

**San Diego Mesa College
Student-Athletes Study
Fall 2004 to Fall 2006 Cohorts**

The focus of the Student-Athletes Study is all students on Mesa athletic teams. This study examines cohorts of Mesa College athletes from Fall 2004 through Fall 2006. The cohorts are based on term and year of entry into a Mesa athletic team. For example, the Fall 2006 cohort comprises all students who joined a Mesa athletic team in Fall 2006. Students who played two or more sports were counted as part of the term cohort for each sport played. Ethnicity and gender, cohort-term GPAs, cohort-term unit- and course-loads, and term-to-term as well as year-to-year persistence are compared for student-athletes and non-athletes. **Non-athletes are defined as first-time, full-time students enrolled in 12 or more term units as of census, who do not participate in Mesa athletics.** Transfer to four-year institutions is also examined for the student-athlete population. Appendix A lists the fall-term and spring-term sports, and Appendix B has detailed information concerning the Mesa Athletics and Academics Program (MAAP).

Gender

Females were under-represented among student-athletes, while males were over-represented overall and during each cohort term except Spring 2005.

Table 1. Gender: Comparison of Student-Athletes and Non-Athletes
Fall 2004 to Fall 2006 Cohorts

		GENDER				
		FEMALE		MALE		TOTAL
		Count	%	Count	%	Count
Fall 2004 Cohort	Student-athletes	67	34.9%	125	65.1%	192
	Non-athletes	324	48.5%	344	51.5%	668
Spring 2005 Cohort	Student-athletes	58	44.3%	73	55.7%	131
	Non-athletes	80	42.6%	108	57.4%	188
Fall 2005 Cohort	Student-athletes	47	28.1%	120	71.9%	167
	Non-athletes	253	45.8%	299	54.2%	552
Spring 2006 Cohort	Student-athletes	47	37.0%	80	63.0%	127
	Non-athletes	111	49.6%	113	50.4%	224
Fall 2006 Cohort	Student-athletes	58	29.7%	137	70.3%	195
	Non-athletes	423	47.8%	462	52.2%	885

Ethnicity

In order to examine ethnicity, the Fall 2004 through Fall 2006 Cohorts were combined in order to create larger aggregate groups and then unduplicated, which means that students who appeared in more than one cohort were only counted once.

African-American students were over-represented when compared to their proportion among non-athletes (all cohorts combined and unduplicated: 18.8% of the total student-athlete population v. 6.5% of the total non-athlete population). In terms of cohorts, the only cohort for

which African-American students were not over-represented among student athletes was Spring 2005.

Asian-American students were consistently under-represented among student-athletes (all cohorts combined and unduplicated: 7.9% of the total student-athlete population v. 17.0% of the total non-athlete population).

Table 2. Ethnicity: Comparison of Student-Athletes and Non-Athletes
Fall 2004 to Fall 2006 Cohorts Combined and Unduplicated

	Student athletes		Non-athletes	
	Count	%	Count	%
American Indian	7	0.9%	20	0.8%
African-American	145	18.8%	163	6.5%
Asian-American	61	7.9%	429	17.0%
Filipino	25	3.2%	115	4.6%
Latino	153	19.8%	481	19.1%
White	302	39.1%	1,041	41.4%
Other	27	3.5%	83	3.3%
Decline to respond	53	6.9%	185	7.4%
Total	773	100.0%	2,517	100.0%

Note: Figures in table represent unduplicated headcount

Persistence

Review of persistence from the term of entry into the athletic cohort to the following term (Table 3) and to the same term in the following year (Table 4) reveals that the fall term student-athlete cohorts had a slightly lower proportion of students persisting to the next term and to the same term in the following year than did non-athletes. Spring term student-athlete cohorts had a substantially higher percentage of students persisting to the next term and to the same term in the following year than did the non-athletes.

Term-to-term persistence decreased from 2004-2005 to 2005-2006 for student-athletes and non-athletes. Future studies will help determine whether this decrease continues over time.

Table 3. Term-to-Term Persistence: Comparison of Student-Athletes and Non-Athletes
Fall 2004 to Spring 2006 Cohorts

		Returned for next term		Total N
		Count	%	Count
Fall 2004 Cohort	Student-athletes	158	82.3%	192
	Non-athletes	552	82.6%	668
Spring 2005 Cohort	Student-athletes	98	74.8%	131
	Non-athletes	129	68.6%	188
Fall 2005 Cohort	Student-athletes	128	76.6%	167
	Non-athletes	436	79.0%	552
Spring 2006 Cohort	Student-athletes	86	67.7%	127
	Non-athletes	135	60.3%	224

Table 4. Year-to-Year Persistence: Comparison of Student-Athletes and Non-Athletes
Fall 2004 and Spring 2005 Cohorts

		Returned for the same term (fall/spring) during the following year		Total N
		Count	%	Count
Fall 2004 Cohort	Student athletes	111	57.8%	192
	Non-athletes	426	63.8%	668
Spring 2005 Cohort	Student athletes	81	61.8%	131
	Non-athletes	99	52.7%	188

Transfer to Four-Year Institutions

Up to this point, comparisons have been drawn between the student-athletes and non-athletes. During their first terms, the two populations are sufficiently similar for justifiable comparisons to be made as both comprise full-time students who are either new to the institution or new to MAAP. Transfer to four-year institutions cannot be soundly compared for student-athletes and non-athletes for three main reasons: 1) a substantial proportion of non-athletes may have no intention to transfer to a four-year institution, 2) a substantial proportion of non-athletes may drop to part-time status after the first term, and 3) student-athletes, who are not necessarily first-term students if they started coursework prior to entering an athletic cohort, may have been enrolled at Mesa for a longer period of time than non-athletes, who are by definition first-term students and would have a shorter period of time during which to complete their Associate degree-level studies and transfer.

Table 5 shows transfer figures for all student-athletes in the Fall 2004 and Spring 2005 Cohorts. Table 6 displays transfer figures only for the Fall 2004 and Spring 2005 Cohort student-athletes who played for two terms. The students who played for two terms were isolated because they are more likely to have the goal of playing competitively at a four-year institution than students who played for only one term, perhaps for recreation.

Table 5. Transfer to Four-Year Institutions Occurring through 2006
Fall 2004 and Spring 2005 Cohorts: All Athletes

	Transferred to a four-year college/university		Total N of Student Athletes
	Count	%	Count
Fall 2004 Athletic Cohort	53	27.6%	192
Spring 2005 Athletic Cohort	38	29.0%	131

Table 6. Transfer to Four-Year Institutions Occurring through 2006
Fall 2004 and Spring 2005 Cohorts: Athletes Who Played for Two Terms

	Transferred to a four-year college/university		N of Athletes who Played for Two Terms
	Count	%	Count
Fall 2004 Athletic Cohort	23	33.3%	69
Spring 2005 Athletic Cohort	17	39.5%	43

Table 7 shows the percentage of transfers for the Mesa College 2000 Cohort of students who demonstrated “intent to transfer.” This cohort of students began their collegiate careers as first-time students in Fall 2000 at Mesa and within a period of six years attempted transfer-level math or English and completed at least 12 units within the San Diego Community College District. Of this Fall 2000 “intent-to-transfer” cohort, 338 students (37%) transferred to a four-year institution within six years after their first term. This formula for transfer is used by the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office and at community colleges statewide.

Table 7. Transfer to Four-Year Institutions Occurring through 2006
Mesa College Fall 2000 Cohort: Students with Intent to Transfer

First Time	Students w/Intent to Transfer*				
	Intent to Transfer		Transferred w/in 6 yrs		
	Students	N	%	N	%
	2,128	904	42%	338	37%

The transfer figures for the two-term student-athletes looked at a six-term window of time, including summer terms, while the Mesa College 2000 Cohort transfer figures looked at an 18-term window of time, including summer terms. However, still, the two-term student-athletes had a comparable percentage of transfers to four-year institutions, even a slightly higher percentage for the Spring 2005 Cohort. These data speak very well for the student-athletes.

Performance: Cohort-Term Grade Point Averages

Examining performance of the Fall 2004 to Fall 2006 Cohorts, student-athletes consistently earned higher cohort-term GPAs than did non-athletes, as shown in Table 8. Please note that students who took courses only on a credit/no-credit basis are excluded.

Table 8. Performance by Cohort-Term Grade Point Average: Comparison of Student-Athletes and Non-Athletes
Fall 2004 to Fall 2006 Cohorts

	Student athletes		Non-athletes	
	N	Mean Term GPA	N	Mean Term GPA
Fall 2004 Cohort	183	2.48	645	2.24
Spring 2005 Cohort	126	2.58	177	2.17
Fall 2005 Cohort	159	2.49	530	2.10
Spring 2006 Cohort	124	2.51	208	2.15
Fall 2006 Cohort	186	2.51	849	2.22

Transfer-Eligibility: Cohort-Term Unit Load and Course Load

During their cohort-terms, the Fall 2004 through Fall 2006 Student-Athlete Cohorts were enrolled in a greater proportion of transfer-eligible courses and course units than were non-athletes, while non-athletes were enrolled in a higher proportion of non-credit and Associate Degree-applicable courses and course units than were student-athletes, as shown in Table 9. The Fall 2004 and Spring 2005 Student-Athlete Cohorts enrolled in more non-credit courses than did later cohorts. However, the percentages of their unit loads comprising non-credit units remained low because many of the non-credit courses offered during those two terms carried zero units.

**Table 9. Transfer-Eligibility of Cohort-Term Unit Load and Course Load:
Comparison of Student-Athletes and Non-Athletes in the Fall 2004 to Fall 2006 Cohorts**

	Transfer Eligibility	% of Unit Load		% of Course Load	
		Student-Athletes	Non-Athletes	Student-Athletes	Non-Athletes
Fall 2004 Cohort	Not for Credit	2.8%	5.8%	16.9%	19.7%
	Associate Degree Applicable	13.3%	18.3%	7.3%	12.3%
	Transfer Eligible	83.9%	75.9%	75.8%	67.9%
Spring 2005 Cohort	Not for Credit	3.0%	12.6%	15.9%	24.7%
	Associate Degree Applicable	7.7%	15.4%	4.0%	10.8%
	Transfer Eligible	89.3%	72.0%	80.0%	64.5%
Fall 2005 Cohort	Not for Credit	4.5%	8.0%	6.3%	10.3%
	Associate Degree Applicable	9.7%	17.9%	5.6%	14.0%
	Transfer Eligible	85.9%	74.2%	88.1%	75.7%
Spring 2006 Cohort	Not for Credit	2.0%	16.7%	4.4%	17.9%
	Associate Degree Applicable	8.9%	16.6%	5.9%	13.3%
	Transfer Eligible	89.1%	66.7%	89.6%	68.8%
Fall 2006 Cohort	Not for Credit	5.8%	10.2%	7.8%	12.5%
	Associate Degree Applicable	14.5%	21.6%	8.7%	17.1%
	Transfer Eligible	79.6%	68.2%	83.5%	70.3%

Discussion and Implications

Student-athletes strive to succeed in two demanding areas simultaneously. They have the responsibility of developing and working toward an educational goal as well as training hard in their sports. This study found that student-athletes had higher cohort-term GPAs and were enrolled in a greater proportion of transfer-eligible courses and course units during the cohort-term than were non-athletes. Their academic attainments may be due in part to the specialized counseling they receive and the rigorous standards they must meet. By the start of the second term of enrollment, student-athletes are required to meet with a counselor to develop an approved Educational Plan. Minimum unit loads and GPAs required of student-athletes who wish to transfer to and compete at Division I, II, and III schools are listed in Appendix B. The three-pronged approach of focusing counseling and guidance on academic, athletic, and personal goals seems to serve the student-athletes well. Counseling efforts could be directed more at improving term-to-term and year-to-year persistence among student-athletes.

Student-athlete cohorts will be tracked continuously for persistence and completion in terms of certificates, Associate degrees, and transfer. This first edition of the Student-Athletes Study was limited by the short period of time that lapsed between the first cohort-term and the time at which the study was conducted. In calculating transfer rates, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office tracks each cohort forward for six years. However, tracking forward for ten years, as opposed to six years, nets an additional 15-20%, including more underrepresented populations (Perry, 2007). This finding suggests that two years is an insufficient window of time for studying the attainment of milestones such as Associate degrees and transfer certifications. Future studies will yield more complete results.

Appendix A Sports by Term

Fall Sports

Basketball-- Men

Basketball-- Women

Cross-Country-- Men

Cross-country-- Women

Football

Volleyball-- Women

Soccer-- Men

Soccer-- Women

Water polo-- Men

Water polo-- Women

Spring Sports

Baseball

Softball

Swimming-- Men

Swimming-- Women

Tennis-- Men

Tennis-- Women

Track and field-- Men

Track and field-- Women

Volleyball-- Men

Badminton-- Women

Appendix B
Mesa Athletics and Academics Program (MA2P)

The Mesa Athletics and Academic Program (MA2P) is a cooperative effort between the Counseling and Physical Education/Athletic Departments. The Mesa Athletics and Academics Program offers counseling and guidance in: adjusting to college, educational planning, academic issues, athletic issues, and personal concerns.

General Eligibility Requirements

Five year Rule (Division I)

If you transfer from a two year college to a Division I school, you must complete all your seasons of competition within five calendar years from your original date of full time enrollment in any collegiate institution, including two year colleges. This "five year clock" does not stop except under special circumstances (for example: time spent in the armed forces, or on official church missions). If you then stayed out of school for two years to work, you have two years of eligibility remaining on your "five year clock" at a Division I school.

10 Semester Rule (Divisions II and III)

If you transfer from a two-year college to a Division II or III school, the 10 semester/15-quarter rule applies. This rule is different from the five-year rule for Division I and gives you more flexibility in completing your seasons of competition. This rule requires you to complete your seasons of competition during your first 10 semesters or 15 quarters of full-time collegiate enrollment. Under this system, a student who is enrolled at a two-year college as a full-time student for two semesters and withdraws from school for two years may return to a Division II or III school and have eight semesters of eligibility remaining. If you have spent time out of school for personal or financial reasons, you may wish to consider a Division II or III school.

Transfer Requirements

Division I Schools

Note: (If you first entered a two-year college on or after August 1, 1996)

Qualifier

If you were a qualifier based on your high school record and you wish to compete immediately at a Division I college, you must meet one of the two options below:

Option I:

1. Graduate from a two-year college with an AA or AS degree
2. Successfully complete a minimum of 48 semester or 72 quarter units of transferable degree credit.
3. Have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0

Option II:

1. Successfully complete a minimum of two semesters or three quarters of academic residence, summers excluded.
2. Successfully complete a minimum of 12 hours of transferable degree credit per semester/quarter attended.
3. Have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0

Non-Qualifier

Other Than Football and Basketball:

1. Graduate from a two-year college with an AA or AS degree
2. Successfully complete a minimum of 48 semester or 72 quarter units of transferable degree credit
3. Have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0
4. Attend a two-year college for a minimum of four quarters of academic residence, summers excluded.

For Football and Basketball:

You are not eligible to compete for one academic year

Did you meet the provisions for other sports as mentioned above (for sports other than football and basketball)?

Division II Schools

Note (If you first entered a two-year college on or after August 1, 1996)

Qualifier

If you were a qualifier based on your high school record and wish to compete immediately to a Division II school, you must meet one of two options listed below:

Option I:

1. Graduate from a two-year college with an AA or AS degree
2. Successfully complete a minimum of 48 semester or 72 quarter units of transferable degree credit.
3. Have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0

Option II:

1. Successfully complete a minimum of two semesters or three quarters of academic residence, summers excluded.
2. Successfully complete a minimum of 12 units of transferable degree credit per semester or quarter amended
3. Have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0

Non-Qualifier

Other Than Football and Basketball:

1. Graduate from a two-year college with an AA or AS degree
2. Successfully complete a minimum of 48 semester or 72 quarter units of transferable degree credit
3. Have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0
4. Attend a two-year college for a minimum of three semesters or four quarters of academic residence, summers excluded.

Note: Student athletics first entering the Division I college on or after August 1, 1997 may not earn more than 18 semester or 27 quarter hours during the summers, and no more than 9 semesters or 13.5 quarter hours of transferable degree credit may be earned during the summer immediately before transfer.

For Football and Basketball:

You are not eligible to compete for one academic year

Did you meet the provisions for other sports as mentioned above (for sports other than football and basketball)?

Division III Schools

If you wish to transfer to a Division III school, you will be eligible to compete immediately if you meet one of the following two requirements before you transfer:

1. You have not previously participated in intercollegiate athletics

OR

2. You have participated in intercollegiate athletics, and you would have been eligible academically if you had remained at the two year college.

Note: If you do not meet all the requirements for one of the two options mentioned above, you will not be permitted to compete in your first year of residence at that school. However, you will be eligible to practice and receive institutional financial aid at the Division III school, provided that you are enrolled in a minimum full time program of studies and meet applicable conference and institutional regulations.

"4-2-4" Transfers

If you originally enroll at a four-year college, transfer to a two-year college and then wish to transfer to a Division I or II NCAA school, there is a separate set of rules you must meet in order to compete immediately at the Division I or II school. You must meet all of the conditions from one of the four following options before you transfer in order to compete immediately after transferring from the two-year college:

Option I:

1. You must have completed 24 semesters or 36 quarter units of transferable degree credit
2. You must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0
3. One year must have elapsed since your transfer from the four-year college
4. You must have graduated from the two-year college.

Note: If you enrolled as a regular student in a two-year college before January 10, 1990, the 24 semesters or 36 quarter units do not need to be transferable degree credit with a cumulative GPA of 2.0.

If you attended more than one, two-year college, at least 25 percent of the credit hours you need to receive your degree must be earned at the two-year college that awards that degree

Option II:

You return to the NCAA school from which you transferred to the two-year college, provided you did not have an unfulfilled residence requirement at the time you left the NCAA school.

Option III:

1. The four-year college you originally attended did not sponsor the sport in which you compete (and you did not attend any other college that sponsored the sport)
2. You were a qualifier based on your high school records
3. You completed 24 semester or 36 quarter hours of transferable degree credit with a minimum grade-point average of 2.0 in your transferable credit hours
4. You completed 12 semester hours of transferable credit for each term you were a full-time student at the two-year college
5. You spent at least two semesters or three quarters as a full-time student at the two-year college

Option IV:

If you are transferring to a Division II college, and for a consecutive two-year period immediately before you begin practice or competition, you have not practiced or competed in intercollegiate athletics competition or organized non-collegiate competition while enrolled as a full-time student at a college. This two-year period would not include any time before your first full-time enrollment at any two- or four-year college.

If you do not meet all of the conditions set forth in one of these four options, you will not be eligible for competition at a Division I or II school until you spend one academic year in residence at that school. However, you will be eligible to practice and receive institutional financial aid, provided you are enrolled in a full-time program of studies and meet applicable institutional and conference regulations.