

# ACADEMIC SUCCESS: PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENT-ATHLETES, LEARNING SPECIALISTS, AND ACADEMIC ADVISORS

RESEARCH FROM THE FRONT PORCH

***“LISTENING TO STUDENT-ATHLETES’ RESPONSES ABOUT WHAT ACADEMIC SUCCESS MEANS TO THEM, WHILE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT ANY INDIVIDUAL ACADEMIC CHALLENGES, ENABLES ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS TO HELP DEVELOP A PLAN FOR EACH STUDENT TO BE SUCCESSFUL.”***

## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

- While definitions of academic success varied, each participant group expressed a theme of effort in the form of expectations to be the essence of academic achievement. Expectations were identified by the participants as focusing on personal outcomes: improved work ethic, maturity, and hard work paying off with a higher GPA.
- Student-athletes identified meeting grade-based standards and work ethic resulting in reaching personal goals as academic success. Student-athletes also perceived that their advisor identified eligibility (e.g., graduation; GPA) and effort (e.g., showing up to appointments; going to class) as academic success.
- Learning specialists identified academic success as maximizing individual potential through personal best, self-awareness, skill development, and process engagement. Learning specialists also viewed work ethic as most important and equated academic success with building academic skills.

Finally, academic advisors identified academic achievement as degree completion, individual standards and personal development

## QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

- As a professional, how does my perception of academic success influence my interactions and efforts with student-athletes at my institution?
- How do student-athletes I work with define academic success? How can I open up dialogue over our individual definitions and attend to any variations in the athlete’s pursuit of academic success?



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