as the opportunity to provide campus-wide programming for all students exists, so would the chance to focus solely on programs that reach other targeted audiences. There are other subset student populations that could possibly benefit from this level of intervention. First-generation students, International students, and students participating in Greek organizations represent a few examples. Expanding programming toward these niche groups could be a way to implement the program multiple times a year if desired by campus leadership. This would allow for future research studies to compare student-athlete outcomes with other targeted sample populations as needed.

The LAST Program Improvements

In addition to practical implications, there are three main improvements that should be considered for future program implementation. These suggestions may be noted as alternative ways to design and deliver the intervention to college student-athletes. First, the program could be extended beyond one session. Since the intervention covers 6 major components or standards recommended by the National Association for Colleges and Employers (NACE), the program could be useful as a 6-session intervention. This would allow more time to focus on each area, which would be a productive pivot as participants indicated that each component met their expectations. This extended format would also allow participants more time between pre-test and post-test measures. Therefore, career self-efficacy growth might be less or more, but could also prevent the possibility of recency effect that likely occurred in the current study.

Another suggestion for program improvement would consist of adding online engagement for participants. A virtual fair, chat room or networking component could increase the amount of information and the diversity of organizations participating in the program. Since the program was limited to an on-campus format, there were employers across a variety of industries that likely would have participated in an online structured segment. This type of offering would have also contributed to the number of media chosen to deliver program content. There were also areas of the evaluation that covered online networking and extended career services, and although participant response was positive in this regard, feedback was not as favorable here as it was in other areas.

The final improvement could be essential to future program implementation, and is centered around direct student-athlete feedback. As part of the Athlete Participant Evaluation (APE) form, student-athletes were asked an open-ended question regarding what additional

topics or areas they would like covered at a future event. The areas of sports, sciences, and communications were mentioned three times more than any other recommended topic on the form. Specialized sports categories listed by participants included coaching, sport management, professional sports, athletic administration, and sports media. Specific science groupings used by participants included scientific, medical, medicine, nursing, and physical therapy.

Communications categories that were consistent with student-athlete mentions included journalism, event planning, creative, marketing, broadcasting, and public relations. The key advancements suggested in this section could help improve future programming for student-athletes according to participant feedback, and what was gathered from the study overall.

Policy Implications for Higher Education Institutions

The policy implications are now discussed for higher education institutions and athletic departments with similar size, budgets, and level of athletic participation. Athletic programs at other small, private institutions may want to review this study, its challenges, and proposed improvements before implementing the intervention program. The challenges addressed by Concordia University would likely exist for other small, private institutions. For example, participants in this study reported strong career self-efficacy scores before participating in the intervention program. NCAA Division III student-athletes are often perceived as more academically focused than student-athletes at larger athletic divisions (NCAA, 2016). This academic level of success may be in part due to the fact that Division III athletic departments do not offer athletic scholarships to student-athletes who choose to compete at their institutions (NCAA, 2016). Therefore, it is likely the same situation may arise with participants at similar institutions, and this would be important to acknowledge prior to program implementation.

Another challenge addressed in this single-site study was although the measure of career self-efficacy scores started high, and were statistically significant, the effect size is likely small. Literature suggests that NCAA Division III student-athletes could have higher academic identities than student-athletes competing at NCAA Division I and II levels, which offer athletic scholarships (NCAA, 2016). The higher the academic identity, the higher the career readiness, therefore an assumption may be that career interventions could be less beneficial for student-athletes at not just Concordia University, but other NCAA Division III institutions as well (Martens & Cox, 2000; Martens & Lee, 1998; Murphy, Petitpas, & Brewer, 1996; Sanstedt et al., 2004; Wiechman & Williams, 1997).

Usually academic success is not related to a program challenge, but regarding this intervention, it may disrupt career self-efficacy growth among NCAA Division III student-athletes. It has been shared by the NCAA that division III student-athletes report higher grade point averages on average, than their counterparts at the division I and II level (NCAA, 2016). This possible standard was evident at Concordia University as nearly 80% of the program participants reported a 3.0 GPA or higher. Student-athletes at smaller, private schools like Concordia may have the same academic achievement and career association, which could also result in minor growth among career self-efficacy scores if measured as a pre-test, post-test assessment.

Since coach commitment was likely an important factor toward student-athlete participation in the intervention, it is important to note that institutions may need to rely on coaches to make an intervention program priority for this student population. Although some institutions have greater resources, and more personnel than others at the division III level, it still may be just as challenging to reel in the focus of athletic coaches at any institution (Carodine,

2003). It was evident at Concordia University that some coaches encouraged student-athlete participation more than others, which may have played a role in overall attendance and program participation. Institutions implementing this program should consider a joint effort between athletics and career services. This helped the researcher collaborate with coaches more effectively as they were made aware of the program's significance by both their own athletic administration, and campus leadership from the division of student affairs.

In terms of how the program was offered, some institutions have designated programs and semester courses geared around careers, life skills, and student development (Carodine, 2003). These types of resources present opportunities to engage more students throughout an academic semester. This would be one recommended approach if academic curriculum would allow, yet many institutions are often forced to find one, unified date for a program of this magnitude, as was the case in this study. Finding event dates that all sports are available is often a challenge given the level of team travel and athletic priorities of an athletic department (Carodine, 2003). This made offering the program as one session more manageable for this study, which may also be the case for similar institutions.

Lastly, for small, private schools that may not be conveniently placed in a metropolitan area, it may be a challenge to identify a diverse group of employer participants due to school location. Concordia University is located in the Chicago suburbs, which allowed the researcher to contact a countless number of employers, and focus on including diverse industries and organizations for the program. Employer outreach alone is a critical area to address before taking on the responsibility of implementing a program. Collaborating with career services can help with ensuring employer participation, and this co-op effort is highly recommended at any institution. Just as career services is critical to the recruitment of employers to the program so

could faculty with the business or education program for example. It may be just as rewarding for the school or specific academic program as it is for the student-athlete participants as other benefits may form from involving corporations in higher education practice. Relationship building, sponsorship support, and identifying mutually beneficial partnerships round out a few examples that Concordia University experienced after the study.

Limitations of the Study

Many of the concerns that could have affected the core strengths of this study's findings were mentioned in the delimitations section (i.e. attrition, single-site study, potential researcher bias), however several additional limitations that were not as intentional or controlled by the researcher are discussed as it pertains to the study. Sampling is the first limitation that should be addressed here. The population sample of 98 student-athlete participants was large enough to achieve adequate power for answering the study's research questions. However, the planning committee, during the initial study design stages, anticipated a 50% program participation rate. This goal fell short of being achieved as 156 student-athletes (40%) of the 391 attending the institution in Fall 2019, participated in the program. The 98 student-athlete program participants were a reference to those who actually took both the pre-test and post-test measures as part of the study. The fact that less than half of the student-athlete population on campus attended the program may be a reflection of participants' beliefs and confidence levels toward career self-efficacy. Perhaps student-athletes felt they were already prepared for making effective career decisions, and did not need the additional program support. If this were the case, it could be noted as a potential study limitation, as well as, the measure used to collect the data.

As pointed out earlier in the study, attendance numbers could also reflect lack of prioritizing non-athletic related programming, which addresses another limitation regarding

student-athlete attendance and participation in the program. Research suggests some student-athletes spend more than 40 hours a week in athletic-related activities, which makes it challenging for them to squeeze in other campus activities (Carodine, 2003; Gaston-Gayles, 2005; Martens, 1998). Coaches were asked to encourage their teams to fully participate in the program. Some teams had solid representation, and some teams did not. For example, the baseball and softball teams each had 18 or more participants, while several sports had three or fewer student-athletes who participated in the program. While lack of diversity existed among some teams, the overall participant numbers still allowed for examining differences among group means calling for a sample size of 30 or more for each measured group.

Lack of prior research in this area was another limitation of the study. There were research studies regarding student-athlete career self-efficacy, however the focus was on NCAA Division I student-athletes with an association to athletic-identity. There was little to no research regarding career interventions, particularly measuring career self-efficacy of NCAA Division III student-athletes. This study served as an instrumental attempt to bridge the gap in literature involving student-athletes and career development for future research.

Another limitation of the study was relying on self-reported data from students participating in the program. There may have been potential areas of bias including confidence in completing career tasks, grade point average, etc. Not only could this have influenced strong career self-efficacy beliefs reported by participants prior to the intervention, but the fact this was a sample made up of college student-athletes may have also played a role. Research suggests that student-athletes who achieve higher grades, and have a higher academic-identity tend to be more confident in their own, personal career development (Martens & Cox, 2000; Martens & Lee, 1998; Murphy, Petitpas, & Brewer, 1996; Sanstedt et al., 2004; Wiechman & Williams,

1997). In this study, participant feedback on assessments were taken at face value, and did seem to be congruent with research findings regarding division III student-athletes and their academic success (NCAA, 2016).

Finally, just as noting the limits of participant, self-reported data is important, so is addressing the possible limitations of the chief investigator in this study. The researcher had greater access to local, regional, and national organizations due to prior work experience in student-athlete career development and corporate relations. This study included companies and hiring professionals who actually preferred student-athlete recruitment at their respective organizations. This could have led to a more enriched experience led by employers than what could have occurred if organizations participated that had never shown interest in this demographic. These employers could have been more versed in understanding the time constraints and lack of relevant experiences student-athletes have, which again could have induced a better, all-around experience for program participants. However, despite the existing relationships of professional organizations, this area was still a challenge for the researcher, which was indicated by the limited representation of graduate programs at the event.

Although several challenges were discovered and addressed in this section, the impact of each limitation did not prevent the program from being designed and implemented, nor cause a major interference in the overall findings and conclusions of the study. However, these limitations could point to some of the needs for further research regarding student-athlete career development at NCAA Division III institutions. The next discussion will point out these recommendations for future, higher education research studies and intervention programs.

Recommendations for Future Research

Several areas should be considered for future research based on results of this study. First, there is opportunity to widen the scope of the study to first-generation or international students as a target population sample. Similar to student-athletes, both first-generation and international students have unique experiences as early as their freshmen years on campus. Exploring career self-efficacy among these two groups and others would allow for some comparisons across certain demographics from the current study including gender, grade point average, and academic class to name a few. This type of focus would provide further assessment into the literature centered on outcomes for alternative student groups and career interventions.

Alternatively, a similar study could be run that includes a control group of student-athletes who did not receive the career intervention. This could efficiently be conducted across various sports for both men's and women's teams. It also could be controlled for teams that are in season as opposed to out of season. For example, if the program is conducted in the Fall, football and volleyball teams who are in season may not participate in the intervention, while out of season programs including baseball and softball would participate in the program. Moreover, a study could also be performed on a group of student-athletes and a group of non-athletes who both could receive the same level of attention, fully participating in the intervention program. In this case, the results would indicate which group had more to gain from participating, as well as, who was impacted more as a result of the intervention program.

Additionally, there is an opportunity for future research on career development among student-athletes and other student groups to carry a more long-term approach. Perhaps a program that covers several weeks or an entire semester, which is a common trend found in the literature on career interventions at higher education institutions. If considering a longer

timeline, it may be productive to consider extending the program across academic schools and departments. The intervention program could complement an academic curriculum in a similar way as internships and enriched learning experiences do, if offered by the department.

Other research recommendations would suggest a greater commitment and involvement from athletic department staff, and campus administrators. Providing surveys and acquiring feedback from career services and athletic staff could play an important role in securing the program's sustainability over time. Moreover, student-athletes tend to listen to their coaches so perhaps involving that particular group could be beneficial in the long run. Finally, involving faculty athletic representatives could lead to a greater academic and research presence for practitioners when considering collaboration with campus stakeholders. Coaches, faculty athletic reps, and academic advisors account for department staff at every higher education institution, despite the athletic program's size, budget or range of resources. The inclusion of these stakeholders, and others would add diversity, depth, and balance in furthering research on student-athletes and career self-efficacy.

Ultimately, career self-efficacy scores and individual beliefs have been improved as a result of the LAST program. Through use of interactive segments and employer-driven insights, future interventions could have similar if not better outcomes if the basis of this study is utilized. Higher education institutions should find a way to promote this level of programming, regardless of the intervention's style, length, and target audience. Overall, these are critical factors that should be considered when planning both a career intervention and program evaluation.

Conclusion

This program evaluation examined the effect a career intervention program had on the career self-efficacy of college student-athletes at a small, liberal arts college in the Midwest.

Program participants were satisfied with the program, reported it was worth their time and investment, and agreed the program should be offered to student-athletes in future academic semesters. This program was meant to help participants acquire specific career-related outcomes related to their own personal and professional development, and student-athletes indicated their expectations in this area were also met.

Although the Life After Sport Transition (LAST) program was an ambitious and comprehensive approach that included multiple segments in a short amount of time, it's challenging pace and format were still well-received by participating student-athletes. The program was meant to facilitate career-related information that participants had never experienced while allowing them to learn about career options outside their academic major. By focusing on experiential learning, and exploring how a career intervention program impacts one's own career beliefs, this dissertation emphasized areas for both higher education practitioners and researchers to pursue in future studies. The patterns and trends often addressing NCAA Division I student-athletes at large, public institutions are now grounded in this research, which speaks to NCAA Division III student-athletes at a small, private institutions.

The process of evaluating this intervention program was a challenging but rewarding experience. The greatest challenge was implementing a program without making it mandatory for every athletic team to ensure student-athlete participation. Perhaps future recommendations will be asserted and it can be offered as an academic course, or required program that all student-athletes attend. Further research is needed in cross-sectional studies to address coach commitment and student-athlete participation, and in longitudinal studies to learn the employment status, future earnings, and overall attitudes toward early career transition for the same program participants over a period of time. This study also has important implications for

student-athlete career development efforts at small colleges and universities that lack the athletic staff, resources, and extracurricular funding to implement similar programs.

The most rewarding aspect of the intervention was observing the student-athletes' involvement in the program, and their engagement with employers. The way they grew confidence in their own talents from program start to finish was fascinating to campus leadership and key stakeholders who were in attendance. Student-athletes were appreciative of the program components, and agreed this experience helped them in developing skills to interact with employers in the professional setting. It was a pleasure to work with campus leadership and the program planning committee, as well as, the student-athletes and coaches. Additionally, the undoubted support of the university's career services staff helped make the LAST program a success.

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APPENDIX A

Participant ID – Last 4 Digits of Cell # _____

CAREER DECISION-MAKING SELF-EFFICACY SCALE (pre-test & post-test)

For each statement below, please read carefully and indicate how much confidence you have that you could accomplish each task by marking your answer according to the following key.

The confidence levels are valued in the following manner:

- 1 – No Confidence at all
- 2 – Very Little Confidence
- 3 – Moderate Confidence
- 4 – Much Confidence
- 5 – Complete Confidence

HOW MUCH CONFIDENCE DO YOU HAVE THAT YOU COULD:

- | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|---|---|---|---|-------|
| 1. Use the Internet to find information about occupations that interest you. | | | | | _____ |
| 2. Find the average yearly earnings of people in an occupation. | | | | | _____ |
| 3. Find out employment trends for an occupation over the next 10 years. | | | | | _____ |
| 4. Find information about graduate or professional schools. | | | | | _____ |
| 5. Talk with a person already employed in a field of your interest. | | | | | _____ |
| 6. Prepare a good resume to be considered by employers. | | | | | _____ |
| 7. Make a career decision and then not worry whether it was right or wrong. | | | | | _____ |
| 8. Successfully manage the job interview process. | | | | | _____ |
| 9. Identify employers relevant to your career possibilities. | | | | | _____ |
| 10. Determine what your ideal job would be. | | | | | _____ |

APPENDIX B

Participant ID – Last 4 Digits of Cell #_____

ATHLETE PARTICIPANT INFORMATION (API) FORM

This form is designed to obtain demographic information from the participants in this study. Please check the appropriate box in response to the following questions.

1. Age: (select one)

- ☐ 17 (if you are 17, please do not continue with the survey)
- ☐ 18
- ☐ 19
- ☐ 20
- ☐ 21
- ☐ 22
- ☐ 23
- ☐ 24
- ☐ 25

2. Gender: (select one)

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male

3. Ethnicity: (select one)

- ☐ American Indian
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black
- ☐ Hispanic
- ☐ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- ☐ White
- ☐ Multiple Ethnic
- ☐ Other

4. What is your current academic classification (select one)?

- ☐ Freshman
- ☐ Sophomore
- ☐ Junior
- ☐ Senior

5. Which of the following best reflects your overall grade point average (select one)?
- ☐ 4.0
 - ☐ 3.5 – 3.99
 - ☐ 3.0 – 3.49
 - ☐ 2.5 – 2.99
 - ☐ 2.0 – 2.49
 - ☐ Below 2.0
6. Select the college you are currently enrolled in or plan to enroll for your major.
- ☐ College of Arts & Sciences
 - ☐ College of Business
 - ☐ College of Education
 - ☐ College of Graduate Studies
 - ☐ College of Innovation & Professional Programs
7. Have you received a partial or full academic grant-in-aid this academic year (select one)?
- ☐ Full
 - ☐ Partial
 - ☐ No academic grant-in-aid this academic year
8. Are you an international student-athlete?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
9. Select the current sport team you are a member of at Concordia University Chicago (if you are a member of more than one team, please select all that apply).

Men's Sports

- ☐ Baseball
- ☐ Basketball
- ☐ Cross Country
- ☐ Football
- ☐ Lacrosse
- ☐ Soccer
- ☐ Tennis
- ☐ Track & Field
- ☐ Volleyball
- ☐ Non-Athlete

Women's Sports

- ☐ Basketball
- ☐ Cross Country
- ☐ Dance & Cheer
- ☐ Lacrosse
- ☐ Soccer
- ☐ Softball
- ☐ Tennis
- ☐ Track & Field
- ☐ Volleyball
- ☐ Non-Athlete

10. Email Address _____ 11. Cell _____

APPENDIX C

Participant ID – Last 4 Digits of Cell # _____

ATHLETE PARTICIPANT EVALUATION (APE) FORM

In thinking about your career after collegiate athletics, address the following statements about your future transition to the workplace after participating in the career program.

Indicate your response by circling the number based on this scale that most accurately reflects your opinion.

The Student-Athlete Focused Career Sessions:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1) Prepared me for life after sport career transition.	1	2	3	4	5
2) Assisted me in developing skills to interact with employers in the professional setting.	1	2	3	4	5
3) Provided career-related information I had never received prior to this experience.	1	2	3	4	5
4) Allowed me to learn about career options outside my academic major.	1	2	3	4	5
5) Inspired me to do my own personal networking in the future.	1	2	3	4	5
6) Was delivered at a comfortable pace and format.	1	2	3	4	5
7) Met my expectations in the area of Career Information.	1	2	3	4	5
8) Met my expectations in the area of Employment Services.	1	2	3	4	5
9) Met my expectations in the area of Career Advising/Counseling.	1	2	3	4	5
10) Met my expectations in the area of Graduate and Professional School Planning.	1	2	3	4	5
11) Met my expectations in the area of Online Networking and Extended Career Services.	1	2	3	4	5
12) Met my expectations in the area of Internships and Experiential Learning.	1	2	3	4	5
13) Was worth my time and investment toward my own personal and professional development.	1	2	3	4	5
14) Should continue to be offered for student-athletes in future academic semesters.	1	2	3	4	5

15) What additional topics or areas would you like covered at a future event?

16. Email Address _____ 17. Cell _____

APPENDIX D

IRB Approval of Research Study from University of Kansas



Date: March 21, 2019

TO: Donald Washington Jr., (dwashington@ku.edu)

FROM: Alyssa Haase, IRB Coordinator (785-864-7385, irb@ku.edu)

RE: **Approval of Initial Study**

The IRB reviewed the submission referenced below on 3/21/2019. The IRB approved the protocol, effective 3/21/2019.

IRB Action: APPROVED		Effective date: 3/21/2019	Expiration Date : 3/20/2023
STUDY DETAILS			
Investigator:	Donald Washington Jr.		
IRB ID:	STUDY00143846		
Title of Study:	Effect of a Career Intervention Program on the Career Self-Efficacy of College Student-Athletes at an NCAA Division III Institution		
Funding ID:	None		
REVIEW INFORMATION			
Review Type:	Initial Study		
Review Date:	3/21/2019		
Documents Reviewed:	• KU Consent Form - DJ Washington, • KU HRPP - DJ Washington, • Session I Flyer, • Session II Flyer, • Survey Forms - DJ Washington		
Exemption Determination:	• (2)(ii) Tests, surveys, interviews, or observation (low risk)		
Additional Information:			

APPENDIX E

IRB Approval of Research Study from Concordia University Chicago

Hi DJ.

I hope this email finds you doing well. Please accept this email as my approval to use CUC student-athletes in your study. When it is completed, I would like to see what your findings are.

Good Luck!

Jeff

Jeff Hynes
Interim University Foundation CEO
Dean of Students
Vice President for Student Life and Intercollegiate Athletics
Assistant Professor of Education

Concordia University Chicago
7400 Augusta St
River Forest, IL 60305

www.CUChicago.edu

From: DJ Washington [mailto:dj@athletenetwork.com]
Sent: Monday, March 25, 2019 5:45 PM
To: Hynes, Jeffrey C. <jeff.hynes@cuchicago.edu>
Subject: Current Research Study Update

Hi Jeff - It's been almost a year now that I sat in your office, and learned of trends concerning student affairs, and your input definitely has been very valuable.

As you may have noticed from Amanda's response, I am conducting a study to complete my doctoral requirements at University of Kansas on student-athletes and career interventions. The study is entitled: *Effect of a Career Intervention Program on the Career Self-Efficacy of College Student-Athletes at an NCAA Division III Institution*

I'd like to deploy a simple survey to CUC student-athletes (pretest/posttest design) that are participating in our annual student-athlete career networking forum and offer a few follow-up sessions with teams through communication with coaches. This initiative should not conflict or disrupt any student's regular schedule, practices, classes, etc.

Of course, I'd work with Jerry and Pete on the timeliness of the surveys as well as presenting final results if the campus community is interested.

This study has been acknowledged and reviewed at CUC's IRB via KU's approval process (approval evidence has been submitted to CUC).

Attached is a copy of the University of Kansas approval document. Please let me know if you need anything else from me prior to our April 3rd event date.

Thank you and hope this finds you doing well! - DJ

Institutional Review Board <irb@cuchicago.edu>

Thu, Mar 28, 2019 at 6:50 AM

To: DJ Washington <dj@athletenetwork.com>

Cc: "Hynes, Jeffrey C." <jeff.hynes@cuchicago.edu>, Institutional Review Board <irb@cuchicago.edu>

Thanks! As long as Jeff is good to go, you are good to go as far as the CUC IRB is concerned.

Amanda Mulcahy, PhD

Chair, Institutional Review Board

Director of Human Subjects Research Compliance

Professor of Research

(708)209-3159 office

(708)209-3167 fax

From: DJ Washington [mailto:dj@athletenetwork.com]

Sent: Monday, March 25, 2019 5:23 PM

To: Mulcahy, Amanda <Amanda.mulcahy@cuchicago.edu>

Cc: Hynes, Jeffrey C. <jeff.hynes@cuchicago.edu>; Institutional Review Board <irb@cuchicago.edu>

Subject: Re: KU Research Study at CUC

Hi Amanda - I have submitted the approval evidence needed and will follow-up with Jeff as well. Thank you. - DJ

DJ Washington | VP, College & Business Development

10000 Marshall Drive | Lenexa, KS 66215

DJ@AthleteNetwork.com | 913.397.6625

On Tue, Mar 19, 2019 at 8:33 AM Mulcahy, Amanda <Amanda.mulcahy@cuchicago.edu> wrote:

Hello DJ,

No, you would not need to seek another IRB approval. We would ask that you file evidence of your IRB approval with us (by email to: IRB@CUChicago.edu). Before any recruitment or data collection could begin you would need to seek approval from our VP for Student Life (Jeff Hynes). I have copied him on this email so that you have his contact information.

Amanda Mulcahy, PhD

Chair, Institutional Review Board

Director of Human Subjects Research Compliance

Professor of Research

(708)209-3159 office

(708)209-3167 fax

From: DJ Washington [mailto:dj@athletenetwork.com]
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2019 3:30 PM
To: Mulcahy, Amanda <Amanda.mulcahy@cuchicago.edu>
Cc: Institutional Review Board <irb@cuchicago.edu>
Subject: KU Research Study at CUC

Dr. Mulcahy - My name is DJ Washington, doctoral candidate at the University of Kansas. I am intending to perform a research study at Concordia University Chicago regarding student-athletes and career self-efficacy.

I would like to confirm that with IRB approval from University of Kansas I will not be expected to go through another review process with Concordia University Chicago for the same study.

Please respond and update me on your process at your earliest convenience. Thank you! - DJ

DJ Washington | VP, College & Business Development

APPENDIX F

Research Participant Informed Consent



ADULT RESEARCH SUBJECT – INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

An Evaluation of the Effect of a Career Intervention Program on the Career Self-Efficacy of College Student-Athletes at an NCAA Division III Institution.

Introduction: The Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Kansas supports the practice of protection for human subjects participating in research. The following information is provided for you to decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You may refuse to sign this form and not participate in this study. You should be aware that even if you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time. If you do withdraw from this study, it will not affect your relationship with this unit, the services it may provide to you, or the University of Kansas.

Purpose of the Study: You are invited to participate in the research project entitled, “An Examination of the Effect of a Career Intervention Program on the Career Self-Efficacy of College Student-Athletes at an NCAA Division III Institution,” which is being conducted at Concordia University Chicago under the direction of Lisa Wolf-Wendel, PhD, Associate Dean & Professor of Higher Education Administration, and DJ Washington, Doctoral Candidate. The purpose of this study is to design, implement, and evaluate the effect of the Life After Sports Transition (LAST) program on student-athlete’s career self-efficacy. Career self-efficacy is the level of confidence in your own ability to make a career decision.

Procedures: This research study will take place in a variety of different learning styles including an athletic-wide forum, individual sports team talks, and an online virtual event. Your participation will include completing a demographic questionnaire, satisfaction survey, and paper-based assessment about your participation in a series of career development sessions. During the assessment, you will be asked to rate your confidence in your ability to complete a variety of career decision-making tasks. At the end of the final session, you will be asked to complete the assessment again. Completion of these items should take 20 minutes. You will complete the forms together with other students. However, there will be no planned social interaction at this time. The entire participation of this program consists of three sessions for a total of six hours.

Upon program completion, your athletic department will have information about the data, results, and research area under study and my contact info will be made available to answer any questions you have about the research process.

Potential Risks: There are minimal risks to participation in this study, including loss of confidentiality. In addition, you may become aware of personal qualities regarding your own career decision-making, which might cause you to feel stressed or anxious. If so, you may stop at any time.

Potential Benefits: The leading direct benefit of your participation may be that you will learn how educational research is conducted while understanding factors influencing your career



decision-making and self-efficacy. There may also be an indirect benefit to others from learning about the results of the research.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in this study is voluntary. You will not be paid for your participation. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty, and your decision will not affect your relationship with Concordia University Chicago or any of your classes.

Participant Confidentiality: Your name will not be associated in any publication or presentation with the information collected about you or with the research findings from this study. Instead, the researcher will use a study number rather than your name. Your identifiable information will not be shared unless (a) it is required by law or university policy, or (b) you give written permission. It is possible, however, with internet communications, that through intent or accident someone other than the intended recipient may see your response.

Permission granted on this date to use and disclose your information remains in effect indefinitely. By signing this form, you give permission for the use and disclosure of your information for purposes of this study at any time in the future.

Private Information/Data: Your identifiable information may be removed from the data and collected during this project, and the de-identified data may be used for future research without additional consent from you. Data obtained from you will remain confidential, to the extent allowed by law. Information recorded by hand will be digitized into an encrypted PDF file and stored on a portable storage device in a small security safe. Your responses on the consent form, demographic questionnaire, and paper-based assessments will be stored in a small security safe, out of public view and monitored by the principal investigator.

Refusal to Sign Consent and Authorization: You are not required to sign this Consent and Authorization form and you may refuse to do so without affecting your right to any services you are receiving or may receive from Concordia University Chicago. However, if you refuse to sign, you cannot participate in this study.

Consent and Authorization Cancellation: You may withdraw your consent to participate in this study at any time. You also have the right to cancel your permission to use and disclose further information collected about you, in writing, at any time, by sending your written request to the researcher's email address: dWASHINGTON@ku.edu

If you cancel permission to use your information, the researcher will stop collecting additional information about you. However, the research team may use and disclose information that was gathered before they received your cancellation, as described above.

Questions about Participation: Questions at any time before, during, or after your participation procedures, should be directed to the researchers listed at the end of this consent form.



Participant Certification: I have read this Consent and Authorization form. I have had the opportunity to ask, and I have received answers to, any questions I had regarding the study. I understand that if I have any additional questions about my rights as a research participant, I may call (785) 864-7429 or (785) 864-7385, write the Human Research Protection Program (HRPP), University of Kansas, 2385 Irving Hill Road, Lawrence, Kansas 66045-7568, or email irb@ku.edu.

I agree to take part in this study as a research participant. By my signature I affirm that I am at least 18 years old and that I have received a copy of this Consent and Authorization form.

Type/Print Participant's Name

Date

Participant's Signature

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APPENDIX G

Career Intervention Program Content

LIFE AFTER SPORT TRANSITION (LAST) Program

NACE Standards (Program Components & Outcomes):

- ✓ Career Information & Employment Services
- ✓ Career Advising/Counseling & Graduate/Professional School Planning
- ✓ Online/Distance Career Services & Experiential Learning

Facilitators/Speakers:

- Program Consultant (the researcher) & Career Services Director
- 24 Participating Organizations & 5 Employer Panelists

Event Format:

National Employer Panel – (30 minutes) This part of the program will take place at the beginning of the program, and will consist of a professional panel discussion with 5 national employers. It will be moderated by the Program Consultant and will help student-athletes address real concerns from top organizations. Each panelist will briefly introduce themselves, their organization, and engage in the Q&A segment allowing about career topics concerning the latest and future employment trends. Related areas include selling yourself, the personal brand, skilled interviewing, online networking strategies, resume development, proper dress in the professional setting, etc.

Professional Round Table Talks – (60 minutes) This segment of the program consists of structured networking where organizations (attending representatives) rotate round-tables and speak to 10-12 student-athletes at each table (speed networking). Student-athlete participants show interest in organizations and learn about various career and employment information. This method should help students keep an open-mind versus pre-judging what each of the employers and careers are about. Organizations are encouraged to students about resumes, graduate school options, relocating, and what they can do to differentiate themselves in the real-world.

Networking Career Fair – (90 minutes) This final segment provides an opportunity for student-athletes and employers to have an open career fair and access to information leading to future employment. Student-athletes are encouraged to provide employers with professional resumes, and acquire business cards for further engagement. Employers are welcome to distribute information describing their career and internship opportunities. Employers have booths setup just like a traditional, campus career fair (table-top displays, interest cards, program brochures, etc.). Student-athlete attendees may ask questions, setup interviews, and seek career networking support from hiring managers, HR directors, and corporate recruiters to gain leverage in making a successful career transition.

Program Materials/Equipment:

200 Ink Pens - 200 Name Tags - 25 Round Tables - 25 Rectangle Tables - Table Number Stands
3-5 Microphones - Audio/Video Equipment - Panel Table - Athlete Check-in Table - Podium

Career and Employment Services

I. Career Information

- *Job market information (local, regional, national, global, etc.)*
 - Employment/job search and internship opportunities
 - Taking advantage of informational interviewing
- *Career Networking*
 - Perfecting your elevator pitch and introducing yourself to employers
 - Making eye-contact, giving a firm handshake, and embracing conversations with professionals you've never met before

II. Employment Services

- *Understanding various employment categories and industry-specific info*
 - Full-time, part-time, contract employment, remote/virtual setup, etc.
 - Salary vs commissioned-based opportunities and career advancement
 - Third-party employers, contract employers, and recruitment agencies
- *Professional Interviewing Strategies & various rounds of interviewing*
 - Do your research, ask for the job & always follow-up
 - Initial screen call, phone/video interview and the in-person meeting
 - When to start the job search, and how long until you're hired Session

Career and Graduate School Planning

I. Career Advising/Counseling

- *Student-athlete career exploration and planning strategies*
 - Understanding your personal strengths and weaknesses
 - Establishing short-term and long-term professional career goals
 - Leveraging on-campus career services and external resources
- *How to differentiate yourself as a college student-athlete*
 - Using athletic-related soft skills and core competencies
 - Articulating your unique athletic skill-set to organizations
- *Career Readiness Checklist*
 - Perfecting your professional resume, cover letter, and business cards
 - Highlighting online resumes, digital portfolios, and personal websites

II. Graduate/Professional School Planning

- *Positioning yourself as quality graduate/professional candidates*
 - Application process, personal statement & recommendation letters
 - An effective graduate school timeline & checklist for student-athletes
- *Connecting with graduate programs through various networking channels*
 - On-campus resources, events, coaches, and faculty recommendations
 - Online websites, publications, networking groups, and family referrals
- *Expecting real outcomes of an advanced degree in certain career areas*
 - Matching specific graduate programs with your ultimate career goals
 - Researching graduate programs in your preferred field of study

Online Resources and Networking

I. Online/Distance Career Services (CUC – Career Center Resources)

- *Developing an online career presence and using social media networks*
 - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Craigslist, etc.
 - Social networking 101: Tips from the pros (employer panelists)
- *Creating a competitive advantage and utilizing niche online networks*
 - LinkedIn.com, JoinHandShake.com, AthleteNetwork.com, etc.
 - Establish your place in front of thousands (employer panelists)
- *Understanding best practices when utilizing online job search engines*
 - Indeed.com, CareerBuilder.com, Monster.com, GlassDoor.com, etc.
 - Pros and Cons when leveraging your personal brand

II. Experiential Learning (Internship/Career Engagement)

- *Tapping into practical-based opportunities to gain career-related experience*
 - Student employment, study abroad, and co-op educational programs
 - Work-based learning, service learning, and employer apprenticeships
 - Alumni mentoring, job shadowing, and volunteering experiences
- *Internships Outlook: Local, regional, national and global opportunities*
 - Learn about the highest-ranking internships across all academic majors
 - Post-graduate internships and entry-level experiences in your field
 - How to consider unpaid internships that may lead to your dream job

APPENDIX H:

Career Intervention Program Flyer

Cougars Athlete Career Night

PAST ATTENDEES INCLUDE:

stryker[®]**CINTAS**[®]
READY FOR THE WORKDAY[™] **BOEING** **enterprise****ESPN**Northwestern Mutual[®]**ORACLE****5 - 8 pm****CONCORDIA GYMNASIUM**

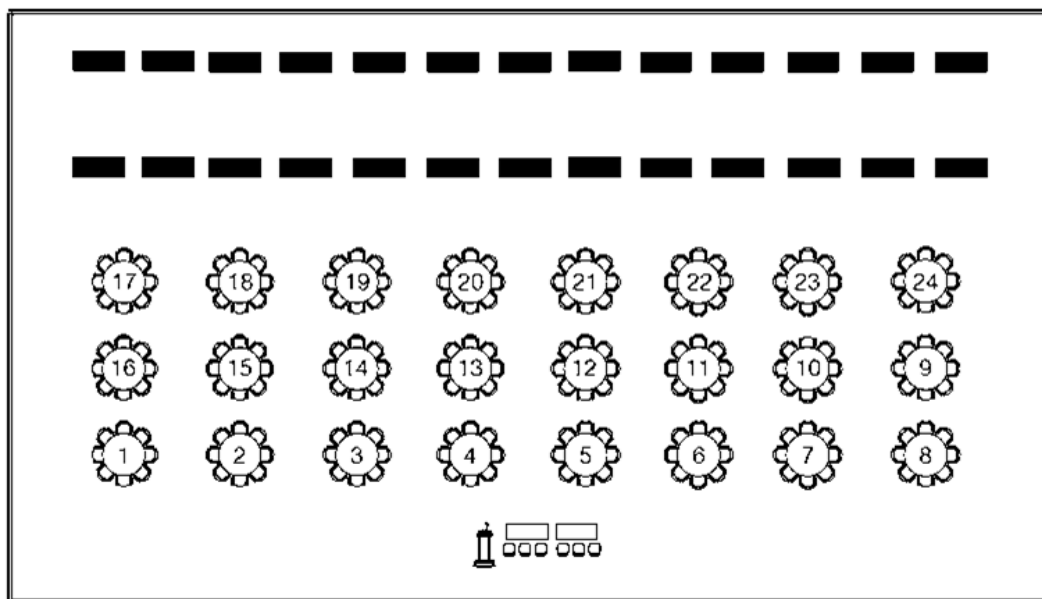
Students will learn a lot at the Career Forum which includes round table discussions. Following that program, students will have time to visit employers and discuss available jobs and internships. Employers include Boosterthon Athletics, City Year Edu, Angies List, and much more!

THIS IS A FREE EVENT FOR ALL STUDENTS, INCLUDING NON-ATHLETES AND OPEN TO ANY CHICAGOLAND DIVISION 3 & NAIA STUDENTS.

Appendix I:

Career Intervention Program Layout

Employer Panel – Round Table Talks – Career Fair Networking

Participating Organizations

*Denotes Employer Panelists

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1.) Booster* | 13.) WESCO* |
| 2.) Stryker Endoscopy* | 14.) Ryder* |
| 3.) Federated* | 15.) Northwestern Mutual |
| 4.) U.S. Marines | 16.) Thrivent Financial |
| 5.) BD Healthcare | 17.) Careers in Nonprofits |
| 6.) Chicago Police Department | 18.) Cicero Public Schools |
| 7.) Fitness Formula Clubs | 19.) Chicago Dogs Baseball |
| 8.) Concordia Graduate Studies | 20.) AXA Advisors |
| 9.) Illinois Dept of Social Services | 21.) Rush Oak Park Hospital |
| 10.) Chick-fil-A | 22.) U.S. Army |
| 11.) Chicago Public Schools | 23.) Stryker Sports Medicine |
| 12.) Concordia Career Services | 24.) Paychex |
| 25.) Athlete Network | |