

Implementation of Policies and Procedures within Athletic Departments for the Safety and Well-Being of the Student Athletes

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**Session 2: Ethics
Presentation (25-minute)**

Thursday, May 31, 2007

8:30 AM - 8:55 AM

The purpose of the original study was to determine whether a significant difference existed between the perception of the National Collegiate Athletic Association male and female athletes regarding various types of abusive behaviors by their coaches. The research examined whether or not athletic departments in the United States of America should develop policies and procedures to educate all persons involved in the athletic setting, as well as the prosecution of coaches who sexually harass or emotional abuse student-athletes. Building upon the information previously gathered, the researcher was interested to examine what steps, if any, Athletic Departments have made in implementing specific policies and procedures to protect the student-athletes from physical or emotional abuse.

A survey instrument adapted from 3 previous studies was employed to rank 29 perceived abusive behaviors in Division I tennis programs. The results of the research enabled the investigator to examine the possibility of implementation of policies and procedures for athletic departments based on the ranked responses from the student athletes. The study covered a historical review of the first cases of sexual harassment in sport, the definitions that were subsequently adopted, the unique relationship between coaches and athletes, and the legal implications involved in sexual and emotional abuse cases filed in court. The ranked order of behavior items was the result of the factor analysis, and the investigation of the review of literature.

All served as a guideline for the researcher to develop a persuasive argument for the necessity of administrators to implement policies and procedures within the each athletic department for the safety and well-being of the student athletes. Many coaching codes of ethics expressly state that coaches should avoid all unethical practices toward their athletes. All coaches agree to try and conduct coaching responsibilities in a completely ethical manner. Currently, coaches consider their own personal ethical standards, the general principles expressed in the numerous codes of ethics that are available for each individual sport, the general principles set forth by the NCAA, and the university's policy of harassment toward faculty and the student body as their ethical framework. However, what specifically constitutes a completely ethical manner of coaching? There are no clear-cut answers. The NCAA has not taken an active role in determining what individual Athletic Departments should mandate. Future discussions and studies are required in this area.