

## ***Factors Influencing the College Selection Process at the Football Championship Subdivision***

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In today's economic climate an increased level of competition between universities to recruit students and student-athletes has become a priority of admission offices across the country. Identification of factors influencing college choice decisions has become a key component of the recruitment process. As the culture of higher education changes, administrators need to reassess the reasons why students are choosing colleges. There is significant literature with regard to college choice of students, but few studies focus on the factors related to college choice among freshmen student-athletes (See Gabert, Hale, & Montalvo, 1999; Letawsky, Schneider, Pedersen, & Palmer, 2003). As the commercialization of college athletics has increased, the pressure on athletic departments and institutions to recruit academically well prepared student-athletes has reached new heights. Winning seasons are no longer just a concern of the athletic department, but now play an integral role in the development of the university's reputation.

The current study is an extension of Letawsky et al. study (2003). Athletic-related factors and non-athletic related factors were evaluated in four categories: (a) athletic and academic reputation of the school, (b) characteristics of recruiting and head coach, (c) characteristics of the campus visit, and (d) general influences of family, friends, and community (Mathes & Gurney, 1985). The survey was administered to a sample of freshman student-athletes receiving full and partial athletic scholarships, non-athletic scholarship student-athletes, as well as freshmen in the general student population at a medium-sized FCS institution in the West. The study is currently in the data collection process. The final results of this study will provide the university with practical information regarding factors influencing student-athlete college selection. Proposed departmental programming and institutional effectiveness will be discussed and presented.