THE IMPACT OF DIVISION II REVENUE AND NON-REVENUE SPORT
PARTICIPATION ON STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Matthew L. Symonds

Dr. Phillip E. Messner, Dissertation Supervisor

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of NCAA Division II revenue and non-revenue sport participation on student engagement. The engagement measurement for the study was selected items from the National Survey of Student Engagement's *The College Student Report.* The institution studied was a four-year, regional, public institution in Missouri. A case study methodology employing quantitative statistical analysis was utilized to investigate the impact of athletics participation on empirically derived process indicators of involvement in educationally purposeful activities.

The independent variable was participation in intercollegiate athletics at the selected institution. Two categories of independent variable included: athletes and non-athletes and revenue sport and non-revenue sport participants. The dependent variables for the study were selected measures of student engagement from *The College Student Report* acquired from the cooperating institution's Office of Assessment, Information, and Analysis.

Data were analyzed using the following statistical analysis procedures: exploratory factor analysis, descriptive statistics analysis, univariate analysis of covariance, and discriminant function analysis. Exploratory factor analysis was employed to examine commonalities of survey items and to reduce the number of dependent variables for the remaining statistical procedures. Univariate analysis of covariance

examined differences between the categories of independent variables. Finally, discriminant function analysis was conducted to determine if an individuals engagement reports could predict group membership.

Exploratory factor analysis of 42 survey items yielded 11 components consisting of 29 measures. The 29 measures were treated as dependent variables for subsequent analyses. Descriptive analysis indicated mean differences in both categories of independent variable. However, descriptive analysis suggested that athletes were largely as engaged as their non-athlete peers. Similarly, descriptive analysis suggested that revenue sport participants were similarly engaged compared to their non-revenue sport counterparts. However, univariate ANCOVA analyses uncovered three significant differences between both categories of independent variable.

Finally, discriminant analyses generated one significant function for each grouping variable. However, analysis of these results revealed that it is likely that these functions would lead to the incorrect classification of individuals into groups.