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Should College Athletes Get Paid?

College athletes should get paid as they create money for their school, however get nothing in response. They have more time in playground than classrooms. Coaches gets millions in a year and athletes who spend their time most of time in playground are not rewarded. Sport for college athletes is first and foremost a hobby or a passion. For this reason, being paid for a sport changes the definition of sport. It is no longer sport for pleasure, but more sport for money.

According to a study published by the NCAA, “National Study of Student Athletes Regarding Their Experience as College Students”, college athletes believe that they are given the opportunity to develop as more well-rounded individuals than their peers who only work on their college coursework. The concept of the well-rounded person is important when applying for jobs because employers often seek potential employees who would be able to function in a diverse set of tasks (Rasche, 219). When an applicant appears to have been responsible for a number of different duties while in college and been relatively successful at all of them, their competitive edge has been strengthened in the job market. Playing sports fits this niche because not only are the students responsible for their athletic obligations, but they must excel in academics in order to maintain NCAA eligibility. Also, student athletes are often seen as the face of a University and their conduct socially is seen as a reflection of the values of that institution. For this reason, student athletes have experience with acting as a public relations liaison for the University. All of these responsibilities qualify the student athlete for a job opportunity that calls for a well-rounded applicant.

College occurs at an important developmental period for students. Right after high school, students leave their families for the first time and experience significant changes in their lives. How a college student reacts to the challenges faced at the University level will be indicators for how they will handle other trials in life after graduation. College athletes are no different from other college students in this regard. The NCAA survey indicates that student athletes feel particularly advantaged by how their athletic involvement helped them personally develop during these important years. College athletes regard their development in the following areas to be particularly strong: leadership, teamwork, work ethic, accountability, decision making and time management skills. All of these areas are ideal for any college student to develop so for student athletes to feel particularly advantaged by their participation in sports then opportunity has been created.

An organization that brings together more than 460,000 student-athletes in 1280 universities or colleges across the United States. The NCAA is responsible for coordinating between member institutions and their conferences or leagues, managing the competition aspect and everything related to the rules of the game, officials, and match schedules. She is also responsible for the exploitation of commercial rights, be it TV, radio or digital rights and the revenues of the end-of-season championships. It finally ensures the balance of sports and studies of athletes and their academic development.

The NCAA is a bit like another professional league in the minds of sports fans in the United States. The content is rich, the seasons are furious, TV audiences very strong. With the big difference that it is unpaid students rather than professional millionaires who are the stars in the field. It is all the more paradoxical that the revenues generated by the NCAA are enormous. In 2016, they amounted to $ 1 billion for the national association's own revenues, and $ 12 billion for all university sport. According to a study published in 2016, 24 American universities have generated more than $ 100 million in annual revenues from their various sports programs. It's a huge industry that influences social spheres.

The NCAA has 23 disciplines, but the vast majority of its revenue comes from two sports: American football and basketball. For example, the University of Texas has 50,000 students and its Faculty of Sports more than 20 disciplines, including the Longhorns, the famous football team, which is the most commercialized in the country with annual revenues of more than $ 128 million. In most universities, football and basketball finance other sports programs. In the United States, diversity, equality and opportunity are given a lot of importance. It is not because small disciplines like wrestling, lacrosse, women's swimming or soccer are less attractive to the public or do not generate a lot of commercial rights than equivalent scholarships to these students. The system is therefore firmly established to reinvest in the sport and thus develop elite elite athletes in all disciplines.

This makes American universities extremely attractive to young athletes. The NCAA model is very effective at keeping young people motivated by high performance sport but also hardworking at school. For many students from modest backgrounds, to get a scholarship through their athletic talents is the only chance to be able to "afford" the university, paying in the United States (between 25 000 and 60 000 dollars per year) (Freedman, 673). Student athletes are often recruited from a wide variety of geographical locations. Due to recruiting efforts, student athletes have more opportunities to develop friendships with people who have a different cultural background than their own. This is a great opportunity for the athlete because these friendships expose them to experiences different than their own and widen their ability for empathy and understanding. Diversity helps strengthen the athlete’s ability to effectively utilize varying perspectives in order to help the overall team goal.

There is also some concern that student athletes are denied certain opportunities that non athlete students get to experience. Because of the rigor and demands of the athletic programs, student athletes are not often given as much time to socialize with their peers. Also, athletes are limited in their choice of what they can major in because they only have a certain amount of time available for studying and specific blocks of time are unavailable for class times because of practice and game schedules. Often student athletes are encouraged not to major in more time consuming majors such as engineering and the sciences (Nygren,359). Also, students are not able to participate in certain professional development activities hosted by the academic majors because of the time it would take away from athletic preparation. Student athletes have had to make a decision about which opportunities they are comfortable with sacrificing in order to experience the opportunities that are widened by their athletic participation (Meggyesy, 27).

 As great as the personal development opportunities are for student athletes, the measures of success for an athletic program is by how well the teams compete at the college level and how man student athlete graduates move on to professional athletics (McKenzie, 373). VCU’s athletic program has had many winning seasons, the most famous of which is the basketball team. Students at VCU have been very excited about the success of the athletic programs and are very excited for the opportunities created for non-athlete students as well. When applying for job after graduation, when an employer sees the name Virginia Commonwealth University on the resume, they will be more likely to recognize the name of the college even outside the state of Virginia because of the success of the basketball team.

As was seen in the walking tour, VCU can brag about success rates for student athlete graduates. In baseball, basketball, tennis and golf, students have moved onto professional careers both in and outside of the United States. In Europe, Jamal Shuler plays professional basketball, first in Germany and now in France. If he hadn’t have played athletics in college, it is unlikely that he would have had the opportunity to be recruited to play basketball inside or outside of the US. The possibility was only available because of his college athletic experience.

Jessa Pellot Rosa was not only given an opportunity to play basketball professionally, but was recruited for football as well. Because of perceived transferrable skills, Rosa was recruited to play for the NFL (Jenkins, 39). While this opportunity ended up not being what Rosa was looking for, it is important to see that even playing college basketball, could open up professional sporting opportunities outside of basketball. Currently Rosa plays basketball professionally in Puerto Rico and has been given significant opportunity to support his family and enjoy his time with his wife and daughter.

In Richmond and at VCU, athletics began as a possibility for relieving stress during wartime activities. Monroe Park gave soldiers time to take their mind off the brutal war that they were participating in and gave them a chance to relax and enjoy their time playing baseball. While currently, sports at VCU are not seen as respite from the stresses of war, they do offer support to the community of VCU as an important supplement to the stress that is University life. Students can take a break from the classes that absorb so much time in order to cheer for their classmates.

 The student athletes are given opportunities to develop themselves personally and professionally while pursuing athletic opportunities. The dream of a professional post college career is in the back of every student athlete’s mind and even here at Virginia Commonwealth University that dream is fostered and the possibility is always there. With the right combination of skill and fortitude, that possibility is very tangible for VCU student athletes. The best student-athletes working in high schools in the United States, Canada and even now in Asia and Europe, aspire to succeed on both counts (school and sports) to receive one of these scholarships (Goldman, 206). They include tuition, lodging, meals and sports equipment for four years of graduation. All of these benefits are worth approximately $ 300,000. The problem lies in the fact that not all players are equal. Andrew Wiggins or Jabari Parker (if he appears) will be millionaires in a little over two months but only sixty players a year are drafted and only forty will play well in the NBA. It is this cleavage between future stars and anonymous players that is difficult to pin down.

To conclude, college athletes should get paid. College athletes should get paid as they create money for their school, however get nothing in response. They have more time in playground than classrooms. We can imagine a small bonus in major conferences but nothing that can amplify the already huge gap between conferences. All small clauses prohibiting them from receiving free pizza or a free t-shirt should be removed from the rules. But no, players should not be paid because it would change the very essence of the NCAA and its vocation to help young people get an education and a university degree, but let's stop this hypocrisy that makes every single act and action players are scrutinized to see if there is no violation of the rules of the university league. With incomes growing, it's time to let players live comfortably and allow them to pass their course in the best possible conditions without all the constraints imposed by the NCAA.

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