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BETWEEN “STUDENT” AND “ATHLETE”: THE ACADEMIC INSTITUTION’S
ROLE IN THE SELF IDENTIFICATION OF DIVISION I STUDENT-ATHLETES

by

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for a Degree with Honors
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Abstract

The present study was designed to investigate the role of the academic institution on the self-identification of Division I student-athletes. While acknowledging the importance of various forms of socialization for the development of the self, this study focuses on the importance of the academic institution as an external force on the student-athlete experience. A voluntary online survey, powered by *Qualtrics*, was administered to all 410 student-athletes at the University of Maine. A basic analysis of the survey results revealed that particular conduits of the academic institution may play an important role in the balance between “student” and “athlete,” including professors’ and coaches’ academic expectations, school-sanctioned organizations and peer interaction, and Honors College enrollment. Also, future plans to attend graduate school were highly correlated with student-athlete self-identification. The use of this information has the potential to enhance the balance between the dual roles of “student” and “athlete” so as to best achieve the athletic and academic goals of the Athletic Department.

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Introduction

The experience of being a Division I student-athlete is one that can be both highly rewarding and highly challenging. Like all students, student-athletes are subject to the demands and expectations of the academic institution they attend. Unlike the majority of students however, student-athletes are exposed to many more demands and expectations from the academic institution. This is reflexive of the dual, full-time occupations of “student” and “athlete” that this population is subject to. They face academic demands as well as athletic demands for their personal commitment and time. This juggling act is the basis of this study, the goal of which is to better understand how student-athletes confront the demands and expectations placed on them by the academic institution. Building on this understanding, the current study was driven by the following research question: How do Division I University of Maine student-athletes self-identify their roles as “student” and athlete” and what role does the academic institution play in shaping this self-identification process?

Understanding how student-athletes self-identify could help athletic departments achieve their goals both athletically and academically. More specifically, understanding the conduits through which the academic institution is able to influence student-athlete self-identification could provide useful information for athletic departments that may be looking for change in either the athletic or academic domain. The greater the importance attached to any particular role, the greater the commitment to that role. Therefore, if student-athletes attach an equal or greater-than degree of importance to the “student” role as compared to the “athlete” role, then this will be reflected in their commitment to academics. Specifically of interest for this study is when there is a significant difference

between the importance attached to each role, often with the “athlete” role receiving prominence over the “student” role. The ideal for the University of Maine would be a student-athlete population that attached equal importance to each role which would be reflected in attempted levels of high achievement in both domains. For the purposes of this study, I will be referring to this ideal type as a “balance” between the dual roles student-athletes negotiate. It is important to note that this “balance” is a potential ideal for some institutions, such as the University of Maine. A shift in the balance toward “student” or “athlete” would better serve the interests of different institutions. By describing ways in which the “student” or “athlete” identities can be variously affected by the academic institution, this study provides knowledge to enhance or detract, one, or both identities.

This study identifies a number of conduits through which the academic institution may actively influence the degree to which student-athletes identify more or less as “students” and “athletes.” The three principal conduits identified by this study are professors’ and coaches’ academic expectations, peer interactions and school-sanctioned organizations outside of athletics, and enrollment in the Honors College. It is important to note that this study was conducted at only one Division I institution. Hence, the conduit of Honors College enrollment is specific to the University of Maine. Many other collegiate academic institutions however, have a program equivalent to the UMaine Honors College. Therefore, its inclusion still allows for a valuable, and generalizable, analysis. Promotion, or enhancement of these conduits in the lives of student-athletes could serve to increase “student” self-identification.

This is not a claim of causality. Rather, the aforementioned conduits were

identified as statistically significant correlates for an increase in self-identification as “student.” A multivariate analysis, controlling for spuriousness, would be necessary to further our understanding of the relationships between the above stated conduits and their influence on the self-identification of student-athletes. Also of importance, is the problem of causal order. The self-identification of student-athletes could be the independent variable meaning that, contrary to the conclusions I have drawn, student-athlete self-identification may be the more important variable in the relationships found. As in all studies relying on elective participation, the self-selection of the participants may not accurately represent the entire student-athlete population. The current study however, provides a solid starting point when trying to address how to increase the importance student-athletes attach, in particular, to the “student” role. This study’s focus on the role of the academic institution aims to address the oversight in the literature of the potential the academic institution has to impact student-athlete self-identification.

I first discuss the existing literature on student-athlete self-identification including a brief explanation of student-athlete stereotypes and the related subject of stereotype reactance. I then present my hypotheses, which are framed around the microsociological understanding of social interaction and the self. The micro-theories of Charles Horton Cooley(1983) and George Herbert Mead (1962) provide the basic framework for this approach. Cooley is best known for his theory of the looking-glass self which essentially posits that through an ongoing process of imagined social judgments, we tailor our behavior and thoughts so as to conform to social norms. Mead added that the self arises in social experience through the processes of role-taking and language. In the following section, I discuss my methodology including sample demographics and an explanation of

Qualtrics, the online survey software used for the administration of this study. I then present descriptive statistical results from my online survey, organized around each of my six hypotheses. Finally, I discuss my findings as they relate to the relevant literature and provide some suggestions for the further study of this topic.

Literature Review

The identities of Division I student-athletes are shaped by numerous social institutions and forces such as the media and the family (Adler and Adler 1989; Johnson and Migliaccio 2009) as well as cultural norms as they apply to race and gender (Comeaux 2008; Dawkins, Braddock, and Celaya 2008; Harrison et al. 2011; Johnson and Migliaccio 2009; Martin et al. 2010; Snyder 1996; Kihl, Richardson, and Campisi 2008; Clopton 2011; Harrison et al. 2009; Miller 2009; Steinfeldt et al. 2011; Todd and Kent 2003). Of the cited studies considered in this examination, it is useful to distinguish between those studies that are based on data collected only from participants in revenue producing sports and which studies are based on more comprehensive data from a variety of sports. The studies of Adler and Adler (1989), Jameson, Diehl, and Danso (2007), Harrison et al. (2011), Dawkins et al. (2008), Kihl et al. (2008), Harrison (2008), and Comeaux (2008) focus exclusively on revenue producing athletes. The majority of studies cited here, however, are based on more comprehensive data from student-athletes in a variety of sports. These include Upthegrove, Roscigno, and Charles (1999), Massey and Mooney (2007), Purdy, Eitzen, and Hufnagel (1982), Burns, Jasinski, Dunn, and Fletcher (2011), McKenna and Dunstan-Lewis (2004), Chabaud, Ferrand, and Maury (2010), Aries, McCarthy, Salovey, and Banaji (2004), Martin et al. (2010), Todd and Kent (2003), Rishe (2003), Clopton (2011), Miller (2009), Steinfeldt et al. (2011), Snyder (1996), and Harrison et al. (2009).

The role of the academic institution as an external force on the identity formation and socialization processes of Division I student-athletes has been overlooked in much of the literature. The academic institution can serve as a powerful agent of socialization for

students in general and student-athletes in particular. Student-athletes are subject to various and often competing expectations from the institution itself. These expectations often come from coaches, professors, and peers and give voice to different facets of the academic institution. Through these different channels, the student-athlete is socialized into their dual roles as to what exactly it means to be a student-athlete representing the academic institution as both a “student” and as an “athlete.”

The purpose of this study is to examine how Division I student-athletes at the University of Maine understand their roles as both “student” and “athlete” as well as how the academic institution itself can shape student-athlete self-identification. In what follows, I describe findings from previous studies on the roles of race in student-athlete identity formation, the role of gender, and the role of social institutions, such as the media, as a part of the identity formation process. Finally, the shaping of student-athlete identities cannot be fully understood without an understanding of the negative academic stereotypes many student-athletes face (Harrison et al. 2009; Kihl et al. 2008; Harrison 2008; Jameson et al. 2007; Massey and Mooney 2007). All student-athletes seem to be affected by negative stereotypes. However, certain populations of student-athletes are disproportionately affected: males, blacks/African-Americans, and those in the revenue producing sports. This may be related to the fact that these student-athletes are the most likely to self-identify as “athletes” as well as the fact that the student-athletes most at risk for being stereotyped happen to display all of the three above mentioned characteristics.

Race and Student-Athlete Identity

Much of the previous literature on the experiences of student-athletes has focused specifically on the experiences of black or African-American male student-athletes participating overwhelmingly in the so-called revenue generating sports of football and basketball. In his study of black male student-athletes, Comeaux (2008) examined the influence of different forms of interaction between these student-athletes and faculty on academic achievement. In a well supported finding that is consistent with past literature for college students in general, Comeaux found that high school GPA was the strongest predictor of college grades for black male student-athletes. More interesting was his finding that student-athletes who received encouragement to attend graduate school from faculty members experienced greater academic success. Of course this finding is subject to the problem of causal order: do faculty provide encouragement for graduate school primarily to students who are already high academic achievers or does high academic achievement result from the encouragement of faculty members? Comeaux's (2008) findings suggest that black student-athletes who are encouraged to attend graduate school perform better academically in college.

Athletic identity has been defined in the literature as the degree to which an individual identifies with the athletic role. The process of identity formation for young African-American males is saturated by sport (Johnson and Migliaccio 2009). According to the literature, all young African-American males are subject to a sport saturated culture due in large part to the over-representation of African-Americans in many professional sports organizations with wide media coverage such as the NFL or the NBA. Johnson and Migliaccio (2009) clearly document the influence social institutions such as family,

community, and the media have on the identity formation process of young African-American males and the degree to which all of these institutions are permeated by an emphasis on sport. It has also been found that African-American football student-athletes at the Division I level identify more strongly with the athletic role than do their white counterparts (Harrison et al. 2011). This strong identification with the athletic role may negatively impact African-American student-athlete's academic achievements (Harrison et al. 2011). It has also been noted that levels of academic motivation vary significantly at the Division I level depending on ethnicity, with African-American student-athletes expressing less academic motivation than their white teammates (Snyder 1996).

The consensus in the literature is that because of African-American student-athletes' stronger identification with the athletic role, they may be more likely than their white counterparts to view sport as a viable career path. These expectations can result in a greater motivation to succeed athletically as opposed to academically (Snyder 1996). However, it is possible that this is due instead to a feeling that many alternative career paths are inaccessible to African-Americans.

Not surprisingly, one study by Clopton (2011) found that racial differences in social capital exist among Division I student-athletes, with whites reporting higher levels of social capital and trust than their African-American teammates. Interestingly, these differences were evident on the university level but were found not to exist on the team level where team identity/membership seems to transcend the race subgroup (Clopton 2011). Clopton used the understanding of "social capital" developed by Putnam (2000). Social capital is thereby understood as a by-product of one's relationships and networks

within one's surrounding community that are built upon trust and lead to a higher quality of life and an improved sense of community (Clopton 2010).

It is clear that the experiences of black or African-American student-athletes are not the same as those of their white counterparts. While much literature has explored the variety of potential variables which may impact the academic achievement of black/African-American student-athletes, many of these potential variables are deeply rooted in the social structure and as such, may take a while to change. Comeaux (2008) found however, that interacting with faculty members who provide encouragement for graduate school improves the experiences of black student-athletes. African-American student-athletes have also been found to express less motivation to succeed academically than white student-athletes (Snyder 1996), to have a stronger athletic identity than white student-athletes (Johnson and Migliaccio 2009; Harrison et al. 2011), and to possess lower levels of social capital than white student-athletes (Clopton 2011) in part because African-American student-athletes are both more likely to see themselves, and to be perceived as, more "athleticated" than educated (Harrison 2008). All of these findings lend strong support to the notion that black or African-American student-athletes are at a significant disadvantage, at least initially, when it comes to balancing an athletic and academic self in a collegiate environment.

Gender and Student-Athlete Identity

There also exists a substantial literature on the role of gender in the identity formation process of student-athletes. Harrison et al. (2009) examined the intersection of athletic identity, academic identity, and gender in an academic environment. These

authors found that females performed worse on the SAT test items when primed for the connection between their athletic and academic identities, while males performed better on the GRE test items when only their athletic identity was primed. The identities of the student-athletes participating in this study were primed by manipulating the information on the cover-page of the test booklet. Only one prime appeared on each test booklet by asking the participant to check if it applied to them. The three primes used were “I am an athlete,” “I am a scholar-athlete,” and “I am a research participant.” Females were found to be more threatened and concerned with confirming the “dumb jock” stereotype than were male participants. Thereby, the threat of confirming the negative “dumb jock” stereotype prevented higher academic achievement in particular for females, regardless of the effort expended in an attempt to perform academically. Miller (2009) found that ‘jock’ was an explicitly gendered term, when discussed by females, referring to males specifically. Males were receptive to the idea that females involved in sports could be perceived as jocks, however the general consensus found by Miller (2009) was that women were better classified as athletes as opposed to as jocks due to the association of jock identity with masculine norms. The differences between ‘jock’ and ‘athlete’ were found to concentrate around three themes: academic focus, teamwork, and cockiness/aggression. Miller (2009) found the jock archetype to be masculinized and viewed more negatively across all three themes than the athlete archetype.

Female student-athletes often have to balance their desire to be muscular (muscularity) with traditional beliefs about femininity. Not surprisingly, Steinfeldt et al. (2011) found that the muscularity beliefs of female college athletes are different than those of their male counterparts due to the strength of gender norms in society. While

female student-athletes were shown to have a significantly greater desire to be muscular than their non-athlete female peers, male student-athletes seem to have the greatest desire to be muscular out of all student sub-groups examined (Steinfeldt et al. 2011).

Student-athletes' self-perceptions have been found to differ by gender, with males viewing athletic competence as significantly more important than females (Todd and Kent 2003). This view of athletic competence is mutually reinforced by public attitudes regarding differences in athletic competence based on gender with the common held belief that males are naturally more athletically competent than females. Todd and Kent's (2003) study lends support to the notion that male student-athletes take more pride in their athletic achievements than do female student-athletes of the same age group. This process could help create the formation of stronger "athlete" identities in males as a result of the importance attached to the feelings of pride achieved through athletic accomplishment. In his study, cited in the previous section, Clopton (2011) noted that Division I female student-athletes report higher levels of social capital and trust within the overall university setting than do their male counterparts (Clopton 2011). This finding provides support for the idea that female student-athletes have more diverse social networks than do male student-athletes, perhaps because they tend to attach importance to more than one primary role.

Gender is an important dimension in the study of student-athlete self-identification. Female student-athletes seem to attach less importance to the athletic role than do their male counterparts as demonstrated by the finding that male student-athletes view athletic competence as significantly more important for their self-perception than do female student-athletes (Todd and Kent 2003). Female student-athletes have also been

found to perform poorly when threatened with confirming the “dumb jock” stereotype as opposed to male student-athletes, who have been shown to perform significantly better when only their athletic identities are primed (Harrison et al. 2009). Females tend to attach importance to both the “student” and the “athlete” role. Hence they feel that their student-athlete identity is threatened by the “dumb jock” stereotype. Males, on the other hand, tend to attach less importance to the “student” role than do females while simultaneously attaching more importance to the “athlete” role. Hence they are less concerned about confirming the “dumb jock” stereotype. In other words, females in this study were more subject to identity threat while the males were more subject to identity affirmation. The identities of “jock” and “athlete” are clearly defined as separate, and explicitly gendered identities with “jock” being reserved primarily for male student-athletes who are not academically focused, do not work well with a team, and are perceived as cocky or aggressive (Miller 2009).

Female student-athletes also seem to possess more social capital, defined as a social good resulting from social networks and interaction including the trust built from quality social networks which contribute to the advancement of the overall community, than male student-athletes, perhaps as a result of a less salient athletic identity (Clopton 2011). Female student-athletes are more likely to attach importance to the “student” role than are male student-athletes, partially reflected by the fact that female student-athletes have higher graduation rates than male student-athletes (Rishe 2003). Not surprisingly, male student-athletes have a greater desire to be muscular than do female student-athletes, although female student-athletes have been found to have a greater desire to be muscular than their non-athlete female peers (Steinfeldt et al. 2011). In general, it seems

that males are more likely than females to attach importance to the “athlete” identity. This trend is reflected in the ways student-athletes identify themselves and in the ways they are perceived by the larger community.

The Impact of Social Institutions

The impact of social institutions on the development of an athletic identity has been well documented in the interactionist literature and largely follows the formulas laid out by Charles Horton Cooley (1983), via the process of the looking-glass self, and George Herbert Mead (1962), via the process of role taking. Institutions such as the media, the family, and the community combine to influence the creation of multiple identities an individual may have. The institution of the family is arguably the single most important social institution because the family serves as people’s primary agent of socialization.

Peoples’ primary identities are often initially formed through the family. Families’ often encourage and instruct children in the ways of sport. For many African-American males, sport is taught to be a viable route for success (Johnson and Migliaccio 2009). Johnson and Migliaccio (2009) note that the perceived opportunities in sport are far greater than the actual opportunities but that sport is often viewed as the only option for getting ahead in life. Being taught that sport is the key to success can result in an overemphasis on athletics and an under-emphasis on academics. This is crucial because there is a strong link between educational achievement and family background (Uptegrove et al. 1999). According to Uptegrove et al. (1999) family background helps to shape levels of academic achievement due to the impact it has on parental

participation, expectations, and household resources. Complimentary to the institution of the family is the larger community within which the family is located. Communities can emphasize sport as a form of social capital, reinforcing the socialization taking place within the family unit (Johnson and Migliaccio 2009).

The media often serves to exacerbate sport based identities in multiple ways. We live in a society that is media saturated, making it difficult to avoid media images. According to Johnson and Migliaccio (2009), this is a particular problem for African-American youth who are not offered many alternative role models outside of sport. In this way, the media perpetuates sport-based identities, in particular for African-Americans, by overemphasizing the image of the successful athlete without providing alternative images for success. Adler and Adler (1989) demonstrate this process on the individual level by using the term “the gloried self.” Adler and Adler (1989) show how individuals can be consumed by media portrayals of themselves resulting in a loss of other self-identities. In this way, the media has the capability of exaggerating the divide between being a “student” and being an “athlete.”

While many social institutions shape the formation of our identities, the family, the community, and the media are particularly active in influencing the formation of a sport based identity. For many African-American youth, the construction of an athletic identity is seen as a path to success (Johnson and Migliaccio 2009). The media, the family, and the community all combine to socialize the individual in similar ways. This socialization can become so extreme that the athletic self runs the danger of becoming the only self. According to Adler and Adler (1989), the media self can come to dominate all

other self concepts. The academic institution provides another lens through which the identity of student-athletes may be further constructed.

Student-Athlete Stereotypes

As I have alluded, it is important to note the effect stereotypes may have on student-athletes academic performances. Current research suggests that the so-called “dumb jock” stereotype exists on college campuses (Martin et al. 2010; Jameson et al. 2007; Harrison et al. 2009; Kihl et al. 2008; Massey and Mooney 2007). The internalization of this stereotype by student-athletes can lead them to perform poorly in the classroom, which in turn, reinforces the broader notion of the “dumb jock.” Jameson et al. (2007) found this to be true in a study of revenue producing male student-athletes who performed worse on test items when their athletic identity was primed by a discussion of negative stereotypes. In addition, the more participants attributed their admission to college to athletic ability, the worse they performed on academic test items (Jameson et al. 2007). This means that academic underperformance disproportionately affects certain members of the student-athlete community, namely, black or African-American males in the revenue producing sports in high profile programs.

When considering the role of stereotypes in the lives of student-athletes, it is crucial not to disregard the process of stereotype reactance. The term stereotype reactance simply means that the stigmatized group is aware of the negative characterizations held against them but does not internalize them in a negative manner. This results in an active effort to prove the stereotype wrong. This process is clearly demonstrated in Martin et al.'s (2010) study of African-American male Division I

student-athletes attending academically rigorous institutions. He employed a phenomenological interview approach in order to understand how the participants viewed their academic experiences as elite student-athletes. Four major themes that demonstrate the process of stereotype reactance emerged: “I had to prove I’m worthy,” “I’m a perceived threat to society,” “it’s about time management,” and “it’s about pride and hard work” (Martin et al. 2010). Unfortunately, not all student-athletes, in particular those most likely to be stereotyped, engage in this process of stereotype reactance.

Stereotypes are an active force on college campuses everywhere. Student-athletes are often subject to the notion that they are less academically capable than their non-athlete peers. Internalization of this “dumb jock” stereotype can result in its manifestation, as has been well documented when studies are designed to prime negative stereotypes of athletes (Jameson et al. 2007). Many student-athletes are also under the impression that they would not have been accepted into college had their application relied solely on their academic merits (Jameson et al. 2007). One response to negative assumptions about student-athletes is through the process of stereotype reactance. Some student-athletes may disagree with the negative stereotypes they are subject to and actively work to prove them false.

Summary

The identities of student-athletes are shaped by many social institutions and forces, although not all student-athletes are socialized in the same manner. The experience of being a student-athlete is complex and is shaped by many factors including one’s race, one’s gender, social institutions, and negative stereotypes. The social

institutions student-athletes are immersed within and the stereotypes they are subject to, all impact the self-identification of the student-athlete. Prior research has shown that the experiences of black or African-American student-athletes are not the same as those of their white counterparts. African-American student-athletes have been found to express less motivation to succeed academically than white student-athletes (Snyder 1996), to have a stronger athletic identity than white student-athletes (Johnson and Migliaccio 2009; Harrison et al. 2011), and to possess lower levels of social capital than white student-athletes (Clopton 2011) in part because African-American student-athletes are both more likely to see themselves, and to be perceived as more “athleticated” than educated (Harrison 2008).

Research has also shown distinct differences in the student-athlete experience due to gender. Female student-athletes seem to attach less importance to the athletic role than do their male counterparts as demonstrated by the finding that male student-athletes view athletic competence as significantly more important for their self perception than do female student-athletes (Todd and Kent 2003). Female student-athletes have also been found to perform poorly when threatened with confirming the “dumb jock” stereotype as opposed to male student-athletes who have been shown to perform significantly better when only their athletic identities are primed (Harrison et al. 2009). The identities of “jock” and “athlete” are clearly defined as separate, and explicitly gendered identities with “jock” being reserved primarily for male student-athletes who are not academically focused, do not work well with a team, and are perceived as cocky or aggressive (Miller 2009). The above research clearly demonstrates that an athlete identity is given much more importance as a male identity than as a female identity.

The importance of social institutions in shaping the student-athlete identity has also been examined in prior research. Particular attention has been paid to the influence of the family, the media, and the community. For many African-American youth, the construction of an athletic identity is seen as a path to success (Johnson and Migliaccio 2009). The socialization process can become so extreme that the athletic self runs the danger of becoming the only self (Adler and Adler 1989).

Prior research has also focused on, and confirmed, the existence of the “dumb jock” stereotype. Internalization of this “dumb jock” stereotype can result in its manifestation, as has been well documented when studies are designed to prime negative stereotypes of athletes (Jameson et al. 2007). Many student-athletes are also under the impression that they would not have been accepted into college had their application relied solely on their academic merits (Jameson et al. 2007). One response to negative assumptions about student-athletes is through the process of stereotype reactance. Some student-athletes may disagree with the negative stereotypes they are subject to and actively work to prove them false.

This study aims to expand the literature by focusing on the role of the academic institution as an external force shaping the self-identification of Division I student-athletes. While not minimizing the importance of other social institutions, it is time attention was paid to the social institution of the University. The expectations emanating from the academic institution come from many sources including coaches, professors, and peers. These voices all represent different conduits through which the academic institution influences its student-athletes. Together these actors--coaches, professors, and

peers--create the perceived expectations of the academic institution and help to shape student-athlete self-identification.

Theory and Hypotheses

While this study is not designed to test one specific sociological theory, it does rely on a micro-theoretical understanding of social interaction and the self in order to best understand how student-athletes perceive their roles as both “student” and “athlete.” The micro level addresses issues of identity formation as a social process. While many theorists have contributed to our understanding of the micro level interactions that take place both within the individual and between individuals, the foundations of this perspective were laid by the complimentary theories of Charles Horton Cooley and George Herbert Mead.

Cooley is best known for his theory of the looking-glass self which posits that “in imagination we perceive in another’s mind some thought of our appearance, manners, aims, deeds, character, friends, and so on, and are variously affected by it. A self-idea of this sort seems to have three principle elements: the imagination of our appearance to the other person; the imagination of his judgment of that appearance; and some sort of self-feeling, such as pride or mortification” (Cooley 1983). This means that the self arises through social experience. The “other” mentioned by Cooley does not have to simply be another individual. The “other” could be a social institution, such as the University. Student-athletes imagine the expectations and demands of the academic institution and respond accordingly in ways that will produce a self-feeling satisfying to them.

Mead takes the development of the self a step further than does Cooley. Mead stressed the importance of language and role-taking for the development of the self as it arises in social experience (Mead 1962). For Mead, the self is in fact a compilation of many selves and “the various elementary selves which constitute, or are organized into, a complete self are the various aspects of the structure of that complete self answering to the various aspects of the structure of the social process as a whole; the structure of the complete self is thus a reflection of the complete social process” (Mead 1962).

As discussed by Sandstrom, Martin, and Fine (2010) the formation of the self is ultimately an ongoing and reflexive process. People are primarily socialized by the family unit into a specific self-concept. We then take this self-concept out into the world where it is judged by others who may, or may not, reinforce our self-concept. These perceived external judgments cause us to reflect on our self-concept. As a result of our self-reflections, we may choose to adjust our self-concept to better fit the perceived external expectations faced within society. On the other hand, we may choose not to adjust our self-concept to perceived external expectations or we may even choose to react against these perceived external judgments. It is important to remember that we all have agency. This means that we have free choice. So if we wish to self-identify in a particular way, we may select situations or people who will reinforce the self-identity we wish to project. What is essential to all of the above, is the reliance on the self-reflexive process.

The micro level perspective offers the best theoretical framework for understanding the process by which student-athletes perceive their dual roles. Micro theory addresses the process of self-identification that is central to this study. This is

because the formation of the self occurs as a continuous process throughout life in the form of an inner conversation between the “I” and the “me” (Mead 1962). According to Mead, the “I” is the individual, creative part of the self. It is tamed by constant interaction with the “me;” the internalized norms of the external environment and community. This means that the formation of the self is itself a social process.

Approaching this study from a micro sociological standpoint, my hypotheses highlight four specific domains that may shape student-athlete self-perceptions: background characteristics, expectations, self-identity process, and opportunity.

Background characteristics explanations (Johnson 2009; Upthegrove et al. 1999) suggest that a student-athlete’s life experiences prior to attending the University of Maine inevitably serve to shape the identity of student-athletes. Factors such as primary (as found in the family unit) and secondary (as found in the surrounding community) socialization have shaped the values of student-athletes long before coming to the University of Maine. Student-athletes’ experiences differ depending on their gender and the sport they participate in. For instance, different perceived social expectations exist for a male football quarterback than exist for a female swimmer, with the male football quarterback receiving far more attention for his “athlete” status than the female swimmer. These external expectations may help to both shape and reinforce a stronger “athlete” identity for the male football player when compared to the female swimmer. Likewise, those participants who prioritized sport participation in their college decision-making process may have been more receptive to internalizing the “athlete” identity than those who did not consider sport participation that important.

One important characteristic that is noticeably absent from the following hypotheses is race. This is not to suggest that racial identity is not important. Rather, because my analysis draws from a homogeneous sample that is mostly white, I am unable to test for differences by race. I therefore refrain from hypothesizing about the effect of race, although I suggest that future research consider this important aspect of the student-athlete self-identification process.

Hypothesis 1:

Student-athletes with the following characteristics will be more likely than other student-athletes to identify with the athletic role: men, revenue sport (football, basketball, and ice hockey) participants, and those prioritizing sports participation in making their college decision.

The expectations a student-athlete is subject to from coaches, professors, and peers can work to influence the degree to which a student-athlete is more or less likely to identify with either role (Harrison et al. 2009; Harrison et al. 2011; Jameson et al. 2007). Coaches' and professors' perceived expectations are reflected upon by student-athletes and either accepted or rejected. Student-athletes may perceive that they are expected to perform well academically and accept this judgment by incorporating it into their self-concept. Similarly, student-athletes may initially accept a change in their self-concept, such as performing well academically, but may find this self-image not supported by reality. In which case, the student-athlete may then reject the self-concept of performing well academically. Of course, student-athletes may initially reject a potential self-

concept if it seems too difficult to incorporate or is not something the student-athlete believes is valuable to their self-identity.

The peer groups a student-athlete chooses to associate with the most may be reflexive of the ways a student-athlete self-identifies or desires to self-identify. We are most likely to associate with peers who reinforce our self-concepts. When student-athletes interact primarily with other student-athletes, it not only serves to reinforce the “athlete” identity, but also shows that student-athletes feel most comfortable around other student-athletes because they wish to self-identify and be perceived as “athletes.”

Hypothesis 2:

Coach and professor expectations of student-athlete behavior will influence the importance student-athletes attach to each role.

Hypothesis 3:

As interaction with other student-athletes increases, so too will one’s identification with the athletic role.

The self-identification process of student-athletes is complex, dependent on many social forces, and is an ongoing process throughout the life span (Cooley 1983; Martin et al. 2010; Mead 1962; Todd and Kent 2003). This self-identity concept can be viewed through the ways that student-athletes expect themselves to perform both academically and athletically. Student-athletes’ self-concept may be influenced by the social institution’s they choose to interact with. A social institution such as the Honors College may serve to reinforce or create “student” identities in the student-athletes who are

enrolled in the institution. On the other hand, the strict academic focus of the Honors College may not be accepted by all student-athletes as evidenced by those who decline enrollment in this institution.

Student-athlete's self-expectations are shaped by numerous social forces beyond the scope of this study. These self-expectations may reinforce or even create the ways in which student-athletes self-identify. By reflecting on their own self-expectations, student-athletes may tailor their self-identities to best serve their self-expectations.

Hypothesis 4:

Student-athletes who are enrolled in the Honors College will be more likely to self-identify with the "student" role when compared to the student-athlete population in general.

Hypothesis 5:

The expectations student-athletes have for themselves with regard to their performance both academically and athletically, will influence the importance they attach to each role.

Finally, the roles of "student" and "athlete" are only as important as the perceived opportunities they respectively offer. If athletics offer legitimate opportunities for advancement then it would make sense that those student-athletes who perceive that they are granted athletic opportunities are more likely to identify with the athletic role than their fellow student-athletes who know they do not have a future, either professionally or as a coach, in athletics. Student-athletes may reflect on the perceived opportunities they

believe are available to them and strive to create a self-concept that best supports their future goals.

Hypothesis 6:

A student-athlete's primary identification with a particular role, "student" or "athlete," will be correlated with their future goals.

It is important to note that all of the above hypotheses are subject, to some degree, to the problem of causal order. The direction of the above hypotheses could all be reversed yet they would still be valid hypotheses. There is always the possibility that student-athletes' self-identification is what shapes their decisions, perceived expectations, social interactions, and perceived opportunities.

Methodology

Data and Measures

An online survey, powered by *Qualtrics*, was distributed to 410 student-athletes at the University of Maine, a NCAA Division I institution, via an email containing an anonymous survey link generated by *Qualtrics*. Of the 410 student-athletes who were contacted, 124 responded. Two of these respondents were under the age of 18 and were not permitted to complete the survey. Of the remaining 122 respondents, 6 did not complete the survey, resulting in a final number of 116 participants aged 18 and older. This translates to a response rate of 28%. This sample consisted of 40 male student-athletes and 76 female student-athletes. The participants represented every sport offered by the University with the largest number of responses coming from the men and women's track and field teams, accounting for 41 of all respondents, and the lowest response coming from baseball with one participant, closely followed on the women's side by basketball with four respondents: baseball ($n = 1$), men's basketball ($n = 5$), women's basketball ($n = 4$), men's cross country ($n = 5$), women's cross country ($n = 9$), football ($n = 5$), men's ice hockey ($n = 2$), women's ice hockey ($n = 14$), men's swimming and diving ($n = 9$), women's swimming and diving ($n = 18$), men's track and field ($n = 19$), women's track and field ($n = 22$), field hockey ($n = 7$), women's soccer ($n = 5$), and softball ($n = 6$). Participants overwhelmingly self-identified as white (97%) with one participant identifying as Black/African American (1%) and a few specifying a mixed race background (3%). Participants consisted of 33 freshmen, 26 sophomores, 26 juniors, 28 seniors, and 3 fifth-years. There were no respondents who were current graduate

students. The average cumulative GPA for the participants was 3.1 on a 4.0 scale. The demographics for the sample are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample Demographics

	Baseball	Basketball	Cross Country	Football	Ice Hockey	Swimming & Diving	Track & Field	Field Hockey	Soccer	Softball	Total
Male	1	5	5	5	2	9	19	n/a	n/a	n/a	40
Female	n/a	4	9	n/a	14	18	22	7	5	6	76
Black or African American	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
White	1	9	14	4	15	26	41	6	5	6	112
Other	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	3
1st Year	0	2	2	0	6	8	10	4	1	2	33
2nd Year	1	0	7	0	3	6	13	0	2	1	26
3rd Year	0	2	2	3	3	6	9	2	1	1	26
4th Year	0	5	2	2	4	7	7	1	1	1	28
5th Year	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	3

The electronic link to the survey was distributed with the help of the academic support staff in the athletic department at the University of Maine. This step was taken in order to increase the perceived legitimacy of the survey through name recognition in an attempt to increase the response rate. Three waves of the survey recruitment email went out. The first wave was sent out during the second week of spring break, the second wave was sent out one week later, and the third wave was sent out five days after that. Each subsequent wave did serve to increase the response rate.

The first page of the survey contained an informed consent form describing the study and its implications for participants. Indicating one's age as that of a legal adult and completion of the survey were considered consent. All participants were allowed to

skip any question as well discontinue the survey at any point if they felt uncomfortable for any reason. The Institutional Review Board approval can be found in Appendix A.

The survey contained nine sections. The first section simply contained the informed consent form and asked participants to identify their age. If participants identified as under the age of 18, they were not permitted to complete the survey. If participants identified as being at least 18 years of age, they progressed to the second section of the survey dealing with background and basic demographic information. In this section participants were asked to indicate, using a Likert scale, how important various reasons were to them when deciding to come to the University of Maine. This question was included in the section about background information because it aimed to provide an overview of what was most important to student-athletes when deciding where to attend college.

The third section contained questions about participants' general academics. This section not only included basic questions about major and GPA, but it asked about potential Honors College enrollment as well as how participants felt their participation in Division I athletics had impacted their GPA. Participants were also asked if they found it difficult to balance school with being a Division I athlete as well as if they participated in any other school-sanctioned organizations outside of athletics. These questions were all in the section about general academics because they can help to assess how student-athletes feel about the importance of academics when they have to balance it with athletics.

The fourth section asked a few questions about participants' future goals; specifically focusing on whether or not participants' believed they had a future in their

sport after college, either professionally as an athlete or as a coach. Participants' were also asked if they intended to go to graduate school. This section, while short, is important because it allows for an understanding of student-athletes future priorities which invariably influence student-athletes' current priorities.

Section five focused on the potential impact of collegiate peer relationships on the student-athlete experience. The purpose of this section was to get a feel for who student-athletes choose to interact with socially and as roommates as well as where student-athletes choose to spend their free time. Student-athletes' peer associations are important to consider because they may reflect, to a certain extent, the degree to which student-athletes are immersed in the "athlete" role.

The sixth section of the survey focused on perceived coaches' expectations of their student-athletes. The focus of this section was to determine how student-athletes think their coaches approach poor academic performance as compared to how coaches approach athletic performance. This is important because coaches are a central part of student-athletes lives and their perceived expectations are likely to be important to their student-athletes.

The seventh section, on perceived professor expectations, is short, aimed to address the question of whether or not student-athletes feel supported or negatively stereotyped by the academic community. Professors make up the public frontline of academic institutions and typically provide students' only contact with academia. How student-athletes feel about their interactions with professors may impact how they feel about being a student in general.

The eighth section of the survey addressed student-athletes' self-expectations both

academically and athletically. It is very important to know how student-athletes expect themselves to perform because, without this knowledge, all of the external influences discussed above (coaches' expectations, peer influences, etc.) become negligible.

The ninth, and final, section of the survey revolved around the topic of student-athlete identity cohesion. This concept was operationalized by inquiring as to participants' academic behavior when traveling for away competitions because this is a time when the "student" identity and the "athlete" identity are potentially in conflict. Participants were also asked to self-identify themselves as a "student," an "athlete," or somewhere in-between. A copy of the full survey can be found in Appendix B.

Analysis

The data were analyzed using cross tabulations in *Qualtrics* for two variable analyses. While *Qualtrics* does not have advanced statistical analysis capabilities, it does provide sufficient tools for a basic analysis including bivariate cross tabulations, chi squared, degrees of freedom, and p-value. In the following section, I present descriptive statistics and crosstabulation results designed to test the aforementioned hypotheses.

Results¹

Before discussing the cross tabulations below, it is important to remind the reader why I do not consider race in my analysis. This was necessary because only 3% of respondents self-identified as anything other than white. For this reason, I am unable to test any hypothesis on racial differences. Since my primary focus is on matters other than race, the elimination of race as a variable should not create any problems for interpreting the rest of the data.

In Table 2 I present descriptive statistics for the study participants. Most participants have never been enrolled in the Honors College (79%). The majority of student-athletes also felt that they would have a higher GPA if they were not involved in Division I athletics (60%) and a similar number found it difficult to balance school with playing a Division I sport (65%). Just over one third of respondents (35%) participate in a school-sanctioned organization other than athletics but the majority of student-athletes (65%) do not. A minority of participants (16%) plan on playing their sport professionally after college, while a larger number of participants (42%) plan on working with their sport as a coach in the future. Interestingly, both of these numbers pale in comparison to the percent of student-athletes who indicated that they plan to attend graduate school in the future (69%).

Two-thirds of participants indicated that they interact with other student-athletes more than non-athlete peers in social settings (59%). Participants overwhelmingly indicated that they have closer relationships with their coaches than with their professors

¹ A closer analysis of all the relationships revealed four statistically significant correlations originally thought to be non-significant. While this second analysis re-analyzed all of the relationships, only four relationships yielded different results. These results do not change the original findings but merely add support to the original relationships. Therefore, only those relationships that were found to differ are discussed. These additional cross-tabulations can be found in Appendix C.

(75%), although many do feel that the University is supportive of athletics (69%).

Slightly more respondents took pride in being an athlete (93%) than in being a student (88%), although clearly student-athletes take pride in both roles. Almost all participants said they feel overwhelmed at some point during the school year (95%), indicating that school work creates the most stress in their lives (73%). Participants were split when asked to self-identify as “student” (24%), “athlete” (30%), or “both” (46%), with the category of “both” receiving just under half of all responses. Also it is important to note that the majority of respondents said they like attending the University of Maine (85%).

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Question	Answer	Percent	<i>n</i>
Are you currently enrolled in the UMaine Honors College?	Yes	14%	16
	I was when I first came here, but I dropped out	7%	8
	I have never been enrolled in the Honors College	79%	91
Do you feel that you would have a higher GPA if you were not an athlete?	Yes	60%	69
	No	40%	46
Overall, is it difficult for you to balance school with playing a Division I sport?	Yes	65%	75
	No	35%	40
Are you a member of any school sanctioned organizations other than Athletics?	Yes	35%	39
	No	65%	73
Do you plan on playing your sport professionally after college?	Yes	16%	18
	No	84%	95
Do you plan on working with your sport as a coach after college?	Yes	42%	48
	No	58%	65
Do you intend to go onto graduate school after you graduate from UMaine?	Yes	69%	78
	No	8%	9
	I don't know	23%	26
Who do you most often interact with in social settings (party with, eat with, etc.)?	Other student-athletes	59%	67
	Other students who aren't athletes	11%	12
	I spend an equal amount of time with both my athlete and non-athlete peers	30%	34
Do you feel that you have a closer relationship with your coaches or with your professors?	I have a closer relationship with my coaches	75%	84
	I have a closer relationship with my professors	7%	8
	I have close relationships with both my coaches and my professors	14%	16
	I am not close with my coaches or my professors	4%	4
Do you feel that the University in general is supportive of Athletics?	Yes	69%	77
	No	23%	26
	I don't know	8%	9
Do you take pride in being an athlete?	Yes	93%	104
	No	7%	8

Do you take pride in being a student?	Yes	88%	98
	No	13%	14
Do you ever feel overwhelmed during the academic year?	Yes	95%	106
	No	5%	6
What causes you the most stress?	School work	73%	77
	Practice	12%	13
	Other	15%	16
With which statement do you most strongly identify?	I am primarily an athlete but also a student	28%	31
	I am primarily a student but also an athlete	22%	25
	I am equally both a student and an athlete	46%	52
	I am an athlete	2%	2
	I am a student	2%	2
Overall, do you like attending the University of Maine?	Yes	85%	95
	No	4%	4
	I don't know	12%	13

My primary variable of interest for all of the following cross-tabulations is the same: student-athlete self-identification. I measured this variable using the question “With which statement do you most strongly identify?” Participants were asked to select one of five answer categories with which they self-identified the most. These were “I am primarily an athlete but also a student,” “I am primarily a student but also an athlete,” “I am equally both a student and an athlete,” “I am an athlete,” and “I am a student.” In order to best analyze the data, the response categories of “I am primarily an athlete but also a student” and “I am an athlete” were merged, as were the response categories of “I am primarily a student but also an athlete” and “I am a student.” This was done to create three general self-identity response categories: “student,” “both,” and “athlete.”

In Table 3, I present results for my first hypothesis: student-athletes with the following characteristics will be more likely than other student-athletes to identify with the athletic role: men, revenue sport (football, basketball, and ice hockey) participants,

and those prioritizing sports participation in making their college decision. A larger percentage of male respondents self-identified with the athlete role (41%) than did female respondents (23%), who were more likely to self-identify with the student role. For both genders the most common response was the “both” category. This could indicate that most student-athletes attempt to strike a balance between their dual roles as “student” and “athlete.” The relationship between gender and self-identification was not statistically significant in my first analysis, yielding a p-value of 0.10, seeming not to support my hypothesis. Although, a closer analysis, as shown in Table 1 of Appendix C, revealed that gender is statistically significant in support of my hypothesis.

With regard to revenue sport, defined in conjunction with the literature as the sports of football, basketball, and ice hockey, participation seems to indicate support for my hypothesis. A substantially larger percentage of respondents who participate in the revenue sports, as defined above, self-identify with the athletic role when compared with the rest of the student-athlete population who are most likely to self-identify as “both.” Here the initial analysis indicated that this relationship is not statistically significant, with a p-value of 0.12. A closer examination however, revealed that revenue sport participation is statistically significant as shown in Table 2 in Appendix C.

We do see a relationship between those student-athletes who prioritized sport participation when making their college decision and the likelihood that these student-athletes will self-identify primarily as “athlete.” I measured the importance of sport participation in students’ college decision on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from not important to very important. As shown in Table 3, students who identify primarily as “athletes” had higher means on the “athletics important” item than those who self-

identify as both “student” and “athlete” or as primarily “student.” This relationship was statistically significant.

Table 3: Background characteristics’ impact on self identification of student-athletes (N = 116)

	Gender		Revenue Sport		Athletics Important (mean)
	Men	Women	Yes	No	
Student	15% (6)	29% (21)	17% (5)	26% (25)	1.69 (27)
Both	44% (17)	48% (35)	38% (11)	52% (50)	2.38 (52)
Athlete	41% (16)	23% (17)	45% (13)	23% (22)	2.44 (33)
Total	100% (39)	100% (73)	100% (29)	100% (97)	(112)
X ² , p-value	X ² =4.71, p<0.10		X ² =4.16, p<0.12		X ² =20.44, p<0.00

In Table 4, I present results for my second hypothesis: coach and professor expectations of student-athlete behavior will influence the importance student-athletes attach to each role. Participants were asked to indicate how they felt their coaches expected them to perform athletically, both in practice and in competition as well as how they perceived their professors’ expected them to perform academically. Similar to many of the relationships being tested in this study and barring a multivariate analysis, the perceived expectations of coaches and professors are subject to the problem of causal order. There is always the possibility that the self-identification of student-athletes can influence the degree to which coaches and professors stress their expectations. Coaches’ expectations for athletic performance was not related to the importance student-athletes attach to each role. With a p-value of 0.29, this relationship does not support my hypothesis. Coaches’ academic expectations of their student-athletes was found to be non-significant ($p = 0.09$) in the initial analysis but this finding was reversed upon a

closer analysis as shown in Table 3 in Appendix C, ultimately lending support to my hypothesis.

Interestingly, the perceived expectations of professors were correlated with the self-identification of student-athletes, supporting my hypothesis. Forty-seven percent of students who said their professors expect them to do poorly in class identify as “athletes,” while just 37% identify as students. With a p-value of 0.04 this relationship is statistically significant.

Table 4: Coach and professor expectations’ impact on self identification of student-athletes (N = 112)

	Coaches expect me to perform athletically	Coaches do not expect me to perform athletically	Coaches expect me to perform academically	Coaches do not expect me to perform academically	Professors expect me to do poorly in class	Professors do not expect me to do poorly in class	I don't know if professors expect me to do poorly in class
Student	24% (26)	20% (1)	25% (27)	0	37% (7)	25% (16)	14% (4)
Both	48% (51)	20% (1)	47% (52)	0	16% (3)	51% (33)	57% (16)
Athlete	28% (30)	60% (3)	28% (31)	100% (2)	47% (9)	25% (16)	29% (8)
Total	100% (107)	100% (5)	100% (110)	100% (2)	100% (19)	100% (65)	100% (28)
X ² , p-value	X ² =2.48, p<0.29		X ² =4.87, p<0.09		X ² =9.80, p<0.04		

My third hypothesis predicted that as interaction with other student-athletes increases, so too will one’s identification with the athletic role. The results initially appeared to be mixed. Student-athletes who participate in at least one school-sanctioned organization outside of athletics are, in support of my hypothesis, less likely to self-identify as “athlete” and more likely to self-identify as “student.” With a p-value of 0.02, student-athletes who interact with non-athlete peers through non-athletic school-sanctioned organizations see themselves less as “athletes” and more as “students.” Initially, although the majority of participants indicated that most of their social

interaction occurs with other student-athletes, this did not seem to have a significant effect on their self-identification ($p = 0.17$). A closer analysis revealed that this relationship is in-fact statistically significant as shown in Table 4 of Appendix C.

Table 5: Peer interaction and student-athlete self identification (N = 112)

	I participate in school sanctioned organization(s) outside of Athletics	I do not participate in school sanctioned organization(s) outside of Athletics	Most social interaction occurs with other student-athletes	Most social interaction occurs with non-athlete students	Socially interacts equally with other student-athletes and non-athlete students
Student	36% (14)	18% (13)	18% (12)	42% (5)	29% (10)
Both	49% (19)	44% (32)	42% (28)	50% (6)	53% (18)
Athlete	15% (6)	38% (27)	39% (26)	8% (1)	18% (6)
Total	100% (39)	100% (72)	100% (66)	100% (12)	100% (34)
X ² , p-value	X ² =7.57, p<0.02		X ² =9.10, p<0.17		

My fourth hypothesis, that student-athletes who are enrolled in the Honors College will be more likely to self-identify with the student role when compared to the student-athlete population in general, is supported by Table 6 ($p = 0.01$). There is a statistically significant relationship between Honors College enrollment and “student” self-identification in support of my hypothesis. Those student-athletes who are enrolled in the Honors College are significantly more likely to self-identify as “student” or both” when compared to the rest of the student-athlete population. Interestingly, none of the participants who are currently enrolled in the Honors College self-identified as “athlete.”

Table 6: Honors College enrollment and student-athlete self identification (N = 115)

	Currently enrolled in Honors College	Not enrolled in Honors College
Student	44% (7)	21% (20)
Both	56% (9)	44% (42)
Athlete	0	35% (33)
Total	100% (16)	100% (95)
X2, p-value	X2=8.89, p<0.01	

My fifth hypothesis, that the expectations student-athletes have for themselves with regard to their performance academically and athletically will influence the importance they attach to each role, was not supported. As shown in Table 7, almost every respondent indicated that they expected themselves to perform well both athletically and academically.

Table 7: Self expectations and student-athlete self identification (N = 112)

	I expect myself to perform well athletically	I do not expect myself to perform well athletically	I expect myself to perform well academically	I do not expect myself to perform well academically
Student	24% (27)	0	24% (27)	0
Both	46% (51)	100% (1)	47% (52)	0
Athlete	30% (33)	0	29% (32)	100% (1)
Total	100% (111)	100% (1)	100% (111)	100% (1)
X2, p-value	X2=1.16, p<0.56		X2=2.42, p<0.3	

Finally, Table 8 addresses my sixth hypothesis that a student-athlete's primary identification with a particular role, "student" or "athlete", will be correlated with their

future goals. A quick look at the percentages of student-athletes who plan to play their sport professionally as well as those who plan to coach their sport in the future, seems to provide support for my hypothesis. However, the p-values of 0.33 and 0.15 tell us that these relationships are not statistically significant. On the other hand, there is support for my hypothesis when future plans for graduate school are considered ($p = 0.05$). Student-athletes who intend to go to graduate school are most likely to self identify as “both,” indicating that these may be the students best able to strike a balance between their dual roles.

Table 8: Future goals and student-athlete self identification (N = 113)

	Plan to play sport professionally		Plan to coach sport		Intend to go to graduate school		
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Don't know
Student	11% (2)	27% (25)	17% (8)	30% (19)	23% (18)	33% (3)	23% (6)
Both	50% (9)	46% (43)	46% (22)	47% (30)	51% (39)	0	50% (13)
Athlete	39% (7)	28% (26)	38% (18)	23% (15)	26% (20)	67% (6)	27% (7)
Total	100% (18)	100% (94)	100% (48)	100% (64)	100% (77)	100% (9)	100% (26)
X ² , p-value	X ² =2.21, p<0.33		X ² =3.78, p<0.15		X ² =9.49, p<0.05		

In sum, my findings provide mixed support for my hypotheses. My first hypothesis regarding background characteristics was, upon closer analysis, supported on all three counts: gender, revenue sport participation, and by the finding that students who identify primarily as “athletes” had higher means on the “athletics important” item than those who identify as both “student” and “athlete” or as primarily “student.” My second hypothesis was partially supported by the finding that both coaches’ (see Appendix C) and professors’ academic expectations are correlated with student-athletes’ self-identification.

Student-athletes who participate in at least one school-sanctioned organization outside of athletics are, in support of my third hypothesis, less likely to self-identify as “athlete” and more likely to self-identify as “student.” Similarly, those student-athletes who interact primarily with other student-athletes were found, upon closer analysis, to be more likely to self-identify as “athletes” than as “students.” My fourth hypothesis was completely supported by my finding that student-athletes who are enrolled in the Honors College are more likely to self-identify with the “student” role when compared to the student-athlete population in general. On the other hand, my fifth hypothesis was not even partially supported when I found that the expectations student-athletes have for themselves with regard to their performance academically and athletically is not correlated to the importance they attach to each role because almost every respondent indicated that they expected themselves to perform well both athletically and academically. Finally, my sixth hypothesis was supported by the finding that student-athletes who intend to go to graduate school are most likely to self-identify as “both,” showing a correlation between a student-athletes’ primary self-identification and their future goals.

It is important to note that these are not causal relationships. There are likely multiple variables influencing each of the above discussed correlations and in the absence of a multivariate analysis it is essential to acknowledge that the relationships found above could be spurious. It is also difficult to determine the direction of the relationships, keeping in mind the problem of causal order. Without controlling for other possible causes, it is difficult to say whether the correlations I have found are in fact causal. For instance, the relationship found above that student-athletes who participate in at least one school-sanctioned organization outside of athletics are less likely to self-identify as

“athlete” and more likely to self-identify as “student,” could be due to a third factor not in consideration such as injury or scholarship status. Also, the finding that professor’s expectations have a positive impact on the likelihood that student-athlete’s will self-identify more as “students” could be influenced by the first impression the student-athlete made on the professor which could dictate subsequent interactions, including the degree of supportiveness the professor feels for the student-athlete’s academic pursuits. Finally, the correlation I found between Honors College enrollment and self-identification could be subject to the problem of causal order. In other words, contrary to the relationship discussed above, a student-athlete’s strong self-identification as a “student” could have led to higher academic achievement prior to college resulting in admittance to the Honors College. In the following section, I will discuss the above stated findings in relation to the relevant literature as well as some implications these findings may have for the Athletic Department.

Discussion and Conclusion

The foregoing results suggest that the academic institution may indeed influence the self-identification of Division I student-athletes. In fact, the external expectations of professors and peers collectively seem to play more of a role than the self-expectations that student-athletes have for themselves. The background characteristics of the sample population were not as powerful as the literature had led me to believe when I first analyzed them, possibly due to the small, racially homogeneous, sample population. Previous studies have consistently found both gender and revenue sport participation to be powerful indicators of the importance attached to “student” and “athlete” roles. I was surprised that my study did not initially reflect these seemingly well-accepted differences. After re-analyzing my data, I found support for both gender and revenue sport participation. This lends support to the importance of background and demographic characteristics for the student-athlete experience.

This study also enhances our understanding of the student-athlete experience in other ways. The importance of the opportunity to play one’s sport at the Division I level seems to be a key factor for student-athletes when deciding where to go to college. This prioritization of athletics in the college decision making process suggests that the more student-athletes prioritize athletic participation, the more likely they are to self-identify as “athletes.” This relationship could prove problematic for athletic department’s if taken to the extreme where student-athletes’ sole purpose is to be an athlete resulting in the sacrifice of any desire for academic achievement.

Interestingly, most respondents said that they have closer relationships with their coaches than with their professors. Yet, the perceived expectations of coaches were

initially found to be statistically non-significant for student-athlete self-identification while the perceived expectations of professors were found to impact student-athlete self-identification. Even after finding that coaches' academic expectations of their student-athletes are correlated to student-athletes' self-identification, it is interesting to note that the external expectations that seem to shape student-athletes' self-identities are those centered around academic performance. It is difficult to place this finding in comparison to previous studies as the roles of coaches and professors have generally been overlooked in this context (Comeaux 2008). Professors seem to have more of an influence on student-athletes self-identification than coaches although the direction of this relationship is difficult to ascertain from the limited statistical analysis above. The self-identification of student-athletes could easily influence professors' and coaches' expectations.

The most important conduit through which the academic institution influences student-athletes self-identification was found to be through peer interaction via school-sanctioned organizations outside of athletics and, upon closer analysis, correlated to whom student-athletes choose to interact socially with the most. Honors College enrollment was found to be correlated with student-athlete self-identification as well. The equivalent of this sub-institution has not been examined within the literature. It is important to distinguish between the Honors College and school-sanctioned organizations outside of athletics. The Honors College has as its focus the importance of academics whereas school-sanctioned organizations have as their focus peer interaction for a common purpose, academic or otherwise. Participation in school-sanctioned organizations entails an extracurricular commitment, often for enjoyment.

Surprisingly, student-athletes' self-expectations were not correlated with their

self-identification as “students” or as “athletes.” While there is not much research on this relationship (Martin et al. 2010), I would have thought that student-athlete self-expectations and their self-identification would be mutually reinforcing, similar to the process of stereotype reactance. However, my study seems to show that student-athletes’ self-expectations are not related to their self-identification.

Another interesting finding, that is difficult to locate in the literature, was the relationship between the future goal of attending graduate school and student-athlete self-identification. This finding fits with the aforementioned finding regarding the importance of professor expectations. I found it surprising that of the three different potential future goals participants were asked to respond to, the only statistically significant goal had to do with academics, not athletics.

In general, my findings suggest that the academic institution plays a large role in the self-identification of its student-athletes through professors’ and coaches’ academic expectations, peer interaction and school-sanctioned organizations, and the Honors College (or its equivalent). All of these conduits may help to increase student-athletes’ desire to attend graduate school. More importantly, all of these conduits may be used by the Athletic Department in order to promote a greater degree of balance between “student” and athlete” roles if it were perceived that student-athletes are not performing acceptably in the classroom. The appropriate use of these conduits could increase the likelihood that student-athletes self-identify primarily as “students.” With an increase in the importance of the “student” identity comes an increase in commitment to that role. This is not to say that promotion of school-sanctioned organizations, positive relationships with professors, or of Honors College enrollment would definitely improve

academic performance. Since my analysis is limited to bivariate relationships, I am unable to draw conclusions about whether the relationships I have found are causal.

This study supports the sociological vision of the self as discussed by Sandstrom et al. (2010). Student-athlete's self-identification is reflexive of many aspects of the social institution of the university. Student-athletes reflect on the academic expectations of their professors, coaches, and peers, as well as what it means to be enrolled in the Honors College. By reflecting on these external forces, the individual constructs the self-identity that best suits their needs and desires. This is an ongoing process as student-athletes reflect on all of their interactions with the academic institution on a daily basis.

Future investigations might build from my findings by conducting multivariate analyses of the data to control for other factors that may be influencing the relationships I have found. There are many factors I was unable to consider in the scope of this study such as potential differences between scholarship and non-scholarship student-athletes and the impact of injury on the self-identification process. Also, the reasons behind why professors' and coaches' academic expectations seem to be able to positively impact student-athlete self-identification merit further exploration; do professors view student-athletes differently than non-athletes or are first impressions the key to positive professor expectations? Another consideration is that of causal order. Barring further analysis, there is always the risk that the relationships I have found are dependant on the student-athletes self-identity, not the other way around.

This study took a fairly broad look at the student-athlete experience in order to understand the role played by the academic institution in the self-identification of Division I student-athletes. By doing so, it has contributed to the literature by addressing

aspects of the student-athlete experience which have been largely ignored. By synthesizing as opposed to compartmentalizing the academic and the athletic, a better understanding of how student-athletes self-identify is possible. The breadth of this study provides a good starting point for future investigation focusing on the relationships identified above. A closer examination of these relationships would allow for a better understanding of how to use them for everyone's advantage, student-athletes and administrators alike.

While survey research proved useful for this initial examination of the topic, an interview approach would be helpful to enhance and provide for more depth of understanding. An interview approach could yield explanations for why student-athletes self-identify as they do by minimalizing the problems of spuriousness and causal order. Also, the importance student-athletes attach to professors' and coaches' academic expectations, school-sanctioned organizations and peer interaction, and Honors College enrollment could be understood. Qualitative interviews would allow researchers to examine and understand the theoretical processes involved in social interaction and the development of the self. How student-athletes reflect on certain experiences and why they interpret these experiences as they do are questions that would best be answered via a qualitative interview approach. The self-concept of student-athletes is continually changing as different opportunities are perceived to either exist or not exist. This process of anticipatory socialization through which student-athletes shape their self-concept and behavior to model the expectations of groups they perceive to be more receptive of them, would be better understood by interviewing individual student-athletes. This would allow researchers to understand why student-athletes may be likely to actively self-

identify with a particular role, specifically if they perceive that identifying strongly with alternative roles are less rewarding.

Future research should narrow its focus to the relationships discussed above. Also, a more complex statistical multivariate analysis would correct for any spuriousness reflected in the previously discussed relationships in order to enhance our understanding of these phenomena. This would include controlling for demographic information such as race and gender as well as taking into account all potential variables inherent in the student-athlete experience such as injury and scholarship status. Finally, one other weakness of the current study is its small sample size and lack of representativeness of all student-athletes. A larger, more representative sample would allow for greater generalizability of the results as well as enhance the reliability of the relationships discussed above. When conducting a study relying on participants willingness to volunteer, one is always faced with the problem of the self-selection of the research participants. Are there factors that make some student-athletes more likely to volunteer than others? For this reason, the results are not necessarily generalizable to the entire student-athlete population and care should be made not to jump to conclusions.

Appendix A: IRB Approval

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH WITH HUMAN SUBJECTS
 Protection of Human Subjects Review Board
 114 Alumni Hall, 581-1498

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Helaina Sacco
 EMAIL: helaina.sacco@umit.maine.edu TELEPHONE: 207-272-9720
 CO-INVESTIGATOR(S): none
 FACULTY SPONSOR (Required if PI is a student): Amy Blackstone
 TITLE OF PROJECT: Between "student" and "athlete": Perceived expectations and the shaping of student-athlete identities

START DATE: ~~2/13/12~~ 3/1/2012 PI DEPARTMENT: Sociology
 MAILING ADDRESS: 721 College Ave.
 Old Town, ME
 04468

FUNDING AGENCY (if any): none
 STATUS OF PI:

FACULTY/STAFF/GRADUATE/ UNDERGRADUATE

1. If PI is a student, is this research to be performed:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	for an honors thesis/senior thesis/capstone?	<input type="checkbox"/>	for a master's thesis?
<input type="checkbox"/>	for a doctoral dissertation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	for a course project?
<input type="checkbox"/>	other (specify)		

2. Does this application modify a previously approved project? (Y/N) If yes, please give assigned number (if known) of previously approved project?

3. Is an expedited review requested? (Y/N).

SIGNATURES: All procedures performed under the project will be conducted by individuals qualified and legally entitled to do so. **No deviation from the approved protocol will be undertaken without prior approval of the IRB.**

Faculty Sponsors are responsible for oversight of research conducted by their students. By signing this application page, the Faculty Sponsor ensures that the conduct of such research will be in accordance with the University of Maine's Policies and Procedures for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research.

2/16/12 _____
 Date Principal Investigator Faculty Sponsor

 Co-Investigator

 Co-Investigator

 FOR IRB USE ONLY Application # 2012-02-06 Date received 2/16/2012 Review (F/E): E
 Expedited Category: 7

ACTION TAKEN:

- ____ Judged Exempt; category ____ . Modifications required? ____ (Y/N) Accepted (date) _____
- ____ Approved as submitted. Date of next review: by ____ . Degree of Risk: _____
- Approved pending modifications. Date of next review: by 2/20/13 . Degree of Risk: _____
- ____ Modifications accepted (date): 3/1/2012 .
- ____ Not approved. (See attached statement.)
- ____ Judged not research with human subjects

Date: 2/21/12 Chair's Signature: Cynthia A. Erdley 10/09

Waived requirement for signed consent

Office of the Vice President for
Research
*Protection of Human Subjects Review
Board*



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MEMORANDUM

TO: Helaina Sacco
721 College Avenue
Old Town, ME 04468

FROM: Gayle Jones
Assistant to the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
(IRB)

SUBJECT: "Between "Student" and "Athlete": Perceived Expectations and the Shaping of
Student-Athlete Identities," #2012-02-06

DATE: March 6, 2012

The above referenced project was approved by the University of Maine's Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB) in an expedited review. The approval period is 2/21/2012 through 2/20/2013. A continuing review of this project must be conducted by the IRB before the end of the approval period. Although you will receive a request for this information approximately 6-8 weeks before that date, it is your responsibility to submit the information in sufficient time to allow for review before the approval period expires.

Given that the study is conducted on-line, the Board waived the requirement for signed consent. The consent information that is posted on the website as the first page must contain the following: "UMaine Institutional Review Board Approved for Use Through 02/20/2013."

Please remember that each any unanticipated problems or harm to the subject must be reported to the IRB immediately. Any proposed changes to the research must be approved by the IRB **prior** to implementation. Any significant new findings must be reported to the subject.

If you have questions, please contact me at 1-1498. Thank you.

pc: Amy Blackstone

Appendix B: Survey

Informed Consent Filter Question

You are invited to participate in a research project being conducted by Helaina Sacco, an undergraduate student in the Sociology Department at the University of Maine. This project is being guided by faculty sponsor Amy Blackstone, Chair of the Sociology Department at the University of Maine. The purpose of this research is to understand the experience of being a Division I student-athlete at the University of Maine. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate.

What you will be asked to do?

Participation should not take more than 15 minutes and involves the completion of an online survey.

Voluntary

Your participation is completely voluntary.

If there is any question you are not comfortable answering you are free to skip to the next question. If at any point you would like to discontinue taking the survey, you are free to do so.

Confidentiality

Although it is possible that your responses to the demographic and academic questions might identify you, all responses will be kept confidential. The data will be kept in an encrypted format on Helaina's personal computer until the end of the semester at which point the data will be permanently deleted. Results will be reported in summary form only, such as comparing male athletes and female athletes or football athletes and hockey athletes.

Risks

Other than the potential for discomfort with a survey question, your time, and energy, there are no other risks for participating in this survey.

Benefits

There are no direct benefits, other than the satisfaction of helping out a fellow student-athlete, for taking this survey. However, your answers are valuable in that the results from this survey could help to improve the experience of student-athletes at UMaine in the future.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact Helaina Sacco by email on FirstClass (helaina.sacco@umit.maine.edu). You may also contact Amy Blackstone by email (amy.blackstone@umit.maine.edu) or phone (207-581-2392). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact Gayle Jones, Assistant to the University of Maine's Protection of Human Subjects Review Board, at 581-1498 (or email gayle.jones@umit.maine.edu).

Should you choose to participate in the survey, please feel free to print this page for your records so that you have contact information for me and for UMaine staff who are available to answer your questions about the study.

UMaine Institutional Review Board Approved for Use through 02/20/2013.

If you are willing to participate in this study please indicate your age below to begin.

- 1) Are you at least 18 years old?
Yes, I am at least 18 years old
No, I am not yet 18 years old

Background

- 2) What Division I sport(s) do you play? Select all that apply.
Baseball
Basketball
Cross Country
Football
Ice Hockey
Swimming & Diving
Track & Field
Field Hockey
Soccer
Softball
- 3) What is your gender?
Female
Male
- 4) What is your race?
American Indian or Alaska Native
Asian
Black or African American
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
White
Other (please briefly specify)

5) What year are you in school?

1st

2nd

3rd

4th

5th

Graduate Student

Other (please briefly specify)

6) Please indicate how important each reason was for you when deciding to come to the University of Maine. (not important, somewhat important, important, very important)

___ To play my sport

___ To get a college degree

___ Financially, this was the cheapest option

___ I didn't want to go far from home

___ I wanted to move away from home

___ Other (please briefly specify)

General Academics

7) What is your major? If undeclared please type "undeclared". If you have more than one major, please list all of your majors.

8) What is your current overall University GPA?

9) Are you currently enrolled in the UMaine Honors College?

Yes (please proceed to question #10)

I was when I first came here, but I dropped out (please proceed to question

#10)

I have never been enrolled in the Honors College (please proceed to question #9a)

9a) If "No", were you ever invited to join the Honors College?

Yes, but I declined (please proceed to question #9b)

No (please proceed to question #10)

9b) If "Yes", why did you decline? Check all that apply.

Didn't think I would have time for it

It didn't sound interesting

I thought it would be too difficult

Other (please briefly specify)

10) Do you feel that you would have a higher GPA if you were not an athlete?

Yes (please answer question #10a)

No (please answer question #10b)

10a) If "Yes", why do you feel that you would have a higher GPA (check all that apply)?

I would have more time to spend on school work/studying

I wouldn't be so tired all of the time

It would be easier to stay awake in class and do academic work

Other (please briefly specify)

10b) If "No", why do you feel that you wouldn't have a higher GPA (check all that apply)?

My sport keeps me focused and forces me to manage my time efficiently

I go to class more because it is required by the Athletic Department

I wouldn't be in school if I didn't play my sport

Other (please briefly specify)

11) Overall, is it difficult for you to balance school with playing a Division I sport?

Yes (please proceed to question #11a)

No (please proceed to question #12)

11a) If "Yes", why do you think it is hard for you to balance school with playing a Division I sport? Please check all that apply.

It is hard to manage my time to fit in both school and practices/competitions

I am always tired from my sport

I am not motivated to get a degree

Other (please briefly specify)

12) Are you a member of any school sanctioned organizations (other than Athletics) such as Greek life, academic clubs, student government, etc?

Yes, I am a member of/participant in _____

No, I am not a member or participant in any school sanctioned organizations other than Athletics

Future Goals

13) Do you plan on playing your sport professionally after college?

Yes

No

14) Do you plan on working with your sport as a coach after college?

Yes

No

15) Do you intend to go on to graduate school after you graduate from UMaine?

Yes, I intend to go to graduate school directly after I graduate from UMaine

Yes, I intend to go to graduate school in the future after taking some time off first

No, I do not ever intend to go to graduate school

I don't know if I want to go to graduate school

Peers

16) Currently, do you live with at least one roommate?

Yes (please answer questions #18a-18c)

No (please proceed to question #19)

18a) If "Yes", not counting yourself, how many roommates do you have?

_____ Please indicate number of roommates.

18b) Not counting yourself, how many of your roommates are currently athletes at the University of Maine?

All of my roommates are athletes

None of my roommates are athletes

_____ (number) of my roommates are athletes

18c) Of your roommates who are currently not athletes, how many were athletes who graduated or quit?

None

_____ (insert number here)

17) Who do you most often interact with in social settings (party with, eat with, etc)?

Other student-athletes

Other students who aren't athletes

I spend an equal amount of social time with both my athlete and non-athlete peers

I do not interact with students or student athletes in social settings

I do not interact in social settings at all

18) Where are you most likely to spend free-time throughout the day between classes, practices, meals etc?

I go to the library

I go to my dorm/house

I go to Sezak

I go to the dining halls

I go to Memorial Gym/Alfond Arena (field house, pool, etc.)
 Other (please briefly specify)

Coach Expectations

19) Do you feel that you have a closer relationship with your coaches or with your professors?

- I have a closer relationship with my coaches
- I have a closer relationship with my professors
- I have close relationships with both my coaches and my professors
- I am not close with my coaches or my professors

20) How do your coaches expect you to perform athletically?

- My coaches expect me to give my best every day at both practices and competitions
- My coaches expect me to perform during practice but care less about how I perform in competition
- My coaches expect me to perform in competition but care less about how I perform in practice
- My coaches sometimes care about how I perform in practice and in competition
- My coaches don't care about how I perform in practice or in competition

21) How do your coaches expect you to perform academically in school?

- My coaches expect me to do well in the classroom and maintain a high GPA
- My coaches expect me to fail my classes
- My coaches expect me to do the minimum it takes to remain eligible
- My coaches expect me to do OK in school so they don't have to worry about my eligibility

22) Have you ever been punished by your coaches for performing poorly academically?

- Yes (please proceed to question #22a)
- No (please proceed to question #23)

22a) If "Yes", how did your coaches punish your poor academic performance? Please check all that apply.

- I was assigned study hours for the first time
- I was assigned additional study hours
- I was given an extra practice
- I was withheld from competition
- Other (please briefly specify)

23) Has your coach ever punished the entire team because at least one member did not perform academically (didn't go to class, didn't do study hours, etc)?

Yes, my coach has punished the team because of the failure of at least one member to perform academically

No, my coach has never punished the team because of at least one member's failure to perform academically

My coach has talked about punishing the team if at least one member fails to perform academically but the team has never actually been punished because of at least one member's failure to perform academically

Professor Expectations

24) Do you feel that the University in general (faculty, students, etc) is supportive of Athletics?

Yes, I feel that the University is supportive of Athletics

No, I don't feel that the University is supportive of Athletics

I don't know if the University is supportive of Athletics

25) Do you ever feel that professors in general expect you to do poorly in the classroom because you are a student-athlete?

Yes, I feel that professors in general expect me to do poorly in the classroom because I am a student-athlete

No, I don't feel that professors in general expect me to do poorly in the classroom because I am a student-athlete

I don't know how professors in general expect me to do in the classroom

Self Expectations

26) When you are practicing, how often do you think about school work?

Never

Occasionally

Most of the time

Always

27) When you are in class, how often do you think about your sport (practicing, competitions, etc)?

Never

Occasionally

Most of the time

Always

28) How do you expect yourself to perform athletically?

I expect myself to give my best every day at both practices and competitions

I expect myself to perform during practice but care less about how I perform in competition

I expect myself to perform in competition but care less about how I perform in practice

I sometimes care about how I perform in practice and in competition
 I don't care about how I perform in practice or in competition

29) How do you expect yourself to perform academically in the classroom?

I expect myself to get good grades

I expect myself to pass with average grades

I expect myself to do the minimum it takes to remain eligible

I expect myself to fail

I have no expectations for my grades

Identity Cohesion

30) Do you take pride in being an athlete?

Yes

No

31) Do you take pride in being a student?

Yes

No

32) Do you compete in at least half of your away competitions?

Yes (please proceed to question #36a)

No (please proceed to question #37)

36a) If "Yes", do you study/do homework while traveling for competition?

Yes (please answer question #36b)

No (please answer question #36c)

36b) If "Yes", why do you study/do homework while traveling for competition? Please check all that apply.

I have no other time to do my school work

I have so much school work that I have to bring some of it with me when I travel

I don't like to think about the competition so I use school work to distract myself

Other (please briefly specify)

36c) If "No", why don't you study/do homework while traveling for competition? Please check all that apply.

I don't have any homework to do

The bus/plane is too loud for me to do work

I get motion sick if I try to read/write on a bus/plane

I am too tired to do school work after the competition

I am too excited about the competition to concentrate on school work
I don't like to think about school when I am about to compete
I prefer to spend time with my teammates
Other (please briefly specify)

- 33) Do you ever feel overwhelmed during the academic year?
Yes (please proceed to question #37a)
No (please proceed to question #38)

37a) If "Yes", what causes you the most stress?
School work
Practice
Other (please briefly specify)

- 34) With which statement do you most strongly identify?
I am primarily an athlete but also a student
I am primarily a student but also an athlete
I am equally both a student and an athlete
I am an athlete
I am a student

- 35) Overall, do you like attending the University of Maine?
Yes
No
I don't know

Appendix C: Significant Correlations Revealed After Closer Analysis

Table 1: Gender

What is your gender? (N = 112)		
	Male	Female
Not only an athlete	21% (23)	50% (56)
Only an athlete	14% (16)	15% (17)
Total	100% (112)	
X ² =3.85, p<0.05		

Table 2: Revenue Sport Participation

Revenue Sport Participation (N = 112)		
	Yes	No
Not only an athlete	14% (16)	56% (63)
Only an athlete	12% (13)	19% (21)
Total	100% (112)	
X ² =4.10, p<0.04		

Table 3: Coaches Expectations to Perform Academically

Coaches Expect Me to Perform Well Academically (N = 112)		
	Yes	No
Not only an athlete	71% (79)	0
Only an athlete	28% (31)	1% (2)
Total	100% (112)	
X ² =4.87, p<0.03		

Table 4: Social Interaction Occurs Primarily with Other Student Athletes

Social Interaction Occurs Primarily with Other Student-Athletes (N = 112)		
	Yes	No
Not only an athlete	36% (40)	35% (39)
Only an athlete	23% (26)	6% (7)
Total	100% (112)	
X ² =7.62, p<0.01		

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Helaina Sacco was born in Wareham, Massachusetts on May 16, 1990. She was raised in Rochester, Massachusetts and graduated from Old Rochester Regional High School in 2008. Majoring in sociology, Helaina also has a minor in political science. She is a member of the University of Maine swim team as well as Phi Beta Kappa and Alpha Kappa Delta.

Upon graduation, Helaina plans to continue her education in the sociology of sport at Loughborough University in the fall after taking the summer to work and relax.