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Athletic Identity, Identity Foreclosure, and Career Maturity of a NCAA Division II Female Student-Athlete

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Athletic Identity, Identity Foreclosure, and Career Maturity of a NCAA Division II Female Student-Athlete

by

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Abstract

National College Athletic Association (NCAA) and Division II (DII) athletics provide an opportunity for student-athletes to complete at a highly competitive level, at smaller regionalize institutions (50.8% of institutions with less than 2,500 students) (NCAA, 2017). There are approximately 300 NCAA DII institutions that participate in 24 conferences throughout the United States of America. NCAA DII athletics philosophy supports a "balanced and inclusive approach" that promotes an opportunity for student-athletes to have a greater opportunity to access championships and promotes preparation for student-athletes for life beyond graduation. This is done through monitored time commitment, limiting class absences due to limited travel and reduced scheduling. A NCAA DII student-athlete may receive an athletic scholarship and have access to additional financial aid. NCAA II institutions are split almost evenly between access between Private (51%) and Public (49%) institutions (NCAA, 2017). DII athletic departments promote the graduation success rates of their student-athletes against the general student body, as well as the commitment to community service and engagement opportunities that their student-athletes participate in.

The study was guided by three research questions. The first research question focused on athletic identity and selected demographic variables as a predictor of athletic identity strength. The second research question focused on the relationship between athletes AIMS score and the athletes score on the OM-EIS. The final research question examined scores on the CMI, OM-EIS, and AIMS to find a statistical relationship. Additional analysis was conducted between year in school and strength of AIMS to determine if identity foreclosure decreased, and career maturity scores increased throughout an athlete's career.

In summary, the AIMS score was higher among those that received an athletic scholarship and with those that participated in the sports of basketball and volleyball. Freshmen scored the highest on the AIMS survey followed by sophomores, juniors and seniors (respectively). When examining year in school and score on the OM-EIS no significance was determined, however, interestingly sophomores scored the highest on the OM-EIS survey, followed by seniors, juniors and freshmen. Finally, juniors scored the highest on the CMI scale followed by sophomores, seniors and freshmen (respectively).

Athletic departments may want to consider allocating resources and programming specifically designed to meet the needs of student-athletes throughout each year as a student-athletes, interconnected to student developmental theory. Identity research has indicated that this age time frame is a pivotal time for these young adults, and that experiences they encounter as a student-athlete may influence identity and choices they make for the remainder of their collegiate career based on their association with their stronger identity. Continued institutional and athletic department programming, internships, and engagement opportunities are essential for juniors and seniors for career readiness. Athletic departments should also continue to work with staff and support staff (assistant coaches, athletic trainers, counselor, SAAC advisors, Senior Women Administrators, etc.) to prepare all athletes for life after athletics through by assisting the athlete in development of their holistic self-identity.

Dedication

To my parents, David and Joleen U'Ren for your continuous support and encouragement throughout my educational journey. I appreciate everything you have done for me and continue to do for me. Thank you for instilling me the importance of an education, the value of hard work and providing guidance and unconditional love.

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To my children, Amelia and Livia Johnson, I hope I showed you that you can do anything if you work hard, stay focused and committed to your goals. I hope to give you the inspiration to go after your dreams and never be afraid of a challenge. Dive into your educational opportunities and love the experiences that it will bring to you. Remember always..you are a U'Ren-Johnson…**you can do anything**!

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Chapter I: Introduction

Collegiate student-athletes uphold unique identity prestige as they must balance both academic and athletic responsibilities, social activities, relationships, and for the majority of the student-athletes, contend with an impending intercollegiate athletic eligibility expiration timeline. As student-athletes navigate their collegiate experience they must also set personal and career future goals with choices that guide them throughout their student-athlete career. Choices can be vast varying from courses enrolled in, the declared degree they take courses in, the relationships that are develop and/or maintained on and off the field of play, and/or the internships or career readiness training they participate in. Additionally, the influences of an academic advisor, professor, parent, coach, support staff, teammate, and other college peers may determine the development of identity and career readiness of the student-athlete.

A sense of one's identity often shapes the choices that an individual makes. Understanding the identity strength of a student-athlete may provide a greater insight into (1) how to assist the student-athlete in the decisions they make throughout the collegiate career, and (2) to support and encourage their on-going investment in career maturity developmental opportunities from freshmen to senior year, not just when eligibility is nearing exhaustion.

The degree to which a student-athlete identifies as being an athlete while participating in athletics may impact their career vocational developmental progress towards. Having a strong athletic identity may impeded a student-athlete's path of reaching future goals due to the choices they may made throughout their collegiate career. A 2010 NCAA study surveyed NCAA athletes (n = 21,000) from 600 Division I, II, III institutions that represented all

NCAA championship sports. The number one programming topic requested by all divisions and genders was additional information on how to create academic success and prepare student-athletes for the workforce after college. Preparing for life beyond college begins with the holistic educational experiences and opportunities that student-athletes encounter and engage in during their student-athlete career. For support staff that work with student-athletes it may be very valuable to understand at what point of the student-athlete's career that they gain a sense of career readiness. Additionally, how does one's athletic identity shape the choices that develop career maturity throughout a student-athletes career.

Throughout these collegiate experiences the individual shapes their identity through choices in academic class selection, social and athletic interactions, and off-field academic opportunities (e.g., internships/practicums). Choices are often guided by the individual's perceived self-identity, a role that is developed and strengthened through interactions and experiences with parents, advisors, professors, peers, and coaches. If an individual receives greater positive feedback and rewards with one role vs. the other role it may induce a stronger attachment to that role through repeated rewards for achievement when the individual is actively engaging in that role context. When working with student-athletes throughout their career it may be very valuable to understand the most significant time period (i.e., year in school) to provide effective to educational programming. By inserting a career readiness educational component into their student-athlete curriculum it may assist in preparing the student-athlete for work life after graduation.

A student-athletes' experiences on campus and the choices they make throughout their collegiate career may either delay growth and development opportunities due to the time

commitment required by an athlete, or provide the student-athletes with additional career maturity skills and readiness through supplementary training provided by being an athlete.

With each year of participation on a team the athlete understands the greater time commitment needed to develop their athletic skills for competition. The devotion to their sport may limit the number of free hours they have to develop their academic skills or participate in athletic department or university programming events to assist them in academic skill development.

Athletic departments and universities may be able to provide soft skill training programming, leadership development, academic tutors, early registration to access courses to fit their schedule, and additional mentors (coaches, athletic trainers, support staff); however, the student-athlete must have the time and commitment levels to take advantage of available resources. In turn, it is important for those that work with student-athletes to have knowledge of the student-athlete by better understanding the degree of a student-athlete's strength in their athletic identity. Additionally, any identity foreclosure obstacles they may be navigating and their greater overall sense—throughout their collegiate career—of being ready to their career post-graduation.

Adler and Adler's (1985) groundbreaking initial research focused on the concept of student-athlete identity as student-athletes balanced dual roles and often became overwhelmed with their athletic role thus limiting their investment into their academic and social roles. McCall and Simmons's (1978) research linked the terms "identity" and "role" together indicating that the person's multi-role identities provided a lens for how an individual interprets their experiences from the past, present, and future. The 2015 NCAA research

indicated that 62% and 53% of women and men, respectively, very strongly identify to both being a student and an athlete. This indicated that that student-athlete identity does not refer to a "single continuum" where at one end of the continuum a student athlete would have strong identity as a student and at the opposite end a student athlete would have high identity as an athlete. Rather these identifications occur independently and non-exclusively (NCAA, 2013). The 2015 NCAA Extra Point report also indicated that having a very strong athletic identity does not predict future academic obstructions, but having a weak student identity does create difficulties for future academic success (NCAA, 2013). Since these two pioneer research studies there has been an emphasis to gain greater knowledge of the NCAA student-athlete and if participation in college athletics is providing career readiness.

Career maturity is defined as "the degree of confidence a person has in his or her ability to make career related decision" (Finch, 2007). Brown and Hartley's (1998) research indicated that individuals who identify strongly with the athletic role may be less likely to explore other career, educational, and lifestyle options due to their intense commitment to athletics. As a student-athlete's career concludes with eligibility exhaustion, degree completion, or injury, a goal in the academic developmental process is to have the student-athlete reach a high level of career maturity through engagement and participation in athletics, internships, academic courses, volunteer services, social experiences, and mentoring from coaches, staff, and administrators. However, there is very limited research, including longitudinal studies, that have tracked this preparation phase from freshmen to senior year. One variable that is tracked at all institutions is graduation rates of student-athletes. Career

maturity scores of student-athletes are often not taken by institutions as a part of the exit process.

At the Division II level graduation rates were at an all-time high in 2014 with the NCAA crediting member institutions with providing a well-rounded and balanced experience at the Division II level (Durham, 2014). In 2016, 7% (49,618 of 690,395) of the female Division II undergraduate population were classified as student-athletes (males 13%; 69,448 of 539,529) (NCAA, 2014b). The Academic Success Rates (ASR) is a data collection method that the NCAA uses to track graduation rates of both athletes and non-athletes at member institutions. The Division II ASR date indicated that student-athletes graduate at a higher rate than the general student-body. NCAA Division II schools often have a higher gap between the successes of the Division II student-athlete compared to the general population (NCAA, 2014b). NCAA DII student-athletes and NCAA female student-athletes are graduating at a higher rate than their peers. However, there is a gap in the literature on NCAA Division II athletics or female student-athletes to provide a conclusive reason as to the why of this trend.

Female student-athletes may "represent an academic vanguard within the college athletic population-a subset of individuals within the stigmatized group that are more prepared and invested or 'psychologically engaged' in the performance outcomes" (Steele, 1977, as cited in Harrison et al., 2009). A consistent trend at all NCAA division levels (I, II, III) is that female student-athletes are continuing to graduate at a higher rate than male athletes, and have greater academic success (GPA) than their male counterparts (NCAA, 2010; Sanders & Hildebrand, 2010). A 2008 NCAA report found that female student-athletes posted a 64% graduation rate, compared to the general female student at 53% (NCAA.org, Summary of

NCAA Division II Athletes, 2017. This unique, highly successful student-population has constantly performed better than their counterparts and non-student athlete peers but there is very limited information on female student-athletes to assess the strength of their identity and levels of career maturity during the collegiate career. This data may provide valuable insight on NCAA Division II female student-athletes.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to gain a greater understanding of the strength of the athletic identity in the female student-athlete and collect additional data on identity foreclosure and career maturity of the female athlete assessing freshmen through senior student-athletes.

This exploratory within-gender quantitative research study focused on the NCAA Division II female student-athlete, ages 18-23 years old, that participated in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Athletic Conference in the fall of 2016. All participants were classified as: freshmen, sophomores, juniors, seniors, or fifth-year seniors. The participating institutions are located in: North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Minnesota, and Nebraska (North Central United States). Participants were members of four selected team sports that competed at both public and private Division II institutions. The team sports were: women's basketball, women's soccer, women's softball, women's volleyball with basketball and volleyball classified as revenue sports and soccer and softball classified as non-revenue sports.

This study provided insight into the relationship strength between athletic identity and variables such as: ethnicity, year in school, type of higher education institution attending (public/private), revenue vs. non-revenue sport participation, and receiving an institutional

athletic scholarship. The study also examined the correlation between strength of athletic sub-dimension identities, public and private, and the correlation between athletic identity. Identity foreclosure and career maturity of the female student-athlete were also measured to gain a greater insight into the NCAA Division II female student athlete.

Statement of the Problem

The 2017 NCAA Fact and Figures data listed over 50,313 female student-athletes that participated in NCAA Division II sports. To date there are no studies that have specially explored the NCAA Division II female student-athlete to gain insight into this unique institution sub-population. Specifically, research on the female student-athlete was deficient in understanding the strength of her athletic identity throughout her career and the relationship between that strength and variables such as: ethnicity, year in school, type of higher education institution attending, revenue vs. non-revenue sport participation, and receiving an institutional athletic scholarship vs. not receiving an institutional scholarship. A NCAA Division II student-athlete competes at a very high level that requires 20 hours per week of team sport-training, along with additional team requirements (out of practice skill work, community service, fundraising to supplement their sports operational budget, engagement events, etc.). The significant amount of time allocated to being a student-athlete may force a student-athlete to foreclose on other identity development opportunities that non-student athletes may experience (academic course selection, jobs, internships, networking relationships) and delay their career readiness and preparation for life after athletics. Athletic departments often focus their philosophy of sport, student-athlete programming, and result outcomes based on the long-standing NCAA male student-athlete model, which may not

necessarily be appropriate in the developmental of the NCAA female student-athlete. Additionally, there was very limited literature addressing identity foreclosure and career maturity in NCAA Division athletes and particularly research focused on the NCAA DII female student-athlete and her needs to reach career readiness by her junior and senior years.

Significance of the Study

The educational significance of this study will be to: 1) to provide insight into the demographics of the NCAA DII female student-athlete in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference; 2) to identify strength of athletic identity in freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior student-athletes; 3) to identify potential correlations between athletic identity and ethnicity, type of higher educational institution attending, sport participating in, revenue vs non-revenue sport participation, and/or receiving an institutional scholarship; 4) to identify potential correlations between athletic identity, identity foreclosure and year in school; 5) to assess career maturity and the potential correlation between year in school; 6) to assess career maturity scores are concurrent to athletic identity and identity foreclosure; 7) to provide additional programming strategies for institutions, athletic departments, head coaches, and support staff to support the developmental process of the female student-athlete to prepare them for life after athletics and career maturity; and 8) to add to the existing body of literature on NCAA student-athletes, NCAA DII athletes, and DII female student-athletes.

Description and Scope of the Research

The participants of this study were NCAA Division II female, team sport, student-athletes that participate in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (NSIC). THE NSIC IS a conference located in North Central region of the United States. To address the

problem of limited literature on the NCAA Division II female student-athlete this study surveyed the student-athlete population to gain a greater insight into the female student-athlete and to add to the literature on this specific population. Theoretical framework of *Social Psychological Development and Identity Theory*: Cooley (1902), Mead (1934); *Role Conflict/Identity Foreclosure*: Erickson (1956, 1968), Marcia (1966, 1993) Petitpas (1978), *Social Roles/Identities*: Burke (2003); Burke, Owens, Serpe, and Thoits (2003); Burke and Stets (2009); Stryker (1968, 2007); Stryker & Burke (2000); Stryker & Serpe (1994), Tajfel and Turner (1986); *Psychosocial and Career Development*: Super (1957), Chickering and Reisser, (1993); Crites (1974); Super (1990), Super and Jordan (1973) were used to guide the research as it pertained to the respective topic area of athletic identity, identity foreclosure, and career maturity. There was not one exclusive theoretical framework that guided the study as the study covered three research areas. Previous studies focused on student-athletes that also used a combination of theoretical frameworks when researching the student-athletes (e.g., Professional, Olympic, NCAA, intermural) and examined relationships between competition level of play, gender, non-student athletes, or other various factors. The literature review provided context to how these conceptual theories were addressed in regard to previous literature that pertained to the student-athlete.

The sampled population was comprised of NCAA Division II female student-athletes, freshmen through seniors, who participate in the NSIC conference. The research gained insight into the population demographics, strength of athletic identity, level of identity foreclosure, and sense of career maturity using a survey created with the assistance of the St. Cloud State Statistical Consulting and Research Center staff. The survey, as distributed

through Survey Monkey, was an electronic survey that was disseminated to the student-athletes institutional electronic mail account during the 2016 fall semester. The survey instruments that collected date included the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS, Brewer, Van Raalte, & Linder, 1993), the Public Private Athletic Identity Scale survey (PPAIS, Nasco & Webb, 2006), the Identity Foreclosure Scale (OM-EIS, Adams, Shea, & Fitch, 1979), and Career Maturity Form-Revised (CMI; Crites, 1974; CMI-R; Crites & Savickas, 1996, Crites & Savickas, 2011). The resulting data was collected and analyzed to address the research questions for this study.

Research Questions

The following three research questions guided this study:

Research Question 1. *How is the athletic identity of DII female athletes affected by athletic status?*

H1 Senior and junior DII female athletes' athletic identity will be stronger than sophomore and freshman DII female athletes.

H2. DII female athlete's indicating a stronger private athletic identity will have stronger athletic identity than DII female athletes with lower private athletic identity.

H3. DII female athletes attending public institutions of higher education will have a stronger athletic identity than DII female athletes attending private institutions of higher education.

H4. DII female athletes receiving athletic scholarships will have a stronger athletic identity than DII female athletes not receiving athletic scholarships.

H5. DII female athletes participating in revenue sports will have a stronger athletic identity than DII female athletes participating in nonrevenue sports.

Research Question 2. *Is there a correlation between the female student-athlete's strength of athletic identity and identity foreclosure, and does this relationship change throughout their collegiate career.*

H6. DII female athletes with stronger athletic identity will also have stronger identity foreclose than DII female athletes with weaker athletic identity.

Research Question 3. *How do DII female athletes' career maturity evolve through their academic career?*

H7. DII female athletes with stronger athletic identity will have lower levels of career maturity than DII female athletes with lower athletic identity.

H8. As DII female athletes advance grade levels their career maturity will increase.

H9. DII female athletes with stronger athletic identity and low foreclosure will have lower levels of career maturity than DII female athletes with lower athletic identity and high foreclosure.

Assumptions of the Study

The assumptions of the study were as follows:

1. The participants were a member of either the women's basketball, women's soccer, women's softball, women's volleyball sport teams at their respective NSIC institution.
2. The participants respond to the survey questionnaire with self-reflection and honesty.

3. The participants understood each question and context of that question on the questionnaire.
4. The survey was voluntary for the participant to take.
5. The participants knew that their individual answers would be kept confidential.

Delimitations

The delimitations of the study were:

1. The study only examined NCAA Division II female student-athletes.
2. The study only examined student-athletes from the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC).
3. The study only examined female student-athletes from the team sports of: basketball, soccer, softball, volleyball.
4. This study only captured a specific period of time (Fall 2016) and was not a longitudinal study.
5. Due to the timing of the study teams were in championship and non-championship seasons which may have influenced their responses.
6. This study does not have an equal proportion of student-athletes represented from each sport surveyed.
7. This study does not have an equal proportion of student-athletes represented from each institution surveyed.
8. The survey was given electronically and not in-person/group setting.
9. Surveys were disseminated from various sources: Senior Women's Administrator, Head or Assistant Coach, and/or St. Cloud Statistical and Consulting Center.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions are provided to ensure uniformity and understanding of these terms throughout the study. The researcher developed all definitions not accompanied by a citation.

***Athletic Identity*.** The degree of importance, strength, and exclusivity attached to the athletic role that is maintained by the athlete and influenced by their environment as measured by the AIMS Scale (Brewer et al., 1993).

***Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS)*.** Single factor sport specific measure to assess the strength and exclusivity of the respondent identity with in the athletic role (Brewer et al., 1993).

***Classification*.** Refers to the student-athlete's athletic eligibility status.

***Career*.** The course of events which constitutes a life: the sequence of occupations and other life roles which combine to express one's commitment to work in his or her total pattern of self-development (Super, 1990, p. 295).

***Career Development*.** The process of growth through various life stages that an individual undergoes through a lifetime, including the selection of occupations that allow for functioning in a role consistent with a person's self-concept. The implementation and cultivation of the self-concept is a central theme in career development, and is part of an overall development pattern that individuals undergo across a lifetime (Super, 1957).

***Career Decision-Making-Self-efficacy*.** The personal belief in ones' abilities or knowledge (Taylor & Betz, 1983).

***Career Foreclosure*.** The absence of exploration of various occupational alternatives that may potentially constrict personal and vocational identity.

***Career Maturity*.** The way in which an individual successfully completes certain career development tasks that are required according to an individual's current development phase. It is observed as the collection of behaviors necessary to identity, choose, plan and execute career goals (Super, 1990, p. 294).

Division I (DI). The highest-level of 4-year intercollegiate athletics governed by the National College Athletic Association and its' member institutions. DI schools comprise the major athletic powers in the college division, with larger budgets, often more advanced facilities, and more athletic scholarships than DII, DIII or smaller populated school that are competitive in sports. Also provides need based grants, academic scholarships, and employment.

Division II (DII). A 4-year institution level following Division I, Division IAA and listed above Division III athletics, governed by the National College Athletic Association and its' member institutions. DII comprise over 300 NCAA colleges, that offer full, partial, or non-athlete scholarship opportunities (need-based grants, academic aid, and employment) for student-athletes.

Division III (DIII). The lowest level tier of 4-year intercollegiate athletics, the National College Athletic Association and its' member institutions. There are 438 colleges in Division III. Does not offer athletic scholarships, but does offer need based grants, academic scholarships, and employment.

***Eligibility Status*.** The eligibility status levels a student-athlete is classified as during their career as a student-athlete: first year, sophomore, junior, senior, fifth year senior.

***Graduation*.** The decisive measure of college success. It is measured in this study by academic status and passed/completed credit status. This is the same method utilized by the NCAA in determining graduation rates.

***Identity Foreclosure*.** An individual who has failed to thoughtfully investigate other available roles and has made a pre-mature, serious commitment to a socially prescribed role (Miller & Kerr, 2003).

***Non-Revenue Sport*.** Athletic department classification for an institutional sport that has the expectation that the sport will not generate revenue athletic dollars for the institution through: ticket sales, gate receipts, television contracts, or yield additional income through the sport after all the expenses for the sport are paid.

***Objective Measure of Ego-Identity Status (OM-EIS*).** Identity foreclosure measurement instruments that is a self-report alternative to a clinical interview methodology (Adams et al., 1979).

***Revenue Sport*.** Athletic department classification for an institutional sport that has an expectation that the sport will operate at a gain and generate revenue for the institution after all the expenses are paid to operate that sport. Revenue is generated through ticket sales, gate receipts, television contracts, or additional sources that yield income.

***Self*.** Self is emerging out of the mind, the mind as arising and developing out of social interaction, and patterned social interaction as forming the basis of social structure. The mind is the thinking part of self (Mead, 1934).

Self-Concept. How humans define themselves to others and how they develop a concept/view of who they are through both content and structure.

Student-Athlete. Any student who participated in any varsity sport at the NCAA institution.

Organization of the Study

The dissertation was comprised of five chapters. Chapter I introduced the topic, purpose and significance of the study, statement of the problem, description and scope of the study, research questions used to guide the study, listed assumptions, delimitations of the study, as well as provided definition of terms. Chapter II presented a review of relevant literature to the topic of NCAA student-athletes, female student-athletes, self-identification, identity foreclosure, and career maturation research. Chapter III provided the methodology of the research including participants, instrument for data collection, data analysis, human subject's approval, and the procedures and timelines of the study. Chapter IV detailed the survey population, instruments used for data collection, research design, human subjects and approval, procedure and timelines, in conjunction with a synthesis and summary of the data collected. Chapter V presented the discussion and conclusions, study limitations, recommendations for practice, and areas of further research that may be conducted on this topic.

Chapter II: Review of Literature

Introduction

Chapter II provided an extensive review of literature and research related to NCAA student-athletes. The chapter was divided into sections that included: (a) Introduction of the NCAA Student-Athlete, (b) NCAA Female Student-Athlete, (c) Identity Theories, (d) Athletic Identity Theories Relating to Student-Athletes, (e) Role Conflict for the Student-Athlete, (f) Identity Foreclosure as a Student-Athlete, and (g) Career Maturity of the Student-Athlete.

A philosophy of Division II athletics is to "provide personal growth opportunities through academic achievement, learning in high-level athletics competition and development of positive societal attitudes in the service community" (Brown, 2010; NCAA, 2008, para. 1). This philosophy endorses "balanced" self-identification roles in athletics and academics, encourages engagement on campus, as well as participation within the community. Most importantly, the philosophy promotes academic development and preparation towards career readiness. The mission is to provide high academic success that lead to graduation as well as to develop transferable career and life skills that may lead to future employment (Brown, 2010).

The review of literature covered relevant areas of research to provide a sense of the factors, choices, and experiences that shape a National College Athletic Association (NCAA) student-athlete's identity. The review included research on the potential impact of a strong role association on a student-athlete, and how that strong identity role may influence their choices and experiences throughout their career, which may lead to identity foreclosure in

weaker non-role identification areas, career maturity readiness, or hindrances that student-athletes may experience during their collegiate careers.

Previous research on the intercollegiate athlete have been highly focused on two variables: athletic identity (Adler & Adler, 1985, 1991; Blann, 1985; Blustein & Phillips, 1990; Brewer et al., 1993; Brewer, Selby, Linder, & Petitpas, 1999; Griffith & Johnson, 2002; Kennedy & Dimick, 1987; Sowa & Gressard, 1983) and identity foreclosure (Marcia, 1966, 1993; Murphy, Peptipas, & Brewer, 1996).

In assessing a student-athlete's role self-identification commitment, researchers have studied both athletic identity and identity foreclosures in intercollegiate athletes. Previous research explored the relationship between role self-identification and identity foreclosure, and the effect on a student-athlete's development of career maturity (i.e., career readiness) (Blann, 1985; Brown & Hartley, 1998; Good, Brewer, Petitpas, Van Raalte, Mahar, 1993; Heller, 2009; Houle, Brewer & Kluck, 2010; Jordan & Denson, 1990; Kennedy & Dimick, 1987; Lanning, 1982; Nelson, 1983; Pearson & Petitpas, 1990; Petitpas & Champagne, 1988: Riffee & Alexander, 1991; Sowa & Gressard, 1983; Whipple, 2009). The bulk of the research primarily concentrated on NCAA Division DI and DIII, a single gender (male), and student athletes from two sports (i.e., men's basketball and football) in regard to self-identification, identity foreclosure, and career maturity (Adler & Adler, 1985, 1987, 1991; Ahlgren, 2001; Baillie & Danish, 1992; Brewer et al., 1993; Brown & Hartley, 1998; Good et al., 1993; Griffith & Johnson, 2002; Hughes, 2005; Kennedy & Dimick, 1987; Killeya-Jones, 2005; Murphy et al., 1996; Smallman & Sowa, 1996).

This review of literature focused on studies of NCAA student-athletes and the complexity of role self-identification as a student-athlete. It also discussed the student-athlete's task of balancing dual roles, not allowing one role to become more significant than the other, so that identity foreclosure does not occur in the weaker role. Also discussed was the link between identity foreclosure and choices that are made by a student-athlete that hinders or develops the student-athlete for life after college (career maturity). The analysis examined the overall relationship between role-self-identification, identity foreclosure, and career maturity as it pertains to a NCAA student-athlete. The review explored literature related of all NCAA Division levels, including both genders and demographic and psychosocial measures that may influence the student-athlete's role self-identification preference, which may result in identity foreclosure and lead to a lack of career maturity development skills.

This literature review also explored various theories on role self-identification identity foreclosure and career maturity, and how those theories related to the development of student-athletes throughout their collegiate career. Finally, the literature review discussed the research in regard to student-athlete programming and interventions and the influence these factors may have in working with students to balance their dual identities and provide career readiness.

Although previous studies explored DI and DIII female student-athletes, there was very limited research specifically focused on demographic and psychosocial variables of intercollegiate female student-athletes. Furthermore, the literature lacked information on Division II team sport female student-athlete in regard to role self-identification, identity

foreclosure, and career readiness. The goal of this review of literature was to reveal greater insight into student-athletes. The study will address the gap of literature focusing on the Division II student-athlete. Specifically, this study focused on the female athlete at the DII level and expand upon the current understanding of female student-athlete role identity, career maturity, and identity foreclosure.

Introduction of NCAA Student-Athletes

There are three institutional classifications within the NCAA. A Division I institution must offer seven sports for both men and women (or six male/eight female sports). Each gender must participate in all three sporting seasons (fall, winter, spring). NCAA DI institutions must meet the minimum athletic scholarships for each sponsored sport and the DI football teams must meet attendance requirements of 20,000 fans per game. DI athletes can be heavily recruited to the institution due to their athletic skills, with financial aid packages primarily consisting of athletic scholarship aid ("NCAA Divisional Differences," n.d.).

Division II must offer five sports for both genders (or four male/six female sports) with a minimum of two team sports for each gender. Each gender sport must have a championship sport option in all three sporting seasons sponsored by the NCAA. Each sport has maximum scholarship opportunities per sport, but no minimum. Most students create a financial aid package with a combination of athletic scholarships, academic awards, and other related awards and grants. Division II student-athletes often are recruited to participate on the athletic team, although some student-athletes do participate as walk-on/non-scholarship student-athletes (NCAA Divisional Differences," n.d.).

Division III must offer five sports for both genders (or four male/six female sports) with a minimum of two sports per gender. Student-athletes are non-scholarship student athletes that are awarded academic financial aid packages for attendance and participation on the athletic programs. This study focused on the NCAA DII student-athlete that participate in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference ("NCAA Divisional Differences," n.d.).

Students often choose DII for their emphasis on: regionalization (location of the institution in relationship to the individuals hometown), lower cost of attendance, low student-to-teacher ratios, accredited academic programs, the championship opportunities for student-athletes (more than other divisions), the amount of time allocated/regulated between academic/athletic obligations, and the opportunity for full, partial, or limited athletic scholarships in addition to academic aid to complete the students financial aid package (Moltz, 2009).

The development of an athlete's self-identification to a sports role may often be influenced by experiences, interpersonal relationships, and the consolidation of one's involvement in sports activity (Cornelius, 1995). Student-athletes must balance academic requirements, maintain physical conditioning, as well as accept a NCAA opposed time limit on their length of collegiate eligibility (Baillie & Danish, 1992; Parham, 1993).

Intercollegiate athletes face developmental tasks similar to their non-athlete peers, as well as having to tackle "very unique personal, academic, and athletic challenges specifically related to their role as student-athletes" (Figler & Figler, 1984; Kissinger & Miller, 2009, p. 1). These factors have led researchers to characterize student-athletes as a distinct subpopulation of college students (Ferrante, Etzel, & Lantz, 1996; Figler & Figlr, 1984).

Student-athletes have a very structured lifestyle due to the competitive, full-time endeavor that is required to be a highly successful student-athlete (Ferrante et al., 1996). However, students-athletes are like their peers in that they develop both cognitive and psychosocial development tasks during their collegiate experience (Carodine, Almond, & Gratto, 2001).

A student-athlete's participation on an athletic team may make them a more recognized individual on campus. Additionally, recognition can be created by: family members, peers, instructors, support staff, and coaches. Top athletes on campus are also promoted heavily by the institution, the conference, or through national social media and television. Athletes can often be praised or criticized by individuals they have never met through external recognition (Thielen, 1996).

Student-athletes are held accountable to both institutional and NCAA rules that outline eligibility status and their financial income perimeters during their time of being a student-athlete (Ferrante et al., 1996). Athletic administrations, the sport coach, and the institution itself may assist in the validating the "athlete" role for their own financial windfall. Throughout the last several decades, priorities in Higher Education, and more specifically the governance of institutional athletics, have shifted (Knight Foundation Commission Report, 1991). The institutional perception of the role of athletes and their role in financial assisting the institution may also cause a more dominant athletic identity. Identification in a single role may limit the personal and social experiences of the individual (Brewer et al., 1993). A high level of identification in the athlete's role may lead to an over involvement in sport. This high level of involvement may influence the courses a student may enroll in for their major due to time requirements of participating in an intercollegiate sport. Student-athletes may sacrifice

academic course options to participate in collegiate athletics. By making these choices, the student-athlete may sacrifice future career opportunities.

Being an athlete carries a powerful sense of self and community (Adler & Adler, 1991). Intercollegiate athletics participation has a profound power to enhance self-esteem (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Yet, a student-athlete must learn to balance an equally confident academic self-esteem, when praise and recognition is more prevalent in the athletic role (Killeya-Jones, 2005). Due to the variety of stressors (requirements) a student-athlete may face during their career (athletics, academics, and social realms) it can be a difficult process for a student-athlete to have a balanced identity and balanced success both on and off the court (Cieslak, 2004; Cornelius, 1995; Lally & Kerr, 2005).

The requirement to be a successful NCAA athlete, as well as the natural clique that is formed by a team can result in isolation which may have a negative impact on a student-athlete's ability to integrate into both the social and academic climate on campus (Hyatt, 2003). "Loneliness affects academic and athletic performance, poor athletic performance affects academic performance, and so on" (Hurley & Cunningham, 1984, p. 55). The identity balance achieved through role salience necessitates that these students learn self-regulation and self-management skills in order to perform both academic and athletic roles effectively (Adler & Adler, 1987).

Since Title IX, female athletes, and female sports, have seen a greater commitment by institutions to provide the same experience for female student-athletes as the male student-athletes. A commitment to academics, graduation, and future employment may be a larger

part of the female student-athlete's identity, due to the remote chance of professional opportunities within their sport.

The NCAA student-athlete role within the higher education institution has been under review the past several years due to recent litigation between the NCAA and former high-profile student-athletes (Stripling, 2015; Thomason, 2015; Wolverton, 2016a). An extensive 2016 NCAA survey of 44,000 D1 athletes and 3,000 head coaches asked their view on how much time athletes should spend on their sport, the best way to account for their hours, and how teams' off-season activities should be regulated (NCAA, 2016).

This survey revealed that coaches and administrators supported a reduced athletic commitment level following their primary season as well as a willingness to allow athletes to participate in educational or career-development activities (NCAA, 2016; Wolverton, 2016b). There is a continued focus on the collegiate careers of student-athletes in higher education. While this focus has been historically centered on academic performance, recent literature reports a growing concern on the overall experience of the student-athlete in the higher education setting.

NCAA Female Student-Athlete

Blinde and Greendorfer's (1992) synthesized qualitative and quantitative data research that included five separate studies that investigated female student-athletes. Their results identified four types of conflict that female student-athletes encounter through their participation in intercollegiate athletics: *role conflict* (meeting expectations of both student and athlete); *role strain* (distress associated with meeting the expectations of others such as parents, coaches, teachers); *value alienation* (struggling to integrate sports-related and

personal values); and *exploitation* (giving priority to athletic responsibility so inadequate time and effort are given to student or personal responsibilities). Blinde and Greendorfer (1992) suggested that the changing context and emphases of college sport after the passing of Title IX legislation might have exposed female athletes to different circumstances, expectations, and experiences. Their experiences are found to be similar to that of a male athlete in these studies, even without the professional opportunities available to them post-graduation as compared to the opportunities of their male counterparts.

Once a student-athlete's eligibility has been exhausted student-athletes face "athletic retirement" and must transition to a new life and career goals beyond athletic participation (Chatrand & Lent, 1987). The vast majority of student-athletes will end their collegiate career without the opportunity to be a professional in their sport. The NCAA reported in 2014 that only a small percentage of student-athletes move on to professional sports post-graduation. A female student-athletes largest opportunity to play a professional sport occurs in women's basketball where 4.7% collegiate participants move on to professional status (NCAA, 2014, para 3). The transition away from athletics may be difficult when the student-athlete has a high degree of personal identity derived from their sports role (Blinde, Taub, & Han, 1993; Brown, 2014; Ogilvie & Howe, 1982), and the loss of being able to identify as an athlete may signal a critical life event.

The latest 2014 NCAA Graduation Success Rate (GSR) report, using the Academic Success Rate (ASR) criteria, indicated that DI female student athletes had a ASR of 84% (males 82%) while DII female student-athletes had a 83% Academic Success Rate (males 64%) (NCAA, 2014a). DII lower rates (when compared to DI) are potentially lower due to

institutions being located in smaller, rural communities or in urban areas, and their academic missions cater to families that may not have a long history of higher education attendance (NCAA, 2010).

In 2013, the NCAA published that a majority of NCAA student-athletes (DI: 62% of women and 53% of men, DII: 61% women and 53% men) very strongly identified as both students and athletes (NCAA, 2014a). This report drew the conclusion that "it is very clear that a student-athlete's identity does not refer to a single continuum with a high identity student at one end and high identity as an athlete at the other. Rather these identifications occur independently and non-exclusive" ("Do NCAA Student-Athletes view themselves as student or athletes," 2013). This report also indicated that NCAA research has shown academic outcome (grades, graduation, and eventual degree attainment) is strongly related to identity as a student while in college. The 2010 NCAA GOALS report indicated the DII female student-athletes reported higher mean academic identities than did their counterparts, which may result in their higher graduation rate.

In this NCAA quantitative research, female student-athletes were found to be more strongly connected with both their roles: they felt just as strong about their identification as a student as they did about being an athlete (NCAA, 2013, para. 4). Female athletes also were found to achieve a higher graduation rate than their male counterparts. However, research has indicated that DII female student-athletes are graduating at a lower rate when compared to their DI and DIII peers. There has been no follow-up research to indicate if this outcome is due to role self-identification as a student-athlete, or due to the limited academic programs offered to DII athletes when compared to their DI counterparts, or financial aid costs due to

scholarship limitations at the DII level, and/or limited support staff to guide the student-athlete in her career maturity. One additional factor may be the institutional admission requirements that may be less stringent than that of a DI or DIII institution admissions academic requirements.

Identity Theories

Mead (1934) proposed that a person's identity was developed through a dynamic process of social interaction and reflexivity. The individual perception of "I" and "me" is in response to how one thinks ones' group perceives oneself (i.e., I am a college athlete).

Erikson (1956) identified an important goal stage in adolescence in which the individual forms a coherent identity to avoid identity confusion (Bullock & Lukenhaus, 1990). Erikson described a person's identity as multidimensional and included such elements as: physical and sexual identity, religious beliefs, and occupational goals (Kroger, 2007). Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial development, as well as his central concept of ego identity, was formed within the matrix of psychoanalytic theory. Erikson (1968) defined *ego identity* as both a conscious sense of individual uniqueness as well as a psychosocial sense of well-being (Kroger, 2007). "[Ego identity's] most obvious concomitants are feeling of being at home in one's body, a sense of 'knowing where one is going'; and an inner assuredness of anticipated recognition for those who count" (Erickson, 1968, p. 165 as found in Kroger, 2007).

Erikson's research was based on two issues that confronted the adolescent in their growth stages: the choice of an occupation and the formation of an ideology (Erickson, 1968).

> Forming a personally and socially relevant *ideology* involves, again [integration] …significant identifications and consistent roles. Any significant change in

> personality structure, even if positive, elicits anxiety that must be controlled in order to permit effective functioning in the world. (p. 116)

Erikson's research concluded that a commitment to identity is developed by a period of reflection through trial and error experiences. It is through this process that past patterns are examined, possibly discarded, and new identities are integrated into a new identity configuration (Erikson, 1968).

Marcia (1966, 1993) followed up on Erikson's work and hypothesized identity development involving two steps: 1) the adolescent must break away from childhood beliefs to explore alternatives for identity in a particular area, and 2) adolescents must make a commitment to a chosen individual identity. Based on Erikson's work, Marcia proposed that identity formation had two criteria: *exploration* (originally defined as "crisis"; Marcia, 1966) and *commitment*. *Exploration* was defined by the process where evaluations occurred or individuals tried out various roles and life plans. A "*crisis*" refers to the experience and knowledge needed to make a *commitment* (Marcia, 1966).

Marcia (1966) identified four "Identity Status" definitions. These definitions of status identity development were: 1) *Identity Diffusion* (identifies those that have neither explored or made a commitment across life defining areas-often due to not having experienced an identity crisis); 2) *Identity Foreclosure* (when a commitment is made without exploring alternatives); 3) *Identity Moratorium* (status of individuals who are in the midst of a crisis, whose *commitments* are either absent or are only vaguely defined, but who are actively exploring alternatives); and 4) *Identity Achievement* (status of individuals who have typically experienced a crisis, undergone identity explorations, and made commitments that caused individual to have internal locus of self-definition).

Marcia's (1966) research indicated that the core idea was that one's sense of identity was determined largely by the choices and commitments made regarding certain personal and social traits. The two areas of *exploration* and c*ommitment* were based on an individual's occupation and ideology, which also included the individual's views of religion and political positions. Kroger (2007) identified that females moved through Identity Moratorium and Identity Achievement earlier in adolescents than males. However, there is limited research in this area. Miller and Kerr (2003) conducted a qualitative study using male and female senior Canadian athletes that participated in both team and individual sports. Their results indicated higher athletic role identity and the investment in that role early in their college experience, which concurrently limited their exploration of the student role (Miller & Kerr, 2003).

Marcia (1966) found that a person with a less well-developed identity is not able to define their personal strengths and weakness and does not have a well-articulated sense of self. Marcia's identification status found that identities are formed early in adolescence through experiences and commitments which allows for a greater opportunity to develop that identity (Marcia, 1966). This identification begins in childhood and continues to develop into the adult years (Brown & Hartley, 1998; Nasco & Webb, 2006; Ogilive & Howe, 1982). Females and males may encounter different social expectations in those formative years that may influence their collegiate athletic identities (Simons, Van Rheenen, & Covington, 1999).

Kroger's (2007) gender identity research was based on both Erickson's and Marcia' previous theories. Kroger's (2007) extensive review of research explored female's identity and questions of female identity structure, domain salience, or development process. Kroger found that "gender differences were not apparent in the identity structures used by late

adolescents and adults to find meaningful psychosocial roles and values" (Kroger, 2007, p. 756). While identity domains may hold different degrees of importance, women were more likely to explore the decision-making process with regard to family and career priorities than men. This research was significant as it emphasized the lack of major difference in the modes by which the genders approached key identity-defining issues (Kroger, 2007). It also found that women use similar psychological structures to address key identity issues as they transition from one identity stage to another. This research does indicate that how women use relationships in the process of self-definition and socialization may influence role self-identification. As it relates to collegiate athletics, it may be beneficial to understand these key gender identity concepts, timing, and the significance of relationships in that process for the female student athlete.

Current research by Burke et al. (2003) may influence future student-athlete investigations. Their research focused on original identity theory work focused multiple identities that an individual has and how those identities are "tied into the complexities of the social structure(s) in which the individual is embedded". Burke et al. (2003) recent literature supports that multi-identities can exist in various *commitment* levels similar to the *commitment* status in Marcia' work (1966). The research of Burke et al. (2003) is based on the concept of collective identity as a cultural emergent from the interaction of a particular social group.

Tajfel and Turner (1986) originated the idea that individuals are considered to have multiple group identities that may shift in salience depending on features of the intergroup context, which is contrast to Erickson's and Marcia' identity theories. Burke (2003) expanded

upon this multiple identity concepts by addressing *commitment* as being the strength of the tie between the individual and the identity. Burke (2003) found two factors determine the individual's overall commitment level: emotional attachment and number of persons to which one is tied (i.e., teammates, classmates, families). The relationship between multiple identities is an issue of the link between social structure and the individual. Burke suggested that the internal focus attends to issues and it is how the multiple identities (that an individual has) function together within the self, or with overall self-verification (2003). The strength of these commitments will influence the individual to "maintain congruence between the meanings in their identity standards and self-relevant meanings in the situation" (Burke & Reitzes, 1991, p. 240).

Burke and Stets (2009) introduced identity theory in conjunction with social theory to examine dual role identities. Identity theory wants to categorize, or classify, or name itself in a particular way in relation to other social categories or classifications (i.e., student or athlete) then an identity can be formed (Burke & Stets, 2009). Social identity is a person's knowledge that he or she belongs to a social category or group (Abrams & Hogg, 1988). "Those in a social group often view things the same as others in the group, in contrast, role identity means acting to fulfill the expectations of the role, coordinating and negotiating interaction with role partners, and manipulating the environment to control the resources for which the role has responsibility" (Burke & Stets, 2009, p. 4). Often a social identity is formed by how people come to see themselves as members of one group in comparison with another. Those that are similar in the category are labeled as a group. Burke and Stets (2009) indicated the distinction between social identity and role identity: "the basis of social identity is in the uniformity of

perception and action among group members, while the basis of role identity resides in the difference in perception and action that accompany a role as it relates to counter-roles" (p. 4).

The research contradicts on whether there is identity hierarchy based on non-sequential stages from childhood through adulthood, or if there can be a successful balance of identities through self-identification and commitment. Burke and Stets (2009) suggest that both experiences and commitments from these identities, as well as this identity formation is done primarily in the adolescent's stage, with expansion upon those identities in the young adult stage. These theories may be relevant to the exploration of the collegiate student from their role self-identification upon arrival at the university and how that role self-identification may change through various experiences commitments as they break away from the adolescent stage and explore adulthood.

Athletic Identity Theories Relating to Student-Athletes

As a collegiate athlete, the individual has been socialized to identify themselves in a dual role of being both a student and an athlete (Marx, Huffmon, & Doyle, 2008; Miller & Kerr, 2003). The NCAA terminology of "student-athlete" was purposely introduced into all NCAA policy language to create awareness of that dual identity of a collegiate student-athlete. Brewer et al. (1993) originated the concept that athletic identity consisted of the cognitive, affective, behavioral, and social concomitants of identifying with the athletic role. Athletic performance often has central meaning to elite athletes because it represents a large portion of their self-identities (Balague, 1999). The amount of time, effort, and identity an athlete chooses to exert toward their chosen self-identity (student and/or an athlete identity) has an underlying effect on the behaviors they choose to associate with that identity (Stryker

& Serpe, 1994). While the NCAA does have a time management policy on athletic countable hours in each day/week (4-hours per day/20-hours per week), often the time required for participation can be demanding and require additional pre-or post-participation time in addition to the scheduled time. This can limit the amount of exposure an individual may have to alternate social and academic experiences on campus.

Brewer et al. (1993) originally defined athletic identity as "…the degree to which an individual identifies with the athletic role" (p. 27). Brewer et al. (1993) also defined athletic identity as "…the strength and exclusivity of an individual's identification with the athletic role and looks to others (family members, peers, classmates, coaches) for acknowledgement of that role" (p. 2). Research has indicated that athletic identity holds a distinctive position in relationship to other identities as athletes have strong identification to their athletic roles. (Adler & Adler, 1985, 1987; Balague, 1999; Brewer & Cornelius, 2001; Cornelius, 1995; Lally & Kerr, 2005; Murphy et al. 1996). Cieslak (2004) expanded on athletic identity as "the degree of importance, strength, and exclusivity attached to the athletic role that is maintained by the athlete and influences their environment" (p. 39).

Research studies on student-athletes concluded that an individual's athletic identity is one dimension of their psychological self-concepts and how the individual perceives oneself in a social setting (Brewer & Cornelius, 2001; Brewer et al., 1999; Markus, 1977). These studies have found that a student-athlete's self-concept is determined by their own perception (self-awareness) of themselves and may be influenced by interactions with significant others, reinforcements, and acknowledgements for one's own behavior (Marsh & Shavelson, 1985).

This is reflective of Erikson's (1968) identity theory that *ego identity* is an individual's uniqueness and that there is a commitment to an identity that has been established through experiences. A student-athlete may go through various experiences in college that establish a commitment to an identity that the individual is most comfortable in as they interact with their peers, family, professors, and coaches. Following Marcia's (1966) theory, student-athletes come to their identity through *exploration* and *commitment*. Throughout the course of a student-athlete's career they may experience "crisis" and various roles to influence their role self-identification (Danish, Petitpas, & Hale, 1993; Murphy et al., 1996). Marcia's *Identity Achievement* status may assist in the determining of the role based of off an athlete's success on the court, or the student's success in the classroom.

Often the praise or recognition a student-athlete receives for their athletic or academic abilities may influence their core identity. Stryker and Serpe's (1994) research on NCAA student-athletes indicated that student-athletes focused more on the athletic role but the strength of the role diminished the closer to graduation. Miller and Kerr's (2003) research found that both genders had the same early emphasize in the athletic role (*Identity Achievement* stage), but that role later declined as the athlete moved towards graduation. Brewer et al. (1993) also concluded that athletic identity was negatively correlated with age, hypothesizing that this occurred due to a change of interests and investments that came with maturity. Miller and Kerr's (2003) research concluded this same finding as they focused on those specific interests that alter the change in role self-identification in a student-athlete. Settles, Sellers, and Damas (2002) investigated 200 DI athletes through the use of a questionnaire that measured Athletic Identity Measure (AIMS: Brewer et al., 1993), the Self-

Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1979), and Role Conflict (Seller & Damas Jr., 2002). This survey explored the concept of identity perception by the student-athlete. If the individuals perceived themselves with equal role identity as both an athlete and a student, then the individual reported a higher level of psychological well-being. Self-knowledge of the individual's role provides a greater well-being for the student-athlete if they are able to separate the roles and focus on the tasks and demands of each role. The ability to change from one identity to the next will depend on the social structure in which the interaction occurs. If that structure is rigid and closed, limits and constraints will be placed on the development of that identity (Stryker, 1968; Stryker & Burke, 2000). If the time demands of being a student-athlete significantly limit additional social and academic opportunities that may prohibit the development of an individual's "student identity."

Brewer et al. (1993) examined both male and female DI student-athletes through the use of the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS; Brewer et al., 1993) and reported that females did have lower athletic identity scores than their male peers. The survey found that the males had more exclusive identification with their athletic role and role self-identification with their peers, family, instructors, coaches, etc. Brewer et al. (1993, p. 57) stated, "that a high identity may prove to be beneficial to an athlete (e.g., Hercules' muscle), but may also be a liability (e.g., Achilles' heel)".

Simons et al. (1999) reported "DI student-athletes often come to the university with strong athletic ability and commitment due to the development of their athletic skills" and the praise they have received for their skills as an adolescent (p. 158). Simons et al. (1999) surveyed over 361 DI student-athletes and found that females and non-revenue athletes of

both genders had a higher level of academic commitment than their male and revenue counterparts.

The research tends to indicate that female student-athletes have developed a stronger commitment to the academic role upon entering college, potentially due to the lack of extrinsic recognition early and during their collegiate careers as compared to their male counterpart (Adler & Adler, 1991, Brown & Hartley, 1998; Lally & Kerr, 2005; Simons et al., 1999). However, the recent NCAA research does provide insight into validating the female student-athlete's commitment to both athletic and academic roles. Continued research on the Division II female athlete could provide additional awareness of the specific timing of role self-identification status (from enrollment to graduation) and if there is a change in the investment level or social structure change (Freshmen-Senior) that alters the role self-identification status. As a female student-athlete navigates role self-identification they also may encounter role conflict due to the societal expectations of a female athlete.

Role Conflict for the Student-Athlete

Research has indicated that there are consequences when the demands of a particular role make it difficult for an individual to perform or meet the demands of another role (Settles et al., 2002). Settles et al. (2002) stated that "role conflict is when a particular role and the demands of that role, make it difficult for an individual to perform or meet the demands of another role, and the consequence or role conflict may vary within each individual" (p. 574). Settles et al. (2002) reported that athletes who separate or "compartmentalize" their role as an athlete from their student role report higher levels of psychological well-being compared to student-athletes who have a difficult time balancing the dual roles. Settles et al. (2002) also

reported that female college students reported higher levels of stress and depression than their male peers, with a slight tendency towards greater role separation. Pronin, Steele, and Ross (2003) indicated that this may suggest that female student-athletes are more likely to navigate the balance between the two roles by cognitively isolating and dividing one identity from the other.

Linville (1985) found that, "two persons with similar roles may differ in the way they cognitively organize the relationship among roles thus processing the same self-relevant information in different ways" (p. 98). Linville (1985) also stated that, "those that separate their social role identities may be thought of as more complex in terms of their self-organization those who combine their role identities" (Settles et al., 2002, p. 576). A student-athlete is balancing multiple social roles throughout their career. If a student-athlete identifies more strongly with the athletic role their self-esteem and internal motivations are more likely to be affected by their athletic performance (Harter, 1990; Rosenburg, 1979). The more important a single role identity is to an individual, the more likely that it will have a psychological effect on trying to maintain that role significance over other roles (Stryker & Serpe, 1994).

In a study by Eldridge (1983), it was noted that individuals attribute a great deal of psychological significance to their involvement in sport, and this investment defines their identity. As Stryker and Burke (2000) suggested, if the structure is rigid and closed due to mandatory requirements, constraints will be place on the development of self-identity and peer relationships that can be developed due to the time expectations of being a student-athlete.

Roles have been defined as the "behavioral expectations that are associated with, and emerge from, identified positions in social structure" (Coakley, 2004, p. 229). Coakley's (2004) research indicated two major methods of managing role conflict as a student-athlete: either merge it into a single role or compartmentalize each role. Settles et al. (2002) indicated that if an individual is balancing two roles and both roles are important, then the individual may attempt to negotiate the competing roles, which may be difficult and cause role conflict.

In 1985, the first national study that examined the conflicting demands of being both a student and a collegiate athlete was sponsored by the Center for Athletes Rights and Education (CARE) (Adler & Adler, 1985). The study focused on a national sample of male and female basketball players from NCAA DI, DII, and DIII levels. The study included a number of questions that addressed the issue of role conflict. The study noted that there was a difference in gender perspective of role conflict as males were more likely than females to feel pressured by their coaches to be an athlete first and a student second (Adler & Adler, 1985).

Adler and Adler (1985) had a pioneering longitudinal qualitative study examining athletic identity and role conflict of Division I men's basketball players. Adler and Adler (1985) found that while athletes entered the university feeling confident about their academic and career possibilities, this attitude changed by the end of the first academic term. This change was due to the intense pressure and demands of being a DI college student-athlete. As the athletic role began to dominate, Adler and Adler termed that phase as "role engulfment" after following DI basketball players throughout their careers (1985). Adler and Adler's (1987) study revealed that as student-athletes advance in their academic standing, they began

to make a series of practical modifications in their academic attitudes and career goals, causing identity foreclosure and influencing their career maturity. Over half of the student-athletes that had initially enrolled in professional programs ended up changing their majors to more feasible ones, or enrolling in majors that required bare minimums to be eligible. Student-athletes began to identify more highly in their role as an athlete which results in a re-organization of their identity hierarchy. The athletes grew closer to those that validated their athletic role. While the limitations of the study were that it only focused on one group of student-athletes, at one university, and of one gender; this study was the foundation for future research on student-athlete athletic identity, role self-identification, identity foreclosure, and career maturity studies.

In 1987, shortly after the release of the Adler and Adler's (1985) study, the NCAA commissioned an independent study by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) to compare student-athletes to non-student athletes through the administration of a survey (Sack & Staurowsky, 1998). The NCAA wanted to understand more about the dual identity of the student-athlete and the role conflict issues they may face. The survey compared 4,083 student-athletes with general studies non-athlete students.

The results of the survey indicated that student-athletes were more likely to encounter hindrances to obtaining a quality education compared with non-athlete student due to athletic participation demands (NCAA, 2010). Past literature indicates that student-athletes who participate in "revenue generating sports" (usually operationalized as men's basketball and football) consistently identify this as an issue (Haslerig & Navarro, 2015). Athletes indicated that being involved in a sport didn't allow as much time for class preparation, studying for

exams, or other opportunities to earn the grade they felt they were capable of getting. Student-athletes indicated they were missing twice as many classes as their non-athlete counterparts. "When compared to students intensely involved in other extracurricular activities, Division I athletes found that sports participation made it harder to take on leadership responsibility, develop new skills and abilities, and learn about themselves" (Sack & Staurowsky, 1998, p. 103). Sack and Staurowasky (1998) noted, "in other words, the women and men in the study reported that being an athlete made it harder to experience the personal growth and discovery that an undergraduate education is supposed to encourage" (p. 103).

Stein and Hoffman (1978) studied 12 intercollegiate male athletes and 12 male non-athletes. Their research results expanded upon Adler and Adler's (1991) study as they also found that most athletes felt the demands of their athletic role limited them from exploring other opportunities and interests that a traditional student would experience in their collegiate career. The obligations of a student-athlete lifestyle forced many individuals into role conflict and limited their ability to investigate other identities.

Research by Good et al. (1993) also supported the findings of previous findings that indicated that intercollegiate athletes might commit to the athlete role without exploring alternative roles or identities. Role conflict may decrease the academic and career developmental opportunities of the collegiate athlete (Figler & Figler, 1984). Expanding to female athletes, both Good et al. (1993) and Petipas (1978) concluded that female student-athletes' identify themselves with the athlete role in a similar fashion. The survey concluded that both the academic and athletic roles appeared to be highly central identities for the student-athlete. The researchers from both studies inferred that the longer the student-athlete

was involved with the sport, the greater level of role interference as both academics and athletics were found to require time and involvement.

These studies indicated that student-athletes might often suffer role conflict trying to balance their dual identities, which in turn may inversely cause identity foreclosure and inhibit the development of career maturity. While each student-athlete may handle their dual roles different, it is important to be aware of the internal conflict that a student-athlete might be dealing and the potential for that conflict to lead to future identity foreclosure.

Identity Foreclosure as a Student-Athlete

It has been suggested that the athletic environment and time constraints of being a student-athlete does not allow the student-athlete the opportunity to participate in various career exploration activities due to the fact that they have numerous demands already placed on them (Murphy et al., 1996). Marcia, Waterman, Matteson, Arche, and Orlofsky (1993) conducted a quantitative study that concluded that identity development requires an individual to explore various roles and behaviors. Following that exploration period, the individual will commit to the occupational and ideological options that illustrate an individual's values, needs, interests, and skills (Murphy et al., 1996). Kroger (2007) found that identity is a powerful construct as it guides life paths and decisions.

Identity foreclosure, as defined by Marcia (1966), occurs when "individuals prematurely make a firm commitment to an occupation or ideology" (p. 558). Marcia stated that individuals that are foreclosed have not allowed for exploration of their internal needs and values; instead they concede to the demands of their environment and adopt that social role identity. Additional research has found evidence of identity foreclosure among athletes,

including a lack of autonomy, low moral development, and limited career plans (Blann, 1985; Kenney & Dimick, 1987; Murphy et al., 1996; Rivas, 2002; Shaffer & Zalewski, 2011; Sowa & Gressred, 1983; Whipple, 2009). Following up on Murphy et al.'s (1996) study, Chartrand and Lent (1987) and Nelson (1983) have suggested that "the physical and psychological demands of collegiate athletes, coupled with the restrictiveness of athletic system, may isolate athletes mainstream college activities, restrict their opportunities for exploratory behavior, and promote identity foreclosure" (Petitpas & Champagne, 1988, p. 240).

In an examination of college students, Good et al. (1993) reported that identity foreclosure and athletic identity increased with the level (FY-SY years) of sports participation, with identity foreclosure being significantly lower for upper-class students than for lower-class students among non-athletes. The athlete population surveyed were from DII and DIII institutions with n = 71 females and n = 95 males using the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (OM-EIS; Adams, Bennion, & Huh, 1989) scale and the AIMS (AIMS: Brewer et al., 1993) measurement scale. Sports participation was found to have an influence on athletic identity and foreclosure. However, the research found no significant difference between male and female athletes in their athletic identity and identity foreclosure.

A follow up study by Murphy et al. (1996) investigated the difference in identity foreclosure, athletic identity, and career maturity as a function of gender, playing status, and sport participated in. The study found that identity foreclosure and athletic identity were both inversely related to career maturity (Murphy et al., 1996, p. 242). This study found a negative relationship between athletic identity, identity foreclosure, and realistic career expectations, which indicates that the athlete role assigned a degree of importance compared to other

activities and roles. Choices were driven by athletic-related ties to events, friends, and relationships.

Murphy et al. (1996) and Whipple (2009) revealed a negative relationship between foreclosed identity and career maturity. These two studies indicated that as one's level of foreclosed identity increased they are more likely to have a lower level of career maturity. In contrast, Dailey (1995) and Rivas (2002) did not find a relationship between the two concepts.

Quantitative research that investigated multiple demographic and physiological variables indicates that there is a connection between role self-identification, identity foreclosure, and the influence it has on career maturity (McPherson, 1980; Murphy et al., 1996; Whipple, 2009). The factors predicting that relationship (whether it is high or low) were (but not limited to): year in school, years of participation, gender, participation demands, and mother/father education status. These variables on the AIMS (Brewer et al., 1999) have been used in multiple research studies to identify potential correlations with numerous factors that the research wanted to measure.

There is a need for additional research using the AIMS scale in regard to the Division II athlete as both demographic and psychosocial measures of a DII student-athlete may differ from peers at the other NCAA levels. These differences may influence the career readiness path of Division II athletes compared to their other Division peers.

Career Maturity of the Student-Athlete

Since the mid-1970s researchers have studied the psychosocial development of college student-athletes based upon development theories that provide the framework to examine psychosocial and career development (Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Crites, 1974;

Super, 1957, 1990; Super & Jordan, 1973). Careers maturity, or vocational guidance, is based on occupational decision-making. Crites (1974) identified the relationship between career maturity and education. Career maturity is the process by which an adolescent chooses a career based upon a desire to be grown up (*Fantasy* stage), then a period in which choices are based successively upon a consideration of interests, capacities, and values (*Tentative*), and finally the period of narrowing down choices of feasible career options until one is specified and implemented (*Realistic*) (Crites, 1974). Crites (1974) research found that the career decision-making developmental process is generally *irreversible.* The research found that individuals had a difficult time making new choices as individuals acted more strongly towards choices that were more common to them in their development process. As student-athletes deal with the decision-making process of their future occupational choice, their vocational maturity may be influenced by the individual's behavior (choices/commitments) for coping with the developmental tasks considered appropriate for the individual and his/her age/life stage (Ginzberg, 1951). As a student-athlete plans their major/minor academic plan toward graduation, the class schedule may be influenced by participation on an athletic team and the requirements to be a team member. To measure career maturity and career education of the student-athlete the Career Maturity Inventory-Revised (CMI: Crites, 1974; Crites & Savickas, 2011) has been the primary assessment tool.

Early work examined whether DI student-athletes and non-athletes differ in their psychosocial development and/or their commitment to their career path (Blann, 1985; Sowa & Gressard, 1983). Super (1957) integrated developmental theory with the task of occupational choice, proposing that career planning occurs in five stages during the lifespan. Crites (1974)

stressed the centrality of identity development to mature career planning. To do this, the individual must actively engage in self-exploration and occupational preferences as well as available career options. Chickering and Reisser (1993) felt that developing strong vocational purpose requires concentrated introspection and individual assessment, which is done through identity development. Studies by Adler and Adler (1985, 1887), Brewer et al. (1993) indicated that intercollegiate athletes develop strong athletic identities. Due to poor identity development, along with limited role experimentation, student-athlete career maturity process may be delayed.

Sowa and Gressard (1983) found that NCAA DI student-athletes scored significantly lower than their non-student athlete counterparts with regard to having educational plans, career plans, and mature relationships with peers. By surveying DI student-athletes, Murphy et al. (1996) examined the relationship between athletic identity and career maturity. Murphy et al. (1996) found that 65% of the sample of the NCAA I male and female student-athletes scored below the 25th percentile on the Career Maturity Inventory (CMI; Crites, 1974) when compared to high school seniors. However, this study did indicate that women in the sample had significantly higher career maturity scores than men. Smallman and Sowa (1996) also suggested that student-athletes competing at the DI level were less career mature than non-athletes.

Kornspan's (2014) comprehensive review of literature of career maturity of college students found that a majority of the studies (n = 29; 80.6%) were descriptive studies that used a survey instrument to assess the career maturity of a sample of collegiate student athletes. Only a few studies (n = 7; 19.4%) utilized an experimental intervention aimed at

determining if a career education intervention enhanced the career maturity of college student-athletes. Kornspan's review of career maturity studies, from the mid-1970s to the present, found that the most common instruments used to assess career maturity were the Career Maturity Inventory (CMI; n = 22; 61.1%), the Career Development Inventory (CDI; n = 6; 16.7%), and the Career Decision Scale (CDS; n = 5; 13.9%). The most assessed population sample was NCAA Division I athletes (n = 30; 83.3%). In contrast, a limited number of studies have investigated the career maturity of NCAA Division II (n = 5; 13.9%) student-athletes and female student-athletes (n = 1).

Multiple research investigations found that when comparing the results of student-athletes career maturity scores to published norms, student-athletes scored below the norms of the general population (Kennedy & Dimick, 1987; Murphy et al., 1996; Smallman & Sowa, 1996; Whipple, 2009 Wooten, Usher, & Osborne, 1994). Using the CMI survey, Murphy et al. (1996) indicated that college student-athletes were in the 27th percentile as compared to CMI norms for seniors in high school. Using a sample population of DIII student-athletes, Whipple (2009) found that the mean score of the college student-athlete was at the 34th percentile for the norms of the CMI.

Luzzo (1992), along with Prideaux and Creed (2001), both investigated the relationship between gender and career maturity. Luzzo (1992) determined that female college students are more likely to be career mature than males. The majority of the research has focused on the Division I male athlete and concluded that males were more likely to be less career mature than females (Ahlgren, 2001; Houle, 2010; Hughes, 2005; Keene, 2000; Ludwig, 1993; Murphy et al., 1996; Rivas, 2002; Van Haveren, 1999). In addition, in studies

that sampled NCAA DII (non-revenue) and DIII (non-scholarship) athletes, there did not appear to be a relationship between gender and career maturity (Irving, 2003; Patterson, 1995; Whipple, 2009).

To examine if the college student-athlete is so devoted to their role as student-athlete that they have little time to concentrate on developing mature career plans, several investigators have utilized the Athlete Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS; Brewer et al., 1993). Blann (1985) investigated career maturity and educational planning with a questionnaire regarding the ability to formulate mature educational and career plans to 250 student-athletes (n = 203 male and n=147 female) and 218 non-student athletes (n = 100 male and n = 118 female) enrolled in NCAA DI/DIII institutions. The results indicated that male freshmen and sophomore non-student athletes formulated more mature career plans than their counterpart freshmen and sophomore student-athletes. At the junior and senior levels, both males at DI and DIII did almost as well as their junior and senior counterparts in their ability to formulate mature educational and career plans. It also suggested that males are less attentive to their career plans due to the time emphasis placed on athletics.

This study had limitations in that in focused on revenue generating sports and male athletes. Brown and Hartley (1998) compared 114 NCAA Division I and II male football and basketball players, finding that the level of athletic identity did not significantly affect any of the five career maturity scales on CDI. This study does indicate that there is no significant difference between athletic identity and career maturity, which is in conflict with the Murphy et al. (1996) study. Brown and Hartley's (1998) study was limited as it only sampled male student-athletes in revenue-producing sports. Eight-five percent of the respondents were male

football players, therefore limiting the generalizability of the findings to all levels of the student-athlete population. In a study using only women at an all-women's college, Mignano, Brewer, Winter, and Van Raalte (2006) revealed that female student-athletes might be more apt to explore their dual roles as a student-athlete as compared to females at coeducational colleges.

Murphy et al. (1996) conducted a study of 124 intercollegiate student-athletes at a NCAA DI institution to examine the relationships between self-identity variables (identity foreclosure and athletic identity) and career maturity. This study also found that both identity foreclosure and athletic identity were inversely related to career maturity. The findings indicated that student-athletes were failing to explore alternative roles that impacted and/or delayed career development. This study illustrated that understanding athletic identity issues is important in working with athletes to assist them in their career maturity process.

There was no clear-cut study that provides data on career maturity or how the role of educational development influences role self-identification and career maturity for NCAA student-athletes. All studies have limitations and there is a gap in the literature regarding an integrated model of factors impacting the career maturity of NCAA student-athletes. Previous studies focused primarily on male athletes in revenue sports, thus limiting the generalizability of the findings.

Summary

The philosophy guiding athletic policies of NCAA Division II institutions are based on sound educational principles and practices that education has a lasting importance on the student-athlete's individual success and future career readiness (NCAA Philosophy

Statement, 2014b). Division II institutions pride themselves on providing growth opportunities through both academic achievement, high-level athletic competition, and personal growth opportunities through events such as community service. It is during this time that student-athletes develop their multiple identities in their dual role status as both a student and athlete. The growth and development of these identities may be defined by the relationships, influences, and connections that are made throughout college (Danish et al., 1993; Good et al., 1993; Marx et al., 2008; Miller & Kerr, 2003; Nasco & Webb, 2006; Rivas, 2002; Sowa & Gressard, 1983; Valentine & Taub, 1999). This research found that due to the structured time management schedule a successful student-athlete must maintain, the development of relationships that may influence their career maturity may be influenced. A student-athlete's academic major decision may be influenced by the demands of the sport, the relationships they have an emotional connection to (teammates, coaches, family, etc.), the ability of the individual to demand the requirements of specific academic programs and athletic program requirements, and finally to be able to self-identify as both a student and an athlete on the institutional campus without closing themselves off (or others accomplishing it for them) from one identity or the other during this crucial development time period.

The purpose of the dissertation study was to gain a greater understanding of the NCAA Division II female student-athlete. The study focused on athletic identity, identity foreclosure, and career maturity of NCAA Division II female student-athletes that participated in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference in the sports of basketball, soccer, softball, and volleyball. Chapter III described in detail the methodology of the study.

Chapter III: Methodology

This chapter describes the design of this quantitative study of the NCAA Division II female student-athlete using a survey instrument tool. This chapter contains information regarding the description of the participants, the instrument used for data collection, the research design and research questions, data analysis, human subject approval, timeline, and the procedures of the study.

The study focused on the NCAA Division II female student-athletes, the strength of their athletic identity, identity foreclosure levels, and career maturity readiness. This study also collected demographic information on each respondent. The chapter is organized into seven sections: (1) Research Design; (2) Human Subject Approval; (3) Participants; (4) Instrument for Data Collection; (5) Pilot Study; (6) Data Analysis; (7) Summary.

Research Design

This exploratory within-gender research study was designed to investigate the NCAA Division II female student-athletes that participated in the Northern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference in the team sports of: basketball, soccer, softball and volleyball. The study analyzed demographic data from respondents which included: ethnicity, year in school, type of higher educational institutional attended, athletic scholarship aid, and sport participating in. Athletic identity (AIMS) was scored for freshmen, sophomores, juniors and senior female student-athletes. The instrument measured public and private athletic identity sub-scales– (PPAIS). Data was additionally collected on ego-identity status (identity foreclosure) in the female student-athlete (OM-EIS). Finally, the instrument took inventory on vocational development measures that reflected the level of vocational development, or career maturity

(CMI) of the female student in freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Three research questions were examined as described below.

Research Question 1. *How is the athletic identity of DII female athletes affected by athletic status?*

H1. Senior and junior DII female athletes' athletic identity will be stronger than sophomore and freshman DII female athletes.

H2. DII female athlete's indicating a stronger private athletic identity will have stronger athletic identity than DII female athletes with lower private athletic identity.

H3. DII female athletes attending public institutions of higher education will have a stronger athletic identity than DII female athletes attending private institutions of higher education.

H4. DII female athletes receiving athletic scholarships will have a stronger athletic identity than DII female athletes not receiving athletic scholarships.

H5. DII female athletes participating in revenue sports will have a stronger athletic identity than DII female athletes participating in nonrevenue sports.

Research Question 2. *Is there a correlation between the female student-athlete's strength of athletic identity and identity foreclosure, and does this relationship change throughout their collegiate career.*

H6. DII female athletes with stronger athletic identity will also have stronger identity foreclosure than DII female athletes with weaker athletic identity.

Research Question 3. *How do DII female athletes' career maturity evolve through their academic career?*

H7. DII female athletes with stronger athletic identity will have lower levels of career maturity than DII female athletes with lower athletic identity.

H8. As DII female athletes advance grade levels their career maturity will increase.

H9. DII female athletes with stronger athletic identity and low foreclosure will have lower levels of career maturity than DII female athletes with lower athletic identity and high foreclosure.

Human Subjects Approval

In an effort to ensure that the rights and welfare of the subjects participating in this study are protected, all requirements set forth by the St. Cloud State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) were strictly adhered to. The study methodology contained no known discomforts or risks, as data were collected through an anonymous, electronic survey. As such, the potential benefits of the study greatly outweighed the minimal risks to participants. The terms of implied consent presented in the survey allowed for voluntary participation, as indicated by the completion of the survey following all the requirements set forth and approved by the SCSU IRB (see Appendix B for consent form and IRB approval).

Participants

Participants were rostered members of 2016-2017 NSIC 16-member institutions in the sports of: basketball, soccer, softball, and volleyball. The specific teams that were selected to participate were on the following teams: women's basketball (n = 37, 14.80%), women's soccer (n = 9, 3.60%), women's softball (n = 169, 67.60%), and women's volleyball (n = 35,

14%). For this study, basketball and volleyball teams were classified as revenue teams, while softball and soccer were classified as non-revenue. The NSIC institutions and participation numbers were as follows: Augustana University (AU) (*n* = 11, 5.5%) (SD), Bemidji State University (BSU) (MN) (*n* = 0, 0%), Concordia University, St. Paul (CSP) (MN) (*n* = 10, 10.6%), University of Mary (UM) (ND) (*n* = 8, 4.0%), University of Minnesota-Duluth (UMD) (MN) (*n* = 13, 6.5%), University of Minnesota-Crookston (UMC) (*n* = 16, 8.0%), Minnesota State-Mankato (MSU) (MN) (*n* = 19, 9.5%), Minnesota State University-Moorhead (MSUM) (MN) (*n* = 9, 4.5%), Minot State University (MSU) (ND) (*n* = 2, 1%), Northern State University (NSU) (SD) (*n* = 16, 8.0%), University of Sioux Falls (USD) (SD) (*n* = 16, 8.0%), Southwest Minnesota State (SMSU) (MN) (*n* = 10, 5.0%), St. Cloud State University (SCSU) (MN) (*n* = 44, 22.1%), Upper Iowa University (UIU) (IA) (*n* = 11, 6.0%), Wayne State College (WSC) (NE) (*n* = 0, 0%), Winona State University (WSC) (MN) (*n* = 16, 6.5%). Universities classified as private were: AU, CSP, USF, UIU, the remainder institutions were classified as public/state funded institutions.

Participants were selected by their association to the team, with the requirement that they be a rostered member on the institutional sport-team website for the academic year of 2016-2017. Participants were classified as: 1) First-Year Athletic Status (*n* = 72, 36.2%); 2) Sophomore (*n* = 47, 23.6%); 3) Junior (*n* = 43, 21.6%); 4) Senior (*n* = 27, 13.6%); 5) Fifth Year/Graduate Student (*n* = 5, 2.5%); and 6) Red-Shirt (*n* = 5, 2.5%). Based on online rosters available as of October 2016, the total participants pool available was *N* = 1179 student athletes. Possible participants were available from four sports: basketball *(n* = 247); soccer (n = 415); softball (*n* = 276); and volleyball (*n* = 241). Data were collected from a total of

n = 249 participants; however, only 80% of participants (*n* = 199) completed the consent form and the survey in its entirety.

The age of the participants ranged from 18-25 years old (i.e., born between 1992-1999). As such, the range of participation of a student-athletes in their respective sport and institution ranged from 1 to 5+ years (under the classification of first year to 5th year Senior/Graduate Student), between 0-125+ credit hours.

Instrument for Data Collection

The survey for this study was adapted from previously administered and verified surveys that had previously been conducted on NCAA student-athletes and non-athletes, vocational/high-school groups, and other work groups. One modification to the previous survey format was the inclusion of updated word choices to represent current language trends (see Appendix A for survey instrument). The survey instrument was administered online through Survey Monkey and could be completed from the student's cell phone, laptop, iPAD, or a computer device. The survey took approximately 8-12 minutes to complete.

The first question of the survey tool was a yes/no consent statement indicating that the participant understood the consent form prior to entering the survey. The participant was required to read and electronically sign the statement. By selecting yes, the respondent was able to continue with the survey. This was the only required question of the instrument tool.

The electronic survey link was disseminated to the contact lists by either the: 1) Head Coach of the sport team; 2) Senior Women's Athletic Administrator; 3) St. Cloud State Research Consulting Center through a direct emailing to the student-athletes. All survey responses were kept anonymous through security options available with Survey Monkey,

which enables collection to occur without the tracking of names, emails, or IP addresses. This functionality is available through St. Cloud State University's subscription to Survey Monkey and coordinated through the St. Cloud State Statistical Consulting and Research Department. The director of St. Cloud State Statistical Consulting and Research Service, Dr. Randy Kolb, and his staff assisted in both survey development for Survey Monkey and in disseminating the survey to potential participants.

The *demographic questionnaire* was comprised of 10-items: 1) date of birth; 2) NSIC institution of current enrollment; 3) NSIC sport of current participation; 4) number of years of participation in that identified sport at that NSIC institution; 5) self-identified ethnicity; 6) current NCAA athletic status; 7) current academic status at that enrolled institution; 8) what their current major choice was influenced by; 9) and if they are currently, or had, received institutional scholarship aid as a NCAA student-athlete; 10) the degree an individual defined themselves as an athlete.

The *Athletic Identity Measurement Scale* (AIMS: Brewer et al., 1993) was the second instrument used to gather data for the study. The AIMS were comprised of 10-items that were designed to assess the strength of the athlete identity and to the degree to which an individual identifies with an athletic role (Brewer & Cornelius, 2001; Brewer et al., 1993). The AIMS test has shown to have high internal consistency in several studies and a high retest reliability rating (Cronbach's alphas ranging from .80 to .93, test reliability r = .89) (Brewer et al., 1993). These 10-items are scored on a 7-point Likert-type scale with response options ranging from (1) strongly disagree to a (7) strongly agree. A composite score—consisting of the sum of responses to the 10 items—was then calculated from each respondent (Brewer et al., 1993).

The AIMS survey has questions that identified the degree of strength in a sense of importance (IM), identity (ID), and self-esteem (SE). A higher score on AIMS is associated with a greater sense of athletic identity, whereas lower scores are representative of a weaker athletic identity. This is the most commonly used instrument to access athletic identity recent evidence has suggested that the AIMS may have limitations when evaluating the multi-dimensions of being a student-athletes, as the questions may be more skewed towards focusing on private athletic identity (Nasco & Webb, 2006).

This study also used a 2nd measure of athletic identity dimension: the *Public-Private Athletic Identity Scale* (PPAIS; Nasco & Webb, 2006). Whereas the AIMS survey focuses on private athletic identity, the PPAIS was created to explore both public and private dimensions of athletic identity. Nasco & Webb (2006) stated that private athletic identity is the "degree to which a person describes her or himself as an athlete owing to internalization of the athletic role" (p. 438). Nasco and Webb (2006) also stated that in contrast, public athletic identity is "the degree to which a person describes her or himself as an athlete due to the external rewards associated with being an athlete" (p. 438). This instrument has 10-items that will explore both the public and private dimensions of the athletic identity to identity if one dimension of identity has a more significant influence on athletic identity strength than the other. Subscales of the PPAIS (public) were found to be significantly correlated with the AIMS scores in previous research (Nasco & Webb, 2006; Whipple, 2009). As reported by Nasco and Webb (2006), it was suggested that the two instruments working in conjunction may provide additional insight into the influence of sub-identity dimensions that influence the athletic identity (Whipple, 2009). The survey questions represent either public or private

identity dimensions and the sum of those questions represents a score. A higher score in one area indicates a greater strength in that identity dimension and a lower score in the other area indicates a weaker association with that identity dimension. The public ($r = .40$, $p < .001$) and private ($r = .61$, $p < .001$) subscales of the PPAIS were previously found to be significantly correlated with the AIMS scores (Nasco & Webb, 2006). Nasco and Webb (2006) indicated that the two instruments may measure similar constructs, and that the AIMS instrument may be weighed more heavily towards the private sub-dimension of athletic identity (Whipple, 2009). The PPAIS was also found to improve prediction of the years that respondents participated in athletics by 2.2% over the AIMS ($R^2 = .41$) (Whipple, 2009). Reliability for the PPAIS as shown for both the public (Cronbach's Alpha = .74) and private (Cronbach's Alpha = .75) subscales (Nasco & Webb, 2006; Whipple, 2009).

The third instrument was the 6-item foreclosure subscale of the *Objective Measure of Ego-Identity Status* (OM-EIS; Adams et al., 1979). Adams et al. (1989) provided evidence of the internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = .76) and convergent validity of the 6-item Foreclosure scale (Murphy et al., 1996). The scoring instrument provides a general measure of individually or self-differentiation ranging from a diffused to an achieved-identity state (Oregon, 2010). To date, no survey has been specifically developed and validated to measure and assess identity foreclosure in student-athletes. However, Whipple (2009), Murphy et al., (1996), and Oregon (2010) assessed student-athletes using the 6-item OM-EIS subscale instrument in their research studies when investigating identity foreclosure and athletic identity in student-athletes. The OM-EIS instrument was comprised of 24-items. The foreclosure subscale consisted of only 6-items using a 6-point Likert-type scale that ranges

from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). The sum of the instrument score was used to calculate the mean and standard deviation of each participants. The sum of the instrument scores were calculated for each eligibility class to compare levels of foreclosure. A higher score indicated an increased level of identity foreclosure, or a settling into a single identity (i.e., not being open to exploring other identities in their hierarchy). Settling into a single identity often happens to resolve or avoid role conflict (Erickson, 1956).

The *Attitude Scale of Career Maturity Inventory-Revised Form-R* (CMI; Crites, 1974; CMI-R; Crites & Savickas, 1996, Crites & Savickas, 2011) was the final instrument used to measure vocational development of career readiness in the student-athlete. The Attitude Scale of the CMI-R is the most widely used measure of career maturity (Crites & Savickas, 2011). The revised *Career Maturity Inventory* (CMI-R) (Crites & Savickas, 2011) is comprised of two subscales for a total of 24 questions. Questions represent a combination of attitude and competency and are answered in the agree/disagree format. A total raw score was determined from a total of all selected responses with a minimum score of zero and a maximum score of 25. The score can be compared to established percentile ranks located in the CMI-R Administration of Use Manual (Crites, 1974). The manual provides information for instrument stability (r = .71 over a 1-year period) and internal consistency (K-R 20 coefficient = .74) Crites, 1974). Although this instrument was developed for assessing high school students it has been shown to be appropriate for use with college students through follow up research studies (Crites, 1974; Whipple 2009).

This purpose of the CMI survey was used to assess individual aspects of the career decision-making process such as decisiveness, involvement, independence, and compromise

as it relates to vocational development. The CMI does not measure cognitive competencies including comprehension and problem-solving abilities. The Attitude Scale examines respondent's attitudes (feelings) towards decision-making such as decisiveness, involvement, independence, orientation, and compromise (Busacca & Taber, 2002). The Attitude Scale has 25-diverse statements with an overall score of 1-25 for career maturity attitude. Scoring is conducted by transferring an individual's responses to each item on the scale to the CMI-R answer sheet. From the scoring sheet, the matched letters shown are then totaled. This procedure is performed on the *CMI-R Attitude Scale* and the total numbers for the scores are summed. The sum represents the individual's career maturity attitude score. A higher score indicates a more highly developed attitude towards career decisions. A score of 20 or higher indicates students are well prepared for career planning activities using interest inventories and advance exploration techniques. Scores that range between 16-19 indicate that an individual is developing career maturity skills at a normal pace. Scores that are 15 or lower indicate that an individual is not yet ready to make career choices. As such, these individuals should be the target of career-related interventions (Busacca & Taber, 2002). Busacca and Taber (2002) were the first to investigate the CMI-R measurement scales internal consistency reliability and construct and criterion validity. Busacca and Taber's (2002) study found modest reliability for the CMI-R, along with a low internal consistency reliabilities of the CMI-R scales. Participants scoring higher in CMI-R attitudes appear ready to make wise and congruent choices, however due to the reduction from 50 to 25 questions from the original CMI to the CMI-R version. The CMI-R did continue to operate in the same theoretical

direction, however it is suggested to be used cautiously when interpreting data and should be combined with additional supplementary information (Busacca & Taber, 2002).

Pilot Study

A pilot study is used as a "small scale version or trial run in preparation for a major study" (Polit, Beck & Hungler, 2001, p. 467). Polit et al. (2001) indicated that the term *pilot study* is used in two different ways in research. It can refer to so-called feasibility studies, which are "small scale version(s), or trial run(s), done in preparation for a major study" (p. 467). Surveys are pilot-tested to avoid misleading, inappropriate, or redundant questions (Simon, 2011). Baker (1984) indicated that a sample size of 10-20% of the sample size for conducted study is an acceptable number of participants for a pilot study.

The survey instrument was piloted to the St. Cloud State women's swimming and diving team members, which consisted of 45 members. The Head Swimming and Diving coach provided the researcher with an email roster that was submitted to the St. Cloud State Statistical Consulting and Research Department. The pilot test was initially disseminated through Survey Monkey on September 9, 2016 to the above pilot group. A second prompting was sent out on September 27, 2016. The pilot survey received 17 completed responses (38% response rate). The survey took approximately 9 minutes to complete. To provide an incentive for completing of the survey, two pilot group respondents were randomly selected to receive gift cards by submitting their email address at the end of the end of the survey. The Swimming and Diving Head Coach was notified of the participants by the Research and Statistical Center, to allow the participants to remain confidential and picked up the gift cards from the researcher to distribute. After two promptings and a follow-up email from the Head

Coach, 17 student-athletes submitted responses that were subsequently evaluated. The researcher than met with the participants to ask: 1) “Was the phrasing and terminology clear and easy to understand?” 2) “Were the directions easy to follow?” 3) Was the survey attractive, neat, and organized?” 4) “Was the survey too long to be comfortable completed in one sitting?” 5) “Do you feel the survey ask you self-reflective questions on self-identification as a student-athlete, identity foreclosure, and career readiness?” 6) Are there any additional comments relevant to the improvement to the overall survey?” The group gave positive feedback in all areas, with limited suggestions for changes.

Data Analysis

This study examined the NCAA Division II female student-athlete as it related to strength of the athletic identity in relation to variables such as ethnicity, year in school, sub-dimensions of athletic identity, type of sport participating in, type of institution attending, and if the participant received an athletic scholarship as a student-athlete. The study also analyzed the strength of the athletic identity with levels of identity foreclosure and assessed the degree of correlation between these two variables. The study examined the level of vocational development, as it relates to career maturity (readiness), among the four eligibility status groups (freshmen, sophomore, juniors, seniors). The research found the strength of the athletic identity, the correlation between the level of identity foreclosure, and the level of career maturity as the student-athletes progressed throughout their career.

The research used several quantitative statistical methods to perform data analysis. Table 1 lists the questions, predictions, null and alternative hypotheses, detailed data analysis methods, and statistical results.

Table 1

Data Analysis Method and Description by Hypothesis

Hypothesis	**Analysis Method and Explanation**	**Analysis Description**
H1. Senior and junior DII female athletes' athletic identity will be stronger than sophomore and freshman DII female athletes.	One-way ANOVA; DV: AIMS instrument IV: Year in School: Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior	Measured athletic identity differences among varying student classifications
H2. DII female athlete's indicating a stronger private athletic identity will have stronger athletic identity than DII female athletes with lower private athletic identity.	Pearson product movement correlation; Variables: AIMS, PPAIS Total, Private and Public Identities	Measured the strength of association between private athletic identity and athletic identity
H3. DII female athletes attending public institutions of higher education will have a stronger athletic identity than DII female athletes attending private institutions of higher education.	Two-tailed t-test; DV: AIMS Instrument IV: Type of HIED Institution: Public or Private.	Detected if the type of institution an athlete attended impacted their athletic identity
H4. DII female athletes receiving athletic scholarships will have a stronger athletic identity than DII female athletes not receiving athletic scholarships.	One-tailed t-test; DV: AIMS instrument IV: Receiving an institutional athletic scholarship, Not receiving an institutional athletic scholarship	Detected if athletic scholarships impacted athlete's athletic identity
H5. DII female athletes participating in revenue sports will have a stronger athletic identity than DII female athletes participating in nonrevenue sports.	One-tailed t-test; DV: AIMS Instrument IV: Type of Sport Participating in (Revenue or Non-Revenue) R=Women's Basketball and Volleyball Non-R=Women's Softball and Soccer	Detected if the type of sport an athlete played impacted their athletic identity
H6. DII female athletes with stronger athletic identity will also have stronger identity foreclose than DII female athletes with weaker athletic identity.	Pearson product movement correlation; Variables: AIMS Instrument, OM-EIS	Measured the strength of association between athletic identity and identity foreclosure
H7. DII female athletes with stronger athletic identity will have lower levels of career maturity than DII female athletes with lower athletic identity.	Pearson product movement correlation; Variables: AIMS Instrument, CMI-RCMI	Measured the strength of association between athletic identity and career maturity
H8. As DII female athletes advance grade levels their career maturity will increase.	t-test; DV: CMI-R IV: Year in school: Freshmen, Sophomore, Junior, or Senior DV: CMI-Form C	Detected career maturity differences among varying student classifications
H9. DII female athletes with stronger athletic identity and low foreclosure will have lower levels of career maturity than DII female athletes with lower athletic identity and high foreclosure.	Pearson product movement correlation for all pairwise combinations of variables Variables: AIMS, OM-EIS, CMI-R	Measured the strength of association among athletic identity, foreclosure and career maturity

Summary

This study used a descriptive, quantitative survey disseminated through Survey Monkey to provide insight into the demographics of the NCAA Division II female student-athlete in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference. A survey instrument tool was developed using the demographic variables: ethnicity, year in school, type of institution attending (public or private), revenue or non-revenue sport participation, and receiving an athletic scholarship. Additionally, the instrument tool consisted of the AIMS, OM-EIS, and CMI-R surveys. The survey was disseminated through Survey Monkey to student-athlete's institutional electronic mail accounts over a two-month span. Upon collection by the St. Cloud State Statistical Research and Consulting Center, the data were analyzed using a variety of statistical tests (e.g., Person *r* correlation, one-tailed t-test, one-way ANOVA, and multiple linear regression). Chapter IV discusses the research results of the study in extended detail.

Chapter IV: Results

The purpose of this study was to examine athletic identity, identity foreclosure, and career maturity of the NCAA Division II female student-athlete. The athletes competed in the Northern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference during the 2016-2017 season. The freshmen through senior student-athletes participated in the sports of women's basketball, soccer, softball, and volleyball. Means and standard deviations were calculated for scores on the AIMS, PPAIS (public, private, total), OM-EIS foreclosure subscale, ad CMI-R. Chapter IV consists of the following sections (1) Survey Response; (2) Subject population; (3) Research Questions; (4) Summary.

Survey Response

A review of institutional team webpages provided an estimated count of 1,179 student-athlete participants between the ages of 18-25. Student athletes were listed as rostered players on their institutions respective teams in the sports of women's basketball, women's soccer, women's softball, and women's volleyball. The survey was disseminated via Survey Monkey through invitations to participate by either the Senior Women's Athletic Directors or Head Coach at the Institution, or by an email invitation from St. Cloud State Statistical Consulting and Research Center. The survey instrument was disseminated to 763 rostered student-athletes. Response from 199 female student athletes was captured, representing 23% response rate from the sample population of female student-athletes.

Subject Population

The subject population was taken from the NCAA Division II affiliated, Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference. The NSIC's membership consists of 16-member NCAA Division

II institutions, located in the North Midwest region of the United States of America. The member institutions were located in the following states: Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota. 94% of the participants indicated they identified as being of Caucasian ethnicity (*n* = 118, 94.7%). Due to the low number of respondents with non-Caucasian ethnicities, for statistical analyses all other options on the survey were grouped as non-Caucasian (*n* = 11, 5.27%). The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 24 years old (*m* = 19). The major of participants were enrolled in public institutions (*n* = 142, 71.4%) as compared to private institutions (*n* = 57, 28.6%). The highest participation was from student-athletes attending St. Cloud State University (*n* = 46, 22.1%), followed by Minnesota State University-Mankato (*n* = 19, 9.5%). There was no population participation from Wayne State College or Bemidji State University (*n* = 0). The average number of participants from each institution was 15.1 total subjects, which represents all sport teams from that institution. While all four types of sport teams had respondents, the majority participated in women's softball (*n* = 113, 67.8%) followed by basketball (*n* = 31, 15.6%), then volleyball (*n* = 29, 14.6%), and soccer (*n* = 6, 3.0%). First year student-athletes (*n* = 72, 36.2%) had the highest response rate, followed by sophomores (*n* = 47, 23.6%), juniors (*n* = 43, 21.6%) and seniors (*n* = 29, 14.6%). Participation by number of credits completed by the respondents reported at 0-30 hours (n = 77, 38.7%), followed by 31-60 credit hours (*n* = 46, 23.1%), 91+ credit hours (*n* = 42, 21.1.6%), 61-90 credit hours (*n* = 31, 15.6%), and finally 0-15 Graduate credits (*n* = 2, 1.0%).

Three additional demographic questions were asked to obtain a preview of the respondent population: (1) who had the greatest influence on choice of major; (2) what

advisor was the strongest influence on selecting their major; and (3) whether the student-athlete viewed themselves as an athlete. The greatest influence on choice of major was interest of academic area (*n* = 133, 66.8%), followed by the potential earning incoming (*n* = 24, 12.1%). Parent/guardian (*n* = 109, 52.3%) was the most influential advisor for selection of major, followed by academic advisor (*n* = 79, 38.2%). The fewest number of respondents indicated their head coach was influential in their choice of major (*n* = 5, 3.2%). Finally, respondents overwhelming picked '*strongly agree'* (*n* = 181, 91%) when asked if they view themselves as athletes. The demographic survey responses are illustrated below in Table 2.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Demographic Survey Population

HIED	Type of Institution	*n*	% Respondents
AU	Private	11	5.5
BSU	Public	0	0.0
CSP	Private	10	5.0
UM	Private	8	4.0
UMC	Public	16	8.0
UMD	Public	13	6.5
MSU	Public	19	9.5
SCSU	Public	44	22.1
MSUM	Public	9	4.5
NSU	Public	16	8.0
USF	Private	16	8.0
SMSU	Public	10	5
MSU	Public	2	1.0
UIU	Private	12	6.0
WSC	Public	0	0
WSU	Public	13	6.5

Participation/type of Institution	*n*	% Respondents
Public	142	71.4
Private	57	28.6

Participation/type of Sport	***n***	**% Respondents**
Basketball	31	15.6
Soccer	6	3.0
Softball	113	66.8
Volleyball	29	14.6

Participation/ Year in school	***n***	**% Respondents**
Freshmen	72	36.2
Sophomore	47	23.6
Juniors	43	21.6
Senior	27	13.6
5+Years	5	2.5
Red-Shirt, No competition status	5	2.5

Participation/Race	***n***	**% Respondents**
Caucasian	188	94.5
Non-Caucasian	11	5.23

Participation/Academic Status/Credit Hours	***n***	**% Respondents**
0-30	77	38.7
31-60	46	23.1
61-90	31	15.6
91+	42	21.1
0-15 Graduate	2	1.0

Participation/Scholarship	***n***	**% Respondents**
Awarded	179	90.4
Not-Awarded	18	9.1
NA	1	.5

Participation/Institutional Aid	***n***	**% Respondents**
Yes	151	75.9
No	41	20.6
NA	7	3.5

Participation/Major influence	***n***	**% Respondents**
Potential Earning Income	24	12.1
Time/Courses Required	6	3.0
Parent/Guardian Influence	12	6.0
Head Coach Influence	4	2.0
Interest in Academic Area	133	66.8
Internships/Past Jobs	13	6.5
Other	7	3.5

Participation/Advised	***n***	**% Respondents**
Parent/Guardian	109	52.3
Academic Advisor/Faculty	79	38.2
Peers/Teammates	7	3.2
Coaching Staff	5	3.2
Other	6	3.0

I consider myself an athlete	***n***	**% Respondents**
Strongly Disagree	2	1.0
Agree	6	3.0
Agree	10	5.0
Strongly Agree	181	91.0

The research questions and hypothesis guided this study on the Division II female student-athletes.

Research Question 1. *How is the athletic identity of DII female athletes affected by athletic status?*

H1. Senior and junior DII female athletes' athletic identity will be stronger than sophomore and freshman DII female athletes.

Hypothesis one measured differences of athletic identity among the DII female athlete's year in school (i.e., freshmen, sophomore, juniors, and seniors). A one-way ANOVA shows no statistically significant differences among the groups in terms of athletic identify; the mean AIMS scores for freshmen (M = 51.31, SD = 7.55), sophomore (M = 50.50, SD =

8.60), juniors (M = 48.80, SD = 7.32) and seniors (M = 48.10, SD = 6.91); $F_{3,198} = 1.832$, $P = 0.142$. Descriptive data are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Athletic Identity by Year in School

Variable Year in School	n	M	Standard Deviation	Standard Deviation Error	F	P
Freshmen	77	51.31	7.55	0.860		
Sophomore	47	50.50	8.60	1.25		
Junior	43	48.80	7.32	1.16		
Senior	32	48.10	6.91	1.22		
Between Groups					1.832	0.142

***Significance p<.01,
**Significance is p <.05

H2. DII female athlete's indicating a stronger private athletic identity will have stronger athletic identity than DII female athletes with lower private athletic identity.

Hypothesis two measured the strength of association between private athletic identity and athletic identity. Pearson product movement correlations revealed a strong, positive relationship between AIMS total and PPAIS total ($r = 0.633$, n = 199, $p < 0.001$). Results also indicate a positive, strong relationship between AIMS total and PPAIS private ($r = 0.562$, n = 199, $p < 0.001$). The relationship between AIMS total and PPAIS public also was positive, although the strength of the relationship was moderate ($r = 0.442$, $n = 199$, $p < 0.001$). A high PPAIS private sub-athletic identity was a strong predictor of higher AIMS scores.

A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient test was computed to assess the relationship between the AIMS score and the PPAIS private and public sub-identity scores. The mean and median scores of AIMS were 50.05 (SD 3.40) and 49.47 respectively, out of a possible 70. The PPAIS total produced a mean score of 34.59 (SD 4.74), a median score of

35.00, and mode score 31.00. Out of a possible 25 score, participants scored a mean of 12.73 on the public sub-athletic identity scale, while scoring a 21.86 on the PPAIS private sub-athletic identity scale. A higher overall total score on PPAIS private sub-identity athletic identity scales was recorded, with a lower PPAIS public sub-identity athletic identity. Of note, the scores of PPAIS private and public sub-athletic identity are conceptually independent. Descriptive data are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

PPAIS Athletic Identity Dimension

Variable	***n***	**M**	**Standard Deviation**	**Standard Deviation Error**	**Correlation with PPAIS Public (P-value)**	**Correlation with PPAIS Private (P-value)**	**Correlation with PPAIS Total (P-value)**	**Correlation with AIMS Total (P-value)**
PPAIS Public	199	12.72	3.64	3.64	NA	NA	NA	0.001
PPAIS Private	199	21.86	2.47	2.47	.015	NA	NA	0.001
PPAIS Total	199	34.59	4.74	0.336	NA	.001	NA	0.001
AIMS Total	199	50.05	3.40	7.70	NA	NA	0.001	NA

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)
*Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

The Pearson product moment correlation indicated that the PPAIS public sub-identity score varied directly in relation to the AIMS score. The Pearson product movement correlation suggests a significant correlation between the AIMS and PPAIS total scores ($p < 0.001$). Results of statistical tests provide support to the prediction of a significant correlation between PPAIS private and public sub-identity scores and PPAIS and AIMS scores.

H3. DII female athletes attending public institutions of higher education will have a stronger athletic identity than DII female athletes attending private institutions of higher education.

Student-athletes identified on the survey instrument the type of institution they attended. Types of institutions were divided between those that were classified as Public institutions and Private Institutions. The AIMS instrument scores were then assessed to determine if there was a relationship between strength of score and type of institution attending. A two-tailed *t*-test showed no statistically significant relationship between AIMs scores and whether student athletes attending public and private institutions; AIMS scores between private (M = 50.49, SD = 8.0) and public group (M = 49.89, SD = 7.59) conditions; t (t = 1.354), *P* = 0.614. Descriptive data are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Athletic Identity by Institution Type

Variable Institution	***n* =**	**M**	**Standard Deviation**	**Standard Deviation Error**	***t***	***P***
AIMS Private	57	50.49	8.02	1.06		
AIMS Public	142	49.89	7.59	0.637		
AIMS Total	199	50.05	7.70	0.054		
Between Group					1.354	0.614

***Significance p < .001, p < .05

It was anticipated that student-athletes who attended a public institution would have a greater sense of athletic identity than student-athletes who attended a private institution. One caveat is that there were more respondents to this survey from public (*n* = 142) than private (*n* = 57) institutions.

H4. DII female athletes receiving athletic scholarships will have a stronger athletic identity than DII female athletes not receiving athletic scholarships.

Student-athletes indicated on the survey instrument if they received institutional athletic scholarship aid. The relationship between individuals that identified as receiving an

athletic scholarship and strength of athletic identity score were analyzed. A one-tailed *t*-test statistical analysis revealed a statistically significant difference between AIMSs scores for students receiving a scholarship (M = 50.39, SD = 7.42), which differed significantly from the AIMS scores of non-scholarship student-athletes (M = 48.36, SD = 8.36) conditions; t_{195} = 2.62, *P* = 0.0104. Descriptive data are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Athletic Identity by Scholarship Status

Variable Scholarship	***n***	**M**	**Standard Deviation**	**Standard Deviation Error**	**T**	**P**
AIMS Scholarship	177	50.39	7.42	0.546		
AIMS Non-Scholarship	18	48.36	8.36	0.552		
AIMS Total	199	50.05	7.70	0.054		
Between Groups					1.354	0.010

***Significance p < .001, p < .05

Female student-athletes who received institutional athletic aid had a higher athletic identity than those that did not receive an athletic scholarship.

H5. DII female athletes participating in revenue sports will have a stronger athletic identity than DII female athletes participating in nonrevenue sports.

Student-athletes indicated on the survey instrument the type of sport they participated in. The sports of basketball and volleyball were identified as Revenue sports. Soccer and softball participants were identified as non-revenue sport participants. The relationship between type of sport participating in (Revenue/Non-Revenue) and the strength of the athletic identity score were assessed. A one-tailed *t*-test statistical analysis showed no significant relationship between AIMS score in student-athletes who participated in revenue sports (basketball/volleyball) in comparison with those who participated in non-revenue sports

(soccer/softball). Data indicated the following: AIMS revenue (M = 48.33, SD = 7.71) and AIMS non-revenue (M = 50.75, SD = 7.71); $t_{197} = 1.96$, *P*=0.051. Descriptive data are presented in Table 7.

Table 7

Athletic Identity by Sport Classification

Variable Sport Type	***n***	**M**	**Standard Deviation**	**Standard Deviation Error**	**t**	**P**
Revenue	60	48.33	7.71	0.995		
Non-Revenue	139	50.75	7.71	0.646		
Total	199	50.05	7.70	0.054		
Between Group					1.96	0.051

***Significance p < .001

R**esearch Question 2.** *Is there a correlation between the female student-athlete's strength of athletic identity and identity foreclosure, and does this relationship change throughout their collegiate career?*

H6. DII female athletes with stronger athletic identity will also have stronger identity foreclose than DII female athletes with weaker athletic identity.

Hypothesis six measured the strength of association between athletic identity and identity foreclosure. A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient showed no statistical significant relationship between AIMS score of athletic identity and OM-EIS scores of identity foreclosure. Although a positive relationship between the two variables was observed there was no significant correlation between these two variables ($r = 0.072$, $P = 0.309$). Descriptive data are presented in Table 8 and 9.

Table 8

Athletic Identity by Identity Foreclosure

Variable	n	M	Standard Deviation	Standard Deviation Error	Correlation with OM-EIS-Total (P-value)	Correlation with AIMS Total (P-value)
OM-EIS Total	199	15.191	4.47	4.45	NA	0.072
AIMS Total	199	50.05	3.40	7.70	.072	NA
Between Group Significance						0.309

**Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)
*Correlation is significant at the .05 (2-tailed)

Table 9

Athletic Identity and Identity Foreclosure, Year in School

Variable	n	OM-EIS Mean	OM-EIS SD	AIMS Mean	AIMS SD
Freshmen	77	15.46	4.47	52.18	7.05
Sophomores	46	14.89	4.62	48.46	8.80
Juniors	31	15.38	3.76	48.62	8.16
Seniors	32	15.62	4.44	48.92	6.39

A multi-regression analysis indicated that there was no significance found between year in school and AIMS total scores. Dependent variable was the AIMS total and independent variable was year in school (handled with dummy numbers). The analysis indicated that there was not a significance in predicting growth in scores in athletic identity from freshmen through sophomore, junior and senior years (R^2 = .027).

A Pearson correlation indicated that there was no linear relationship between AIMS total scores and year in school. Between year in school analysis indicated that there was a moderate downhill relationship between freshmen and sophomore year in school (r = -442)

and freshmen and junior year in school (r = -4.17). Freshmen to senior showed a weak downhill linear relationship (r = -.348).

The multi-regression analysis also indicated that there was no significance between year in school and OM-EIS total scores. The dependent variable was the OM-EIS identity foreclosure total score and the independent variable was year in school (handled with dummy numbers). Just as in the AIMS total scores, no significance was found to predict growth in total scores from freshmen through senior year. Both statistical tests indicated that there was no explanation for the relationship between the variables (R^2 = .005).

A Pearson correlation indicated that there was no linear relationship between OM-EIS total scores and year in school. Between year in school analysis indicated that there was a moderate downhill relationship between freshmen and sophomore year in school (r = -442) and freshmen and junior year in school (r = -.417). Freshmen to senior showed a weak downhill linear relationship (r = -.348).

Research Question 3. *How do DII female athletes' career maturity evolve through their academic career?*

H7. DII female athletes with stronger athletic identity will have lower levels of career maturity than DII female athletes with lower athletic identity.

Hypothesis seven measured the strength of association between athletic identity and career maturity. A Pearson product-moment correlation indicated a significant, negative relationship between the two variables (*r* = -.198, p = 0.005). A higher student-athletic identity score correlated with lower career maturity scores. Descriptive data are presented in Table 10.

Table 10

Athletic Identity by Career Maturity

Variable	*n*=	M	Standard Deviation	Standard Deviation Error	CMI-R Total	AIMS Total
CMI-R Total	199	18.23	3.76	4.45	NA	-0.198
AIMS Total	199	50.05	7.71	7.70	-0.198	NA
Between Group Significance						.005

**Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)
*Correlation is significant at the .05 (2-tailed)

H8. As DII female athletes advance grade levels their career maturity will increase.

Student-athletes identified their current year in school. A relationship was analyzed between the year in school and their career maturity score. A two-sample *t*-test showed was no statistically significant difference between the mean career maturity of the freshmen respondents and the sophomores (t = 1.467, *P* = 0.800), freshmen and juniors (t = 1.785, *P* = 0.944) and seniors (t = 1.376, *P* = 0.577). Descriptive data are presented in Table 11.

Table 11

Years in School by Career Maturity

Variable	*n*	*CMI-R Mean*	*CMI-R SD*	*AIMS Mean*	*AIMS SD*
Freshmen	77	18.37	3.84	52.18	7.05
Sophomore	47	18.76	3.25	48.46	8.80
Junior	31	17.31	3.95	48.62	8.16
Senior	32	17.15	4.13	48.92	6.39

A Pearson correlation indicated that there was no significance found between CMI-Total scores and year in school. CMI-Total score was the dependent variable and year in school was the independent variable. Just as AIMS totals and OM-IES total indicated no linear relationship, the same held true for CMI-total scores (R^2 = .036).

H9. DII female athletes with stronger athletic identity and low foreclosure will have lower levels of career maturity than DII female athletes with lower athletic identity and high foreclosure.

Hypothesis nine measured the strength of association among athletic identity, foreclosure and career maturity. A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient revealed a weak negative correlation between CMI-R and AIMS scores (r = -0.198, *P* = 0.734). There was a negative, weak correlation between CMI-R and OM-EIS scores (*r* = -0.115, P = 0.188). When analyzing the correlation between AIMS and OM-EIS scores, there was a positive, but not statistically significant correlation between the two variables (*r* = 0.309, *P* = 0.188). This suggests that those that scored low in career maturity, also scored low or high in athletic identity and identity foreclosure. Data also suggested that respondents that had a stronger score in athletic identity also had a stronger score in identity foreclosure. Descriptive data were presented in Table 12 and 13.

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics for Student-Athletes Year in School and Career Maturity/Athletic Identity Scores

Variable	***N***	***CMI-R Mean***	***CMI-R SD***	***AIMS Mean***	***AIMS SD***
Freshmen	77	18.37	3.84	52.18	7.05
Sophomore	47	18.76	3.25	48.46	8.80
Junior	31	17.31	3.95	48.62	8.16
Senior	32	17.15	4.13	48.92	6.39

Table 13

Descriptive Statistics for Population with Means, Standard Deviations, Career Maturity total, Identity Foreclosure Total, and Athletic Identity Total

Variable	***N***	**M**	**Standard Deviation**	**Standard Deviation Error**	***Correlation with CMI-R Total (P-value)***	***Correlation with OM-EIS-Total (P-value)***	***Correlation with AIMS Total (P-value)***
CMI-R Total	199	18.23	3.76	4.45	NA	-0.115	-0.198
OM-EIS Total	199	15.191	4.47	4.45	-0.115	NA	0.309
AIMS Total	199	50.05	3.40	7.70	-0.198	0.309	NA

Summary

NCAA Division II female student athletes who participated in one of four team sports in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference were researched in this study. This research study provided a snapshot examination of student-athletes that participated in their respective sport in the fall of 2017, when the data was collected. Demographics were collected to on the participants which included: ethnicity, year in school, sub-dimensions of the athletic identity, the type of higher education institution attended, whether or not a student-athlete receives an institutional athletic scholarship, and the specific sport participated in. Statistical tests such as One-way ANOVA, Pearson Product Movement correlations, and one tailed t-tests were conducted to determine relationships and correlations. Data did support the researcher's hypothesis that NCAA DII female student-athletes had a stronger athletic identity with greater private sub-dimensions characteristics, that female student-athletes on scholarship had a greater sense of athletic identity, and student-athletes with a greater sense of athletic identity will also have a lower sense of career maturity. All other research hypothesis were found not

to be supported by the statistical data. A summary of all research hypothesis is listed in Table 14.

Table 14

Results Summary by Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Supported/Not Supported	Statistical Analysis
H1. Senior and junior DII female athletes' athletic identity will be stronger than sophomore and freshman DII female athletes.	Not Supported	One-way ANOVA indicated no statistical significant differences among the varying years in school
H2. DII female athlete's indicating a stronger private athletic identity will have stronger athletic identity than DII female athletes with lower private athletic identity.	Supported	Pearson product movement correlation indicated an association between private athletic identity and athletic identity
H3. DII female athletes attending public institutions of higher education will have a stronger athletic identity than DII female athletes attending private institutions of higher education.	Not Supported	Two-tailed t-test detected that the type of institution an athlete attended did not affect their athletic identity
H4. DII female athletes receiving athletic scholarships will have a stronger athletic identity than DII female athletes not receiving athletic scholarships.	Supported	One-tailed t-test detected that athletic scholarships impacted athlete's athletic identity
H5. DII female athletes participating in revenue sports will have a stronger athletic identity than DII female athletes participating in nonrevenue sports.	Not Supported	One-tailed t-test detected the type of sport an athlete played does not impacted their athletic identity
H6. DII female athletes with stronger athletic identity will also have stronger identity foreclose than DII female athletes with weaker athletic identity.	Not Supported	Pearson product movement correlation indicated no association between athletic identity and identity foreclosure
H7. DII female athletes with stronger athletic identity will have lower levels of career maturity than DII female athletes with lower athletic identity.	Supported	Pearson product movement correlation indicated association between athletic identity and career maturity
H8. As DII female athletes advance grade levels their career maturity will increase.	Not Supported	t-test resulted in inconsistent analysis
H9. DII female athletes with stronger athletic identity and low foreclosure will have lower levels of career maturity than DII female athletes with lower athletic identity and high foreclosure.	Not Supported	Pearson product movement correlation

Research Question 1. *How is the athletic identity of DII female athletes affected by athletic status?*

Research Question 2. *Is there a correlation between the female student-athlete's strength of athletic identity and identity foreclosure, and does this relationship change throughout their collegiate career?*

Research Question 3. *How do DII female athletes' career maturity evolve through their academic career?*

Chapter V included a discussion, interpretation of the research findings, limitations of the study, implications for future research, and final conclusions.

Chapter V: Discussion

The purpose of this exploratory within-gender research study was to gather data on the NCAA Division II female student-athlete. This was done by using the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (Brewer et al., 1993) to access strength of athletic identity. Additionally, a 10-item Public-Private Athletic Identity Scale (PPAIS, Nasco & Webb, 2006) was used to explore both the public and private sub-identity dimensions of the athletic identity. In conjunction with the identity measurement tools, the female student-athlete completed the Foreclosure-Scale from the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status Instrument (OM-EIS, Adams et al., 1989) to assess their level of foreclosure. Finally, this study examined the female-student athletes' sense of career readiness by completing the vocational development survey CMI-R (Crites & Savickas, 2011). By surveying NCAA Division II student-athletes that participated in their respective sport in the fall of 2016, data was collected to address the research questions.

Chapter V was organized by the findings of the research questions. The chapter will also address the limitations of the research study, relevance for practice as it relates working with NCAA student-athletes, NCAA Division II athletes, and female student-athletes, and implications for future research on student-athletes. Finally, Chapter V offers a conclusion based on the research summary.

Discussion and Conclusions

This research study examined the NCAA Division II female student-athlete, who competed in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference in the sports of women's basketball, soccer, softball, and volleyball during the fall of 2016. The NSIC Institutions are located in

the North, Central region of the United States, which may have limited the population ethnicity sample. The timing of the data was a one-time data collection, collecting data from the NSIC student-athlete in the fall of 2016. The survey instrument provided a snapshot representation of the student-athletes perception at that moment of their athletic identity, identity foreclosure and career maturity. Comparisons to previous research conducted using the variables of athletic identity, identity foreclosure, and career maturity can be made; however, with the understanding that results of this study are specific to the sample that was utilized for this research study.

Athletic Identity

There has been a significant amount of research done on athletic identity on all NCAA levels of student-athletes (male and female) since Adler and Adler's (1985) groundbreaking study. Murphy et al. (1996) first explored the relationship between athletic identity, identity foreclosure, and career maturity in DI student-athletes. More recently Whipple (2009) explored athletic identity, identity foreclosure, and career maturity in DIII female student-athletes. In this research study, the mean score (M = 50.053, SD = 7.70622) was higher than the scores recorded in Murphy et al. (1996) (M = 49.56, SD = 10.18) and Whipple (2009) (M = 46.33, SD = 8.33) research studies on DI/DIII student-athletes (respectfully). The higher mean score may be indicating a possible higher strength of athletic identity in the student-athletes sampled in this research study that was conducted on NCAA DII student-athletes.

The NCAA DII student-athletes competes at a very high level, along with 20+ hours a week of training to prepare for competitions. The NCAA Division II female student-athlete scored high level in athletic identity means, indicating that female student-athletes do place a

high value on their athletic identity, represented by the high value they placed on athletic identity in the survey instrument. Through my experience with female student-athletes as a coach, as a researcher this result was not unexpected. Female student-athletes often emotionally and physically engulf their dual roles, wanting to achieve high success in both roles. Women's athletes have very limited opportunities to turn professional, so there is an emphasis on career readiness to prepare for their future jobs.

While female student-athletes immerse themselves in their athletic role in college, there is an understanding that there will be an end to their participation experience. Through my experience as a head coach of female athletes, it appears as if there becomes a moment of clarity between the female student athlete's sophomore and junior season in which they determine their level of commitment and engagement in their sport. If their sport participation begins to interfere with their success as a student, or major/internship opportunities, they may withdraw from being a collegiate athlete to pursue their academic choices. They make a conscious choice to pursue their student identity and go away from their athletic identity. This also can occur if the female student-athlete does not receive positive feedback supporting their role as an athlete (playing time, awards, recognitions). If it becomes clear to the athlete that they will not be a starter, or they are limited in their competitive playing time, that may also diminish the value placed on their athletic role.

In addition, if the time requirements required for participation in athletics takes away from time needed to achieve success in the classroom, causing a lower GPA, the student-athlete may also withdraw from the sport, citing a need to focus on their academics to achieve graduation.

I hypothesized that the strength of the athletic identity would increase throughout the collegiate career of the student-athlete. Identity theory suggested that the more an individual receives praise, awards, or recognition, the more committed they become to that identity that produces that type of ego-building feedback. While DII student-athletes may not receive as much media recognition as their DI counterparts, the NCAA DII regionalization model, along with the ability to compete for more championships than their DI counterparts, may provide that essential reinforcement to the athletic identity ego of the DII athlete. Being a part of a smaller institutional setting (than DI), may provide the DII athlete the opportunity to build relationships with professors, staff, classmates, and within the community. By developing these relationships, they may receive more praise and recognition in their daily campus interactions than that of a student that is on a large, more formal campus size.

The more years a student-athlete participates in their sport, they often have a greater opportunity to receive conference or regional awards which would boost their athletic identity perception. Recognition on campus by professors, peers, and support staff will also grow from freshmen to senior year. The NCAA has had an emphasis on creating and supporting many types of public awards that provide recognition to NCAA athletes, to encourage this type of praise. Through the social media, there is a venue for NCAA DII athletes to receive recognition and national notoriety.

To compare against previous studies such as Brewer et al. (1993, p. 13) study suggested, "…as college students mature and become more exposed to variety of activities and influences, their exclusive identification with the athletic role decreases." This study examined AIMS scores from freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors NSIC student-

athletes. Significance was not found in AIMS score growth from freshmen to senior status ($p > .05$)

The difference between this research study and previous studies may be attributed to the gender, level, and athletic scholarship availabilities to the group's studies. For future research studies, a longitudinal or qualitative study may assist in a more detailed measurement of athletic identity as student-athletes move from freshmen to senior status. The longitudinal, qualitative study method may also provide a greater understanding of athletic identity strength as a student-athlete upon entering the institution, and provide insight and what specific experience, or choice, altered the athletic identity.

Due to the human growth period the collegiate student-athlete is transition through, it may be beneficial for the coaching staff or support staff to note any change in the athletic identity status of their student-athletes. If the athletic role becomes too strong, it may cause emotional and psychological distress upon eligibility exhaustion from that sport. As such it may be healthier for an athlete to move towards a weaker athletic identity over time (Webb, Nasco, Riley, & Headrick, 1998). Athletic department programming, university programming, or support staff that works with student-athletes may want to also consider the importance of providing the tools necessary to cope with athletic identity withdrawal that may occur abruptly upon graduation as an additional component of the athletic department obligations to the student-athlete.

Specially noted in this study was the scoring of the sophomore class. The sophomore student-athletes scored the lowest in athletic identity. This again may be the year with the moment of clarity. Sophomores begin to have a greater understand of the expectations of

being a successful student on campus and the time commitment required in classes and their major program. Additionally, they are also beginning to understand the time requirement of being an athlete and the expectations and requirements needed to be a successful member of a NCAA DII program.

The sophomore student-athlete also may begin to realize what their individual strengths are academically and athletically. With self-evaluation, they may determine that it serves them better to focus on their academics due to a lack of success as an athlete. On the opposite end, you may have a female athlete who is finding great success in their athletic role and begins to allocate additional time to their athletic identity. Athletic identity and academic identity are not on one continuum, however there may be a great self-identification in one of the roles that consumes the time and intensity at which the individual is invested in that role. The sophomore year appears to be the year in which the student-athlete begins to have a greater sense self-identification and shapes their time, goals, and relationships around the stronger identity.

This study is just a snapshot of one population group of NCAA sophomore student-athletes that participate in the NSIC conference. Sophomore student-athletes may be at a crossroads of their identity, and may be at a very influential period of their life with course selection, relationships they engage in, and how they perceive their success academically and athletically, and how those success (or failures) reflects on their self-identification process. Freshmen student-athletes on campus often receive additional training sessions and programming to prepare them for life at college and away from home. Many universities focus on the student development phase of that first year and devote resources to the transition

process from high school to college campus. As students enter their sophomore year, there is less programming specifically working with sophomore student athletes as they continue their transition into campus life as a 2nd year student. Students often find housing off campus for their sophomore year, pulling them away from campus engagement activities and growth and development opportunities. Off-campus student begin to engage in activities that are comfortable to them and are not required to attend a diverse range of activities that were required of 1st year students.

Sophomores may also be trying to find their own independence from their parents as they navigate the development of their identities, or on the flip side, not being able to work towards independence and autonomy and relying on their parents for continued guidance, emotional and financial support to make choices.

PPAIS

The study also examined the influence sub-dimensions for the athletic identity using the PPAIS, Public Private Athletic Identity Survey, which explores public and private athletic identities. The Private athletic identity is concerned with how we see ourselves and is usually [described as being unavailable for public scrutiny]–it includes our attitudes, belief, feelings and emotions (Symes, 2010). The public identity is concerned with how we think others see us, or judge us. Symes (2010) indicated that they are not opposite ends of the athletic identity sub-dimensional scale. Both private and public identities are closely aligned and may impact behavior and/or choices.

In this research study, female student-athletes that participated in a basketball, soccer, softball and volleyball, had a total mean score of M = 34.5930 (SD = 3.64134), the private

mean score was M = 21.8643 (SD = 2.47547), and the public mean score was M = 12.7286 (SD = 3.64134). When comparing to Nasco and Webb (2006) and Whipple's (2009) studies, the mean scores were very similar to those two studies. This indicated that the PPAIS demonstrated consistency across samples and that the instrument worked as it was intended to. Nasco and Webb's (2006) study found that the PPAIS score strongly correlated with the AIMS total scores ($r = .74$, $p < .01$). This study also found that the PPAIS total score had a strong relationship to the AIMS score ($r = .633$, $p < .01$). There was also a strong moderate, to strong correlation between AIMS scores and the private sub scale scores ($r = .562$, $p < 0.01$), correlation between AIMS scores and public sub scale scores ($r = .442$, $p < 0.01$).

When analyzing the strength of the athletic identity and the influence of the public and private sub-dimension identities, it was found that the private athletic identity, that the student-athlete thinks and feels like an athlete, is greater than public Athletic identity. While DII athletics has a very high level of competition, with extrinsic awards (scholarships, All-American, All-Conference, Team Championships) it does not receive the level of social media exposure and scrutiny that NCAA Division I athletics gets on their own campus, within their communities, on television, and on internet and social media exchanges. It is not surprising that the Division II student-athletes had a lower correlation between athletic identity and private athletic identity due to the level of intrinsic motivation it takes to be a NCAA Division II student-athlete.

Identity Foreclosure

It is important to understand the strength of the athletic identity in the student-athlete as over-identification to the athletic role may result in identity foreclosure and poor career

planning (Murphy et al., 1996). Adler and Adler (1985) noted that one of the consequences of identity foreclosure is the inability to foresee and plan for future roles. Miller and Kerr (2003) suggested that identity foreclosure may be unique to higher competition level athletes. This study only examined the NCAA Division II student-athlete.

I assumed that athletic identity would increase throughout the athletic career and that identity foreclosure would have a similar result increase from freshmen to senior status. The greater investment into the athletic identity, the greater foreclosed a student-athlete would be on other areas of their life. The results from this study indicated that there was not a parallel relationship between the two areas. Seniors who had the second highest score of athletic identity also had the highest levels of identity foreclosure and lowest levels of career maturity. Sophomores scored the lowest level of identity foreclosure, as well as the lowest on athletic identity, indicating they are in a pivotal period of their life where they are open to exploring alternative identities, or creating a stronger athletic identity.

When examining identity foreclosure, this study found a total m = 15.1910, SD = 4.47707). When compared to Murphy et al.'s (1996) study, which, produced a *m* = 14.79, SD = 5.25) and Whipple's (2009) study with m = 15.61, SD = 5.63, the DIII population had the highest total mean scores levels on identity foreclosure, then the DII population, and the DI players having the lowest identity foreclosure scores. Overall, the data did not support the researcher's hypothesis that the female student-athlete that had a higher athletic identity would also have a stronger identity foreclosure.

An understanding of student-athlete identity and identity foreclosure levels through the student-athletes career may be beneficial to support staff as they work with student-

athletes towards graduation. As the student-athlete begins to invest a greater amount of time into their sport goals and build campus relationships based off of their athletic team status they may become foreclosed in other areas of their human growth development. Support staff may provide inserts of programming to assist in delaying the identity foreclosure to provide the individual opportunities to continue exploring and engaging in opportunities outside their sport sphere.

Career Maturity

This study analyzed the NCAA DII population using the updated CMI-R form. This study indicated that student-athletes recorded a mean score of M = 18.2261, SD = 3.76375. When compared to previous research studies that have investigated NCAA athletes (Murphy et al., 1996; Whipple, 2009) the individuals in this study scored higher in their survey results. There was no evidence to support why this happened, it could be possible that that the type of student-athlete that attends a Division II university has a different background and preparation than do its DI, DIII counterparts. This would be an area that could value from additional research to provide insight into career maturity of the NCAA athlete.

The research for this study indicated that seniors had the second highest mean score in athletic identity, and had the lowest career maturity score. This was an interesting observation from the data results. It may be that the seniors were experience insecurities towards career maturity at the time of the test taking as they entered their last semester of eligibility. Sophomore scored the highest in career maturity, which may be a good sign as they enter into the time frame in which they are required by the NCAA to have declared a major. Freshmen who are just entering their collegiate academic experience were the highest scoring group

year. It may be that being a recent graduate, they had recent academic success and felt confident in the current major they had selected coming into college.

Career maturity should be at the forefront of support staff, advisors and coaches. Support staff and advisors should be providing check-ins with the student-athletes on their choices that support growth and development of both their hard and soft skill sets. Coaches often build in these skill sets through the season with leadership training, team rules, and are also developed through daily interactions with teammates, support staff, and coaches. Competition also prepares the student-athlete for life after college with goal setting, navigating hardships and obstacles, and building confidence through repetitions and success.

While these tools are a part of everyday life as a student-athlete, additional monitoring may assist in directing student-athletes that get off path due to their strong commitment to their athletic role. Providing mandatory career readiness sessions that focus on resume building, interview skills and internships may assist in building the confidence level of the student-athlete as they near graduation, or are injured and no longer able to participate in sport. For athletes that have built their friendships, relationships, and experiences around being a member of a team, it can be a daunting experience to head into life after college without that support net available for them. For many athletes, being a part of a team, having practice, going to weights and being around their teammates is their routine. When a routine is taken away, the student-athlete can enter into mental depression. Understanding that a large percentage of student-athletes will not go on to play professional sports, athletic departments may need to do their due diligence to provide the support services and training to prepare student-athletes for life after athletics.

Limitations

Although procedures were taken to reduce potential limitations, this study's results should be viewed in context. The population sample that was surveyed for this research consisted of only NCAA Division II female student-athletes that participated only within the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference that is geographically located in the North Central Region of the Midwest. There was limited participation in the study by non-Caucasians which may have provided additional research data and perspective to the study. This sample population of NSIC student-athletes also reflected a greater number of first-year and sophomore participants, compared to junior and senior participation, with seniors being the smallest contributing group to the survey.

Due to the nature of the researcher's employment as an NSIC softball coach, there were a greater number of softball participants in the study than the other sports: basketball, soccer and volleyball. Softball participation was higher due to my connection with fellow head softball coach colleagues.

Since the survey was online it was essential to connect with coaches and administrators to obtain email addresses. An additional limitation in obtaining e-mail address, was one athletic director did not forward on the information to their institution coaches due to not understanding the IRB guidelines for students within the Minnesota State System. More schools were located in Minnesota (and a member of the MN State System) that responded to the survey than the other geographic regions of South Dakota, North Dakota, Iowa, and Nebraska, this may have also influenced the subject population diversity population that was sampled.

A final limitation was the way the survey was distributed to the population. The data was collected electronically through Survey Monkey, and not in-person group setting in which the researcher was able to address the participants prior to their participation in the survey.

A follow-up limitation to not having all the participants together in a group setting, was that the students may not have reserved enough time to complete the survey once they started. Since the survey could be done from the student's Smartphone, IPAD, Labtop computer, or other electronic device, the participant could have been distracted while taking the survey, or not completed the survey all in one sitting time. In an in-person group setting, an organized time block allocated by the head coach may have provide additional completed surveys.

Due to the geographical location of all the institutions, and the number of sport teams surveyed with two teams (soccer, volleyball) in the Championship calendar schedule of their season and two teams (basketball/softball) in the non-Championship segment of their season. There were freshmen that responded to this survey that yet not yet officially completed in their first NCAA DII contest.

Implications for Research and Recommendation for Future Research

This study has added to the literature regarding NCAA Division II female student-athlete that participated on team sports (basketball, soccer, softball, volleyball) in the NSIC Conference. The NSIC was located in the North Central United States which represents the demographic variables of that area. Similar research studies should be conducted at a wide variety of NCAA DII institutions in order to increase the demographic backgrounds and get a

larger population sample of female student-athletes. Athletic identity strength, level of identity foreclosure, and career maturity on the female student-athlete could also be conducted analyzing participants at NCAA DI and NCAA III and compare those athletes with NCAA DII female student athletes using the same variables used in this study: ethnicity, year in sport, type of higher education institution attended, type of sport participating in, scholarship vs. non-scholarship athlete, revenue vs. non-revue athlete.

Future research could consider in-depth qualitative studies focusing on NCAA DII female student-athletes. Research investigating athletic identity and identify foreclosure may benefit from longitudinal, qualitative analyses that may better specify the relationships among strength of athletic identify and level of identity foreclosure.

Based on the findings of this study, further research pertaining to the female student-athlete could be done at the NCAA Division II level with additional team or individual sports surveyed, additional geographical conferences surveyed, and/or surveying Division I or Division III female student-athletes.

Implication for Practice

Institutions spend a great deal of time, resources, staffing, and programming directed at the first-year student experience. There is a significant focus on campus to make the first year experience a welcoming, educational experience, encouraging students to explore identity development through on-campus learning communities, first year experience programs, diversity courses, advising meetings, and general life in the on-campus dormitories that provide the student daily access to peer advisors and residential hall directors. As freshmen student-athletes, students often times have team policies that focus on required team

study, additional meetings with the coaching staff, and, as a group, they often spend a great deal of time together off the field in the dorms, eating together at the on-campus dining facility, or attending the same liberal arts classes.

As seniors and juniors, student-athletes have found their academic major, have invested in relationships over the past 3-4 season that have supported their lifestyle as a student-athlete, and have a sense of identity based on their collegiate experience to that point. They might also be more independent and confident of their own choices, not seeking as much direction from parents, advisors, coaches, and support staff on day to day activities. They continue to use these relationships to support their identity, but they have already begun foreclosing on other identities based on the choices they have made in their collegiate career over the previous years. While their identities become stable, programming may need to be considered to provide them confidence in their career maturity skills and assure them of their career readiness as they near graduation. Continued programming and attention by those near the athlete (parents, coaches, support staff) may need to be conscious of not only providing positive feedback on the athletic success that upperclassmen generally find, but also the academic successes they achieve as they complete their degree requirements.

The group that may need more additional focus is the sophomore student-athlete. It is a group that often goes under the radar on campus with programming. Sophomores may be at the crucial time of their life where they are searching for their identity and are going through an important human development stage in which they are now required to make decisions on their own. As a sophomore, students are able to pick new term classes with the assistance of an advisor but they do have more autonomy of their choices than an incoming freshmen

student does. Sophomore student may be now living off campus and not spending as much time on campus participating in campus events and programming. They may also be finding their own independence separate from their parents, or continuing to seek out their parents' advice. A students relationship may be based of emotional or financially support need. Sophomores may also invest less in relationships outside of their sport sphere. Roommates may be teammates, and they may spend little time after class on campus to interact with non-athletes.

This study indicated that female student-athletes a stronger athletic identity when they received an athletic scholarship. While there is some opportunity to become a professional in a women's team sport, the number who do so generally come from a higher competitive level, NCAA DI. NCAA DII female student-athletes that receive a scholarship may find a greater justification in their address this issue through conversation, programming, and events to support student-athletes that specifically participate in the non-revenue sports to give them a greater sense of being an athlete at that institution, which may provide a greater strength to the athletic identity.

Summary

This research study was conducted to examine the constructs of athletic identity, identity foreclosure and career maturity in a NCAA Division II female student-athlete. Research has suggested that there is a correlation between athletic identity and identity foreclosure, however the majority of these studies were conducted on highly competitive NCAA DI male and female student-athletes. Having a higher level of athletic identity at a higher competition level does make sense. It also would lend to finding that an athlete that has

to invest a greater amount of time to be prepared to compete at the higher competition level, may limit themselves in other opportunities that develop other facets of their identity. This researched explored athletic identity at the NCAA Division II, level which also has a competitive aspect to being an athlete at that level, and that operates under the same NCAA weekly and season time restrictions/requirements that Division I athletes function under (20 hours/week, 4 hours a day, off only 1 day a week).

The knowledge of the athletic identity strength level of the NCAA Division II female student-athlete could be very useful information to better develop academic advising, career counseling, and vocational development opportunities for student-athletes, especially sophomores who may not have as much focus as first year and junior/senior students may have.

Due to funding, resources, staffing and the overall make up a Division II institutions, career centers and academic advisors specific to student-athletes are not as common as what can be found at the Division I level. At the DI level, and at highly competitive institutions, including the NCAA itself ("NCAA After the Game", 2016) career centers are being put in place or are in place designed to assist the student-athlete transition from being a collegiate athlete to being prepared for life after graduation. As an athlete, often the socialization into one's sport and team culture limits, or foreclosures, on opportunities for vocational development specific to a future career. These high levels of foreclosure can cause student athletes to fail to prepare for life after athletics and, therefore, not explore career opportunities.

While the NCAA data indicate that female student-athletes have higher GPA's and graduate at a higher rate than their male counterparts in their respective sports, the NCAA Division II female athletes have lower GPA's and graduation rates compared to their NCAA I and NCAA DIII peers. While NCAA DII institutions may not have the same operational funding, staffing and facilities as their DI and DIII counterparts possible a smaller scale version of academic advising and career development services could provide an opportunity to increase DII female-student athletes' success rate. If that is not an option, then working with the coaches to create a greater understanding of a female student athletes needs and programming opportunities through the academic year.

This study found that coaches play a very insignificant role in the mentoring of student-athletes in regard to helping them navigate their career by assisting with them with their vocational choice and career readiness. That role is still primarily influenced still by parents/guardians in the population sampled. Most research conducted on the student-athlete is done at the Division I level (estimated at 350 DI institutions). There are roughly 300 NCAA DII and 450 NCAA Division III that serve a greater population of student-athletes encompassing all types of demographic variables that could be explored. With increased focus on studies that are outside of the NCAA DI student-athletes, more knowledge could be gained to broaden the literature in the field of athlete research at all levels, and especially on the female athlete population. There is very limited data available to provide specific student-athlete programming specifically for the female athlete. While the NCAA has sponsored athletics since 1906, primarily for men's programs until 1973, when many women's programs starting up much later due to Title IX legislation. Over the past 45 years, athletic department

programming has been based on the male athletic model, and the professional opportunities that male athletes may have. This research study aides in the process of collecting data on the female student-athlete at Division II institutions and broadening the literature in the field of female-student athlete research.

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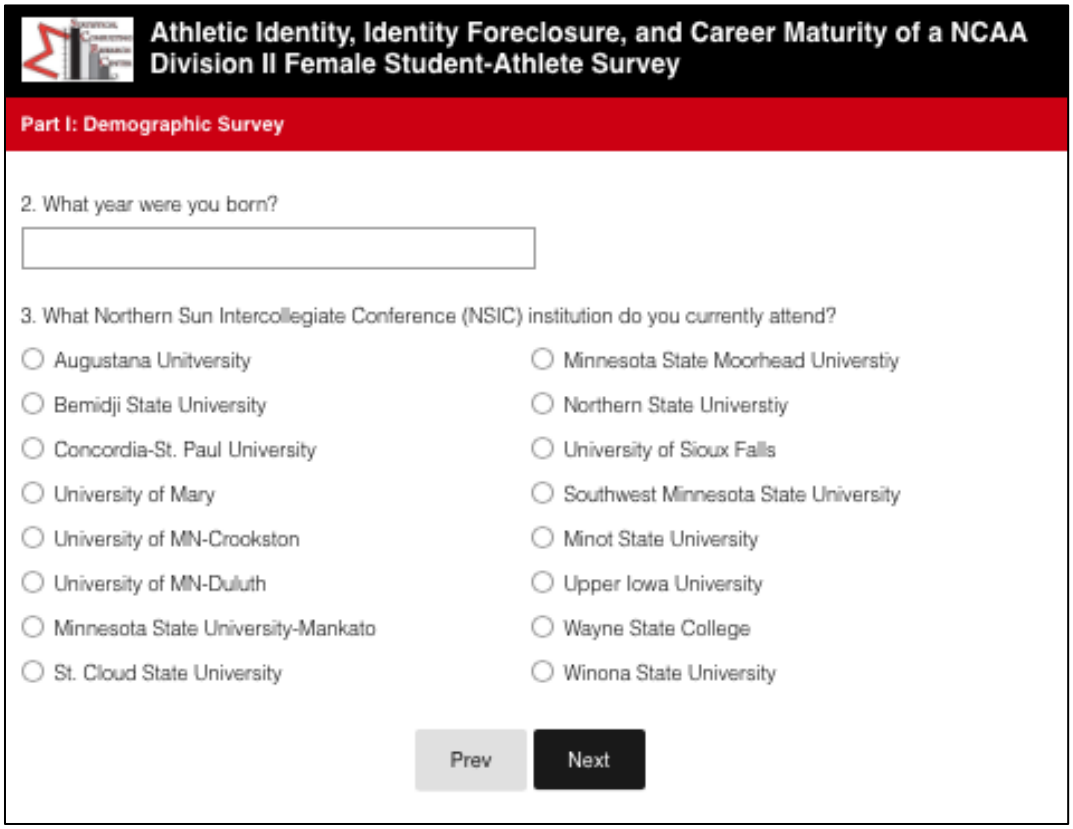
Appendix A: Survey Instrument



Athletic Identity, Identity Foreclosure, and Career Maturity of a NCAA Division II Female Student-Athlete Survey

Part I: Demographic Survey

2. What year were you born?

3. What Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC) institution do you currently attend?

- ○ Augustana Unitversity
- ○ Bemidji State University
- ○ Concordia-St. Paul University
- ○ University of Mary
- ○ University of MN-Crookston
- ○ University of MN-Duluth
- ○ Minnesota State University-Mankato
- ○ St. Cloud State University
- ○ Minnesota State Moorhead Universtiy
- ○ Northern State Universtiy
- ○ University of Sioux Falls
- ○ Southwest Minnesota State University
- ○ Minot State University
- ○ Upper Iowa University
- ○ Wayne State College
- ○ Winona State University

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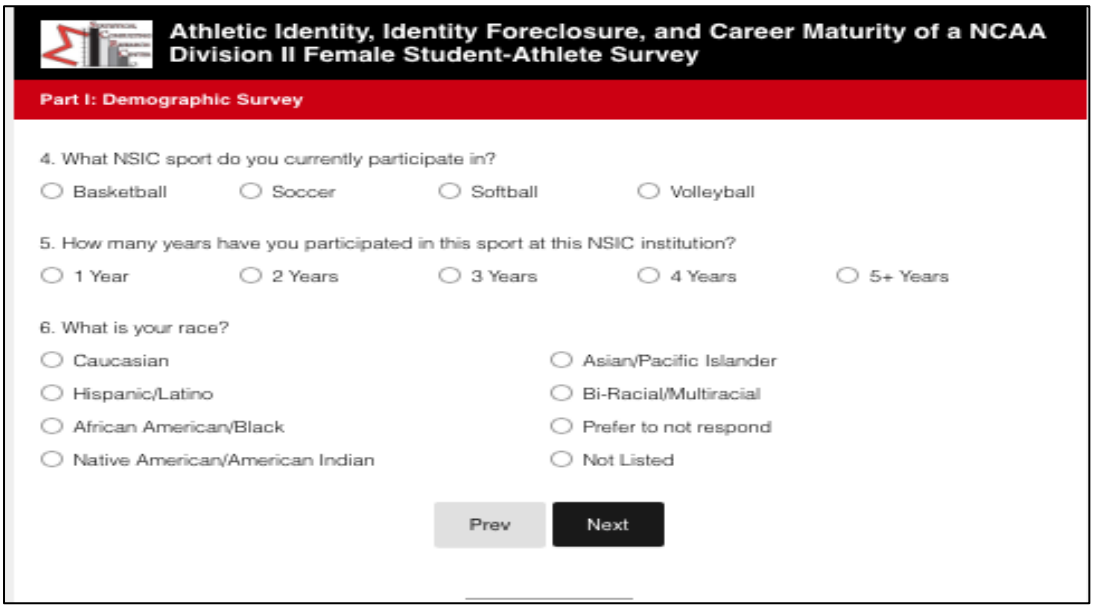

Athletic Identity, Identity Foreclosure, and Career Maturity of a NCAA Division II Female Student-Athlete Survey

Part I: Demographic Survey

4. What NSIC sport do you currently participate in?

○ Basketball ○ Soccer ○ Softball ○ Volleyball

5. How many years have you participated in this sport at this NSIC institution?

○ 1 Year ○ 2 Years ○ 3 Years ○ 4 Years ○ 5+ Years

6. What is your race?

- ○ Caucasian
- ○ Hispanic/Latino
- ○ African American/Black
- ○ Native American/American Indian
- ○ Asian/Pacific Islander
- ○ Bi-Racial/Multiracial
- ○ Prefer to not respond
- ○ Not Listed

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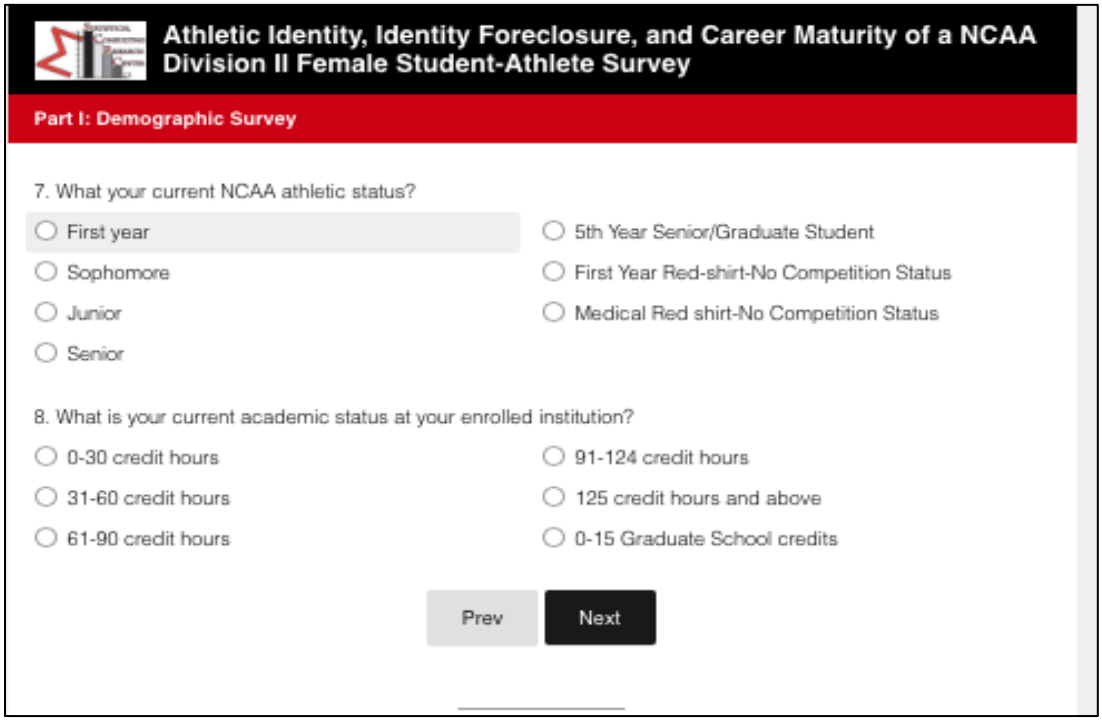

Athletic Identity, Identity Foreclosure, and Career Maturity of a NCAA Division II Female Student-Athlete Survey

Part I: Demographic Survey

7. What your current NCAA athletic status?

- ○ First year
- ○ Sophomore
- ○ Junior
- ○ Senior
- ○ 5th Year Senior/Graduate Student
- ○ First Year Red-shirt-No Competition Status
- ○ Medical Red shirt-No Competition Status

8. What is your current academic status at your enrolled institution?

- ○ 0-30 credit hours
- ○ 31-60 credit hours
- ○ 61-90 credit hours
- ○ 91-124 credit hours
- ○ 125 credit hours and above
- ○ 0-15 Graduate School credits

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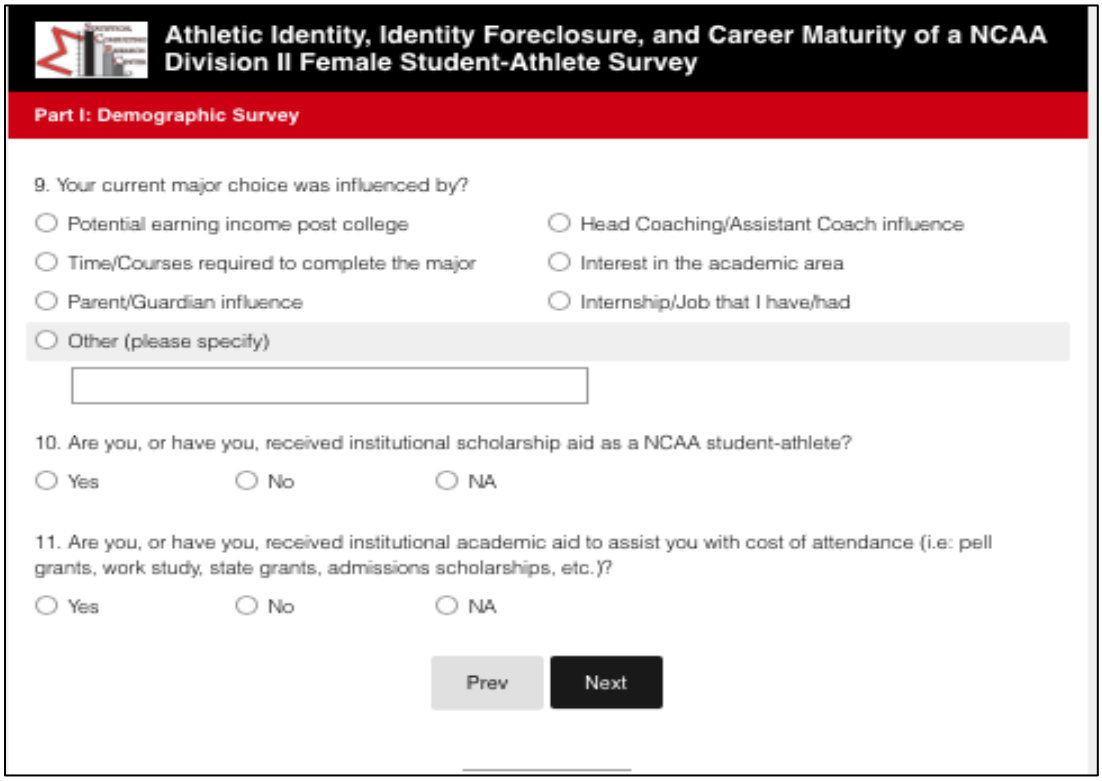

Athletic Identity, Identity Foreclosure, and Career Maturity of a NCAA Division II Female Student-Athlete Survey

Part I: Demographic Survey

9. Your current major choice was influenced by?

- ○ Potential earning income post college
- ○ Time/Courses required to complete the major
- ○ Parent/Guardian influence
- ○ Other (please specify)
- ○ Head Coaching/Assistant Coach influence
- ○ Interest in the academic area
- ○ Internship/Job that I have/had

10. Are you, or have you, received institutional scholarship aid as a NCAA student-athlete?

○ Yes ○ No ○ NA

11. Are you, or have you, received institutional academic aid to assist you with cost of attendance (i.e: pell grants, work study, state grants, admissions scholarships, etc.)?

○ Yes ○ No ○ NA

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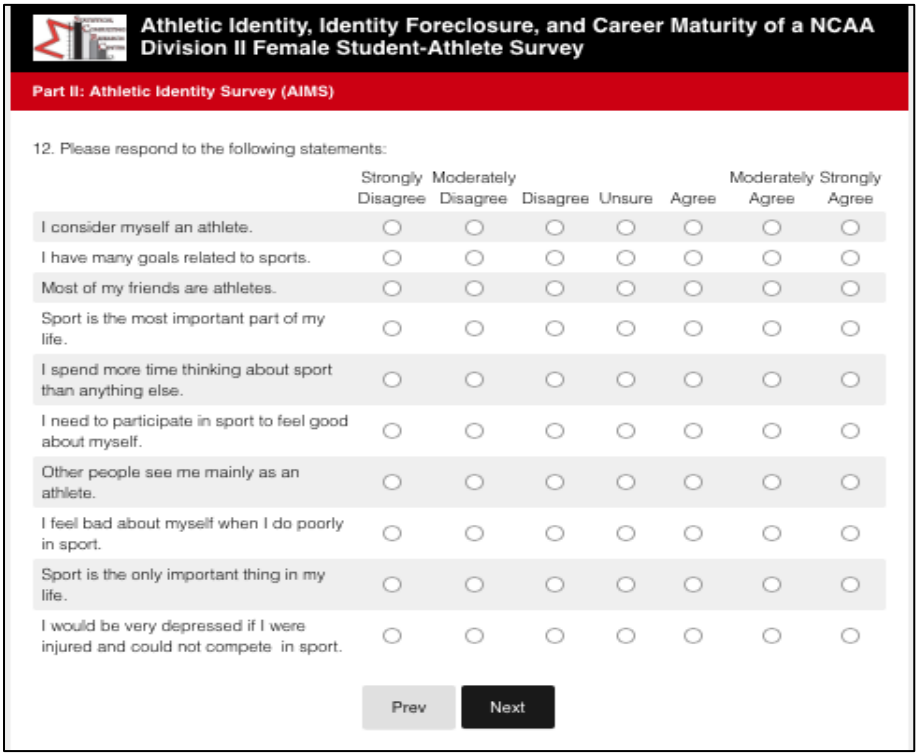

Athletic Identity, Identity Foreclosure, and Career Maturity of a NCAA Division II Female Student-Athlete Survey

Part II: Athletic Identity Survey (AIMS)

12. Please respond to the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
I consider myself an athlete.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I have many goals related to sports.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Most of my friends are athletes.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Sport is the most important part of my life.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I spend more time thinking about sport than anything else.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I need to participate in sport to feel good about myself.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other people see me mainly as an athlete.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel bad about myself when I do poorly in sport.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Sport is the only important thing in my life.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would be very depressed if I were injured and could not compete in sport.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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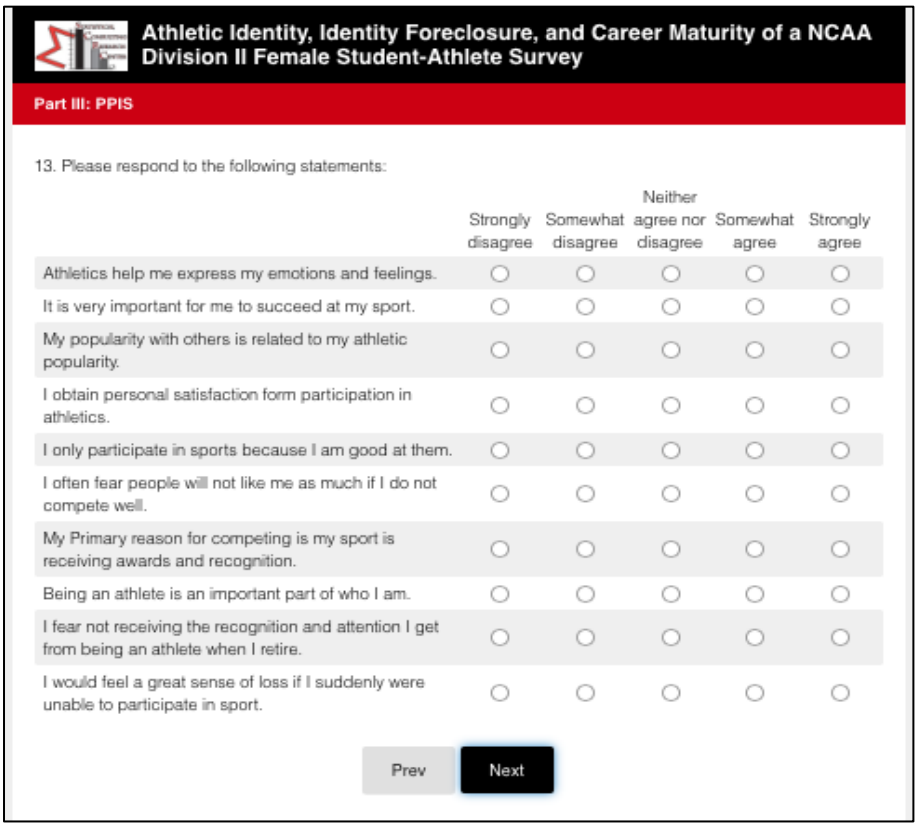

Athletic Identity, Identity Foreclosure, and Career Maturity of a NCAA Division II Female Student-Athlete Survey

Part III: PPIS

13. Please respond to the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Athletics help me express my emotions and feelings.	○	○	○	○	○
It is very important for me to succeed at my sport.	○	○	○	○	○
My popularity with others is related to my athletic popularity.	○	○	○	○	○
I obtain personal satisfaction form participation in athletics.	○	○	○	○	○
I only participate in sports because I am good at them.	○	○	○	○	○
I often fear people will not like me as much if I do not compete well.	○	○	○	○	○
My Primary reason for competing is my sport is receiving awards and recognition.	○	○	○	○	○
Being an athlete is an important part of who I am.	○	○	○	○	○
I fear not receiving the recognition and attention I get from being an athlete when I retire.	○	○	○	○	○
I would feel a great sense of loss if I suddenly were unable to participate in sport.	○	○	○	○	○

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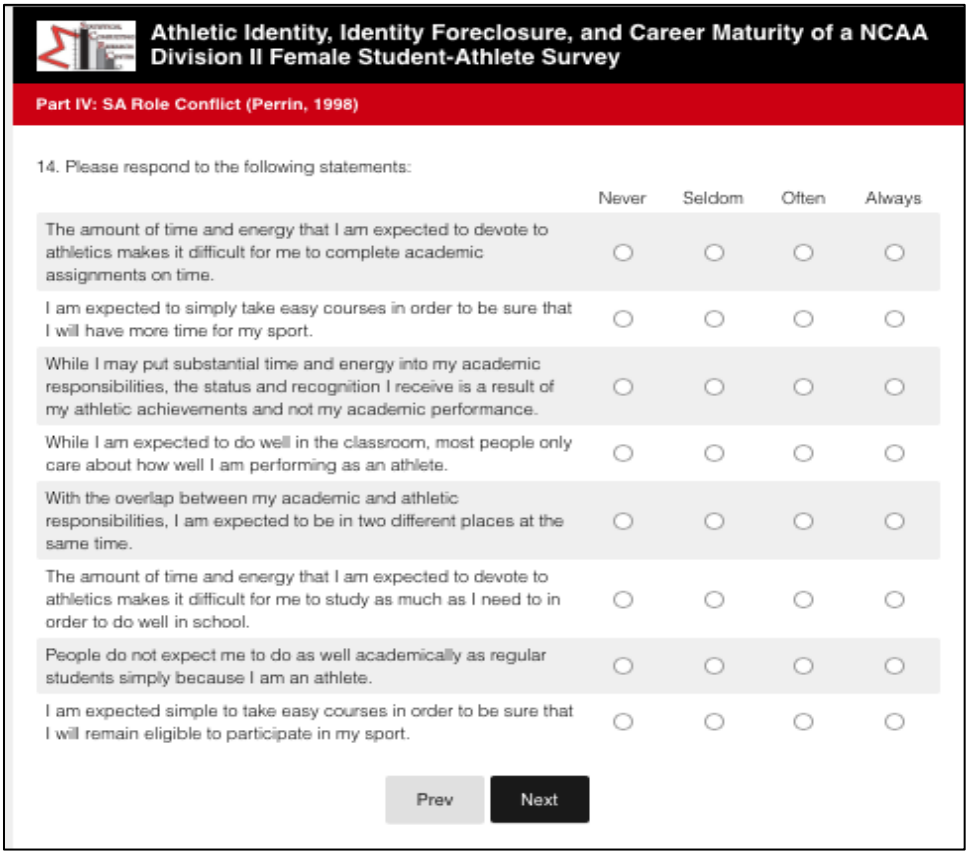

Athletic Identity, Identity Foreclosure, and Career Maturity of a NCAA Division II Female Student-Athlete Survey

Part IV: SA Role Conflict (Perrin, 1998)

14. Please respond to the following statements:

	Never	Seldom	Often	Always
The amount of time and energy that I am expected to devote to athletics makes it difficult for me to complete academic assignments on time.	○	○	○	○
I am expected to simply take easy courses in order to be sure that I will have more time for my sport.	○	○	○	○
While I may put substantial time and energy into my academic responsibilities, the status and recognition I receive is a result of my athletic achievements and not my academic performance.	○	○	○	○
While I am expected to do well in the classroom, most people only care about how well I am performing as an athlete.	○	○	○	○
With the overlap between my academic and athletic responsibilities, I am expected to be in two different places at the same time.	○	○	○	○
The amount of time and energy that I am expected to devote to athletics makes it difficult for me to study as much as I need to in order to do well in school.	○	○	○	○
People do not expect me to do as well academically as regular students simply because I am an athlete.	○	○	○	○
I am expected simple to take easy courses in order to be sure that I will remain eligible to participate in my sport.	○	○	○	○

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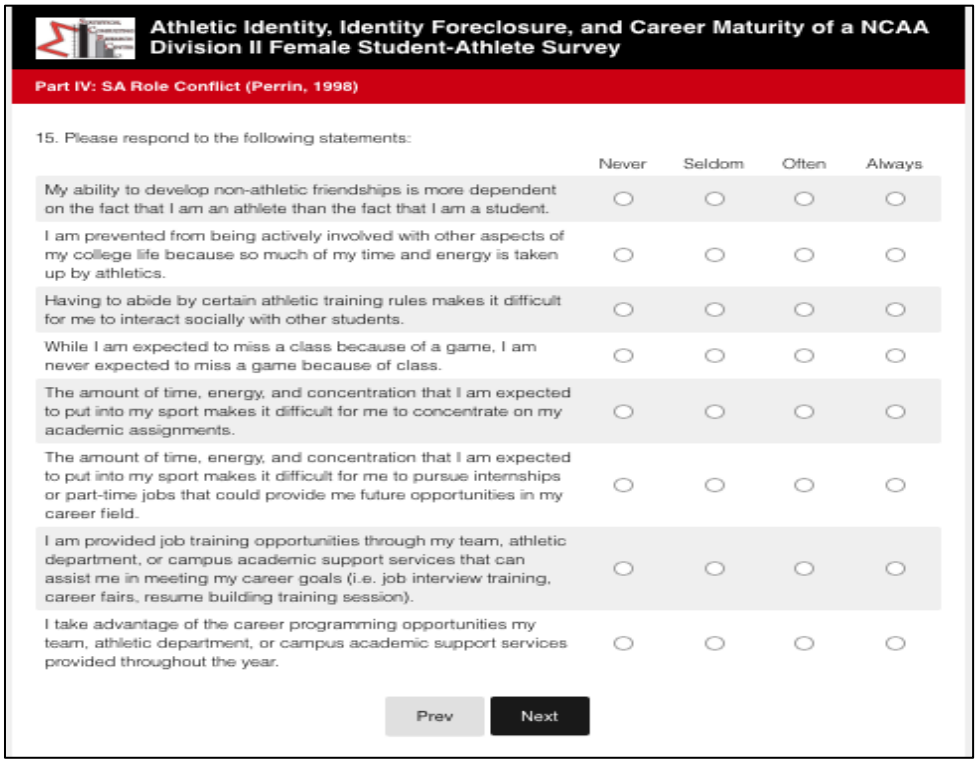

Athletic Identity, Identity Foreclosure, and Career Maturity of a NCAA Division II Female Student-Athlete Survey

Part IV: SA Role Conflict (Perrin, 1998)

15. Please respond to the following statements:

	Never	Seldom	Often	Always
My ability to develop non-athletic friendships is more dependent on the fact that I am an athlete than the fact that I am a student.	○	○	○	○
I am prevented from being actively involved with other aspects of my college life because so much of my time and energy is taken up by athletics.	○	○	○	○
Having to abide by certain athletic training rules makes it difficult for me to interact socially with other students.	○	○	○	○
While I am expected to miss a class because of a game, I am never expected to miss a game because of class.	○	○	○	○
The amount of time, energy, and concentration that I am expected to put into my sport makes it difficult for me to concentrate on my academic assignments.	○	○	○	○
The amount of time, energy, and concentration that I am expected to put into my sport makes it difficult for me to pursue internships or part-time jobs that could provide me future opportunities in my career field.	○	○	○	○
I am provided job training opportunities through my team, athletic department, or campus academic support services that can assist me in meeting my career goals (i.e. job interview training, career fairs, resume building training session).	○	○	○	○
I take advantage of the career programming opportunities my team, athletic department, or campus academic support services provided throughout the year.	○	○	○	○

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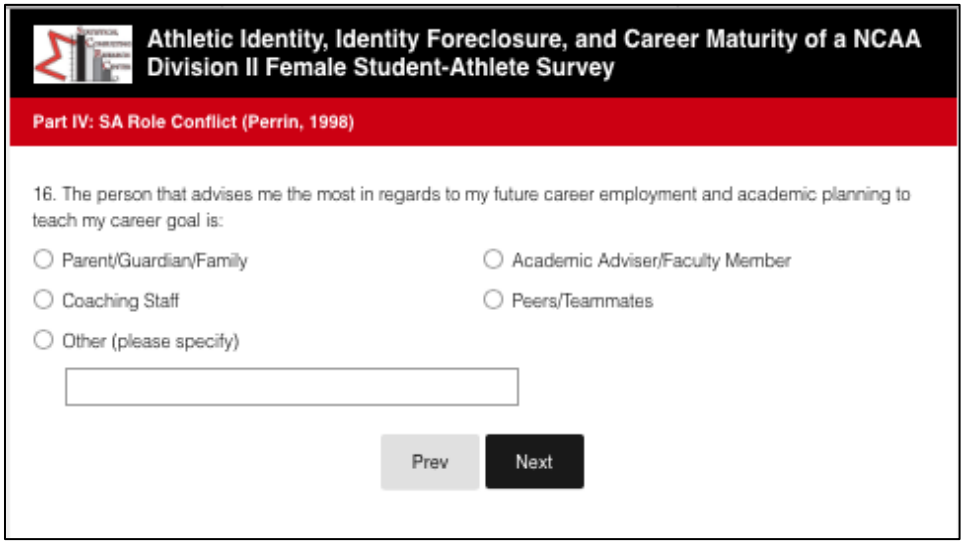

Athletic Identity, Identity Foreclosure, and Career Maturity of a NCAA Division II Female Student-Athlete Survey

Part IV: SA Role Conflict (Perrin, 1998)

16. The person that advises me the most in regards to my future career employment and academic planning to teach my career goal is:

- ○ Parent/Guardian/Family
- ○ Academic Adviser/Faculty Member
- ○ Coaching Staff
- ○ Peers/Teammates
- ○ Other (please specify)

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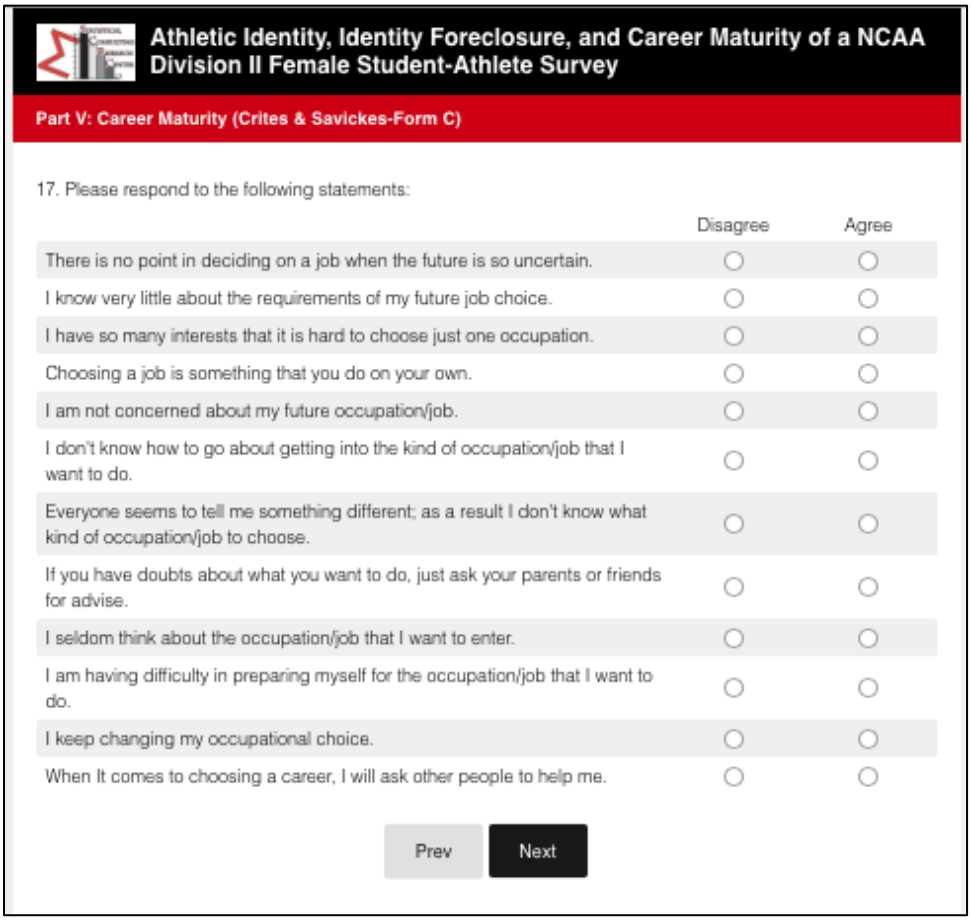

Athletic Identity, Identity Foreclosure, and Career Maturity of a NCAA Division II Female Student-Athlete Survey

Part V: Career Maturity (Crites & Savickes-Form C)

17. Please respond to the following statements:

	Disagree	Agree
There is no point in deciding on a job when the future is so uncertain.	○	○
I know very little about the requirements of my future job choice.	○	○
I have so many interests that it is hard to choose just one occupation.	○	○
Choosing a job is something that you do on your own.	○	○
I am not concerned about my future occupation/job.	○	○
I don't know how to go about getting into the kind of occupation/job that I want to do.	○	○
Everyone seems to tell me something different; as a result I don't know what kind of occupation/job to choose.	○	○
If you have doubts about what you want to do, just ask your parents or friends for advise.	○	○
I seldom think about the occupation/job that I want to enter.	○	○
I am having difficulty in preparing myself for the occupation/job that I want to do.	○	○
I keep changing my occupational choice.	○	○
When It comes to choosing a career, I will ask other people to help me.	○	○

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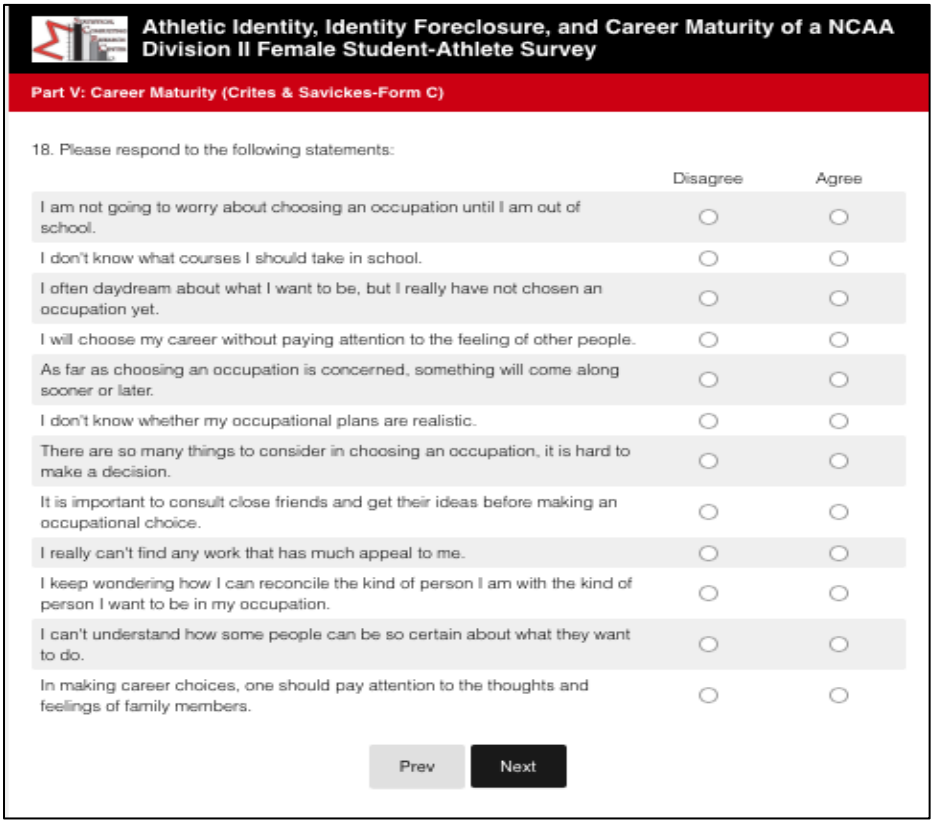

Athletic Identity, Identity Foreclosure, and Career Maturity of a NCAA Division II Female Student-Athlete Survey

Part V: Career Maturity (Crites & Savickes-Form C)

18. Please respond to the following statements:

	Disagree	Agree
I am not going to worry about choosing an occupation until I am out of school.	○	○
I don't know what courses I should take in school.	○	○
I often daydream about what I want to be, but I really have not chosen an occupation yet.	○	○
I will choose my career without paying attention to the feeling of other people.	○	○
As far as choosing an occupation is concerned, something will come along sooner or later.	○	○
I don't know whether my occupational plans are realistic.	○	○
There are so many things to consider in choosing an occupation, it is hard to make a decision.	○	○
It is important to consult close friends and get their ideas before making an occupational choice.	○	○
I really can't find any work that has much appeal to me.	○	○
I keep wondering how I can reconcile the kind of person I am with the kind of person I want to be in my occupation.	○	○
I can't understand how some people can be so certain about what they want to do.	○	○
In making career choices, one should pay attention to the thoughts and feelings of family members.	○	○

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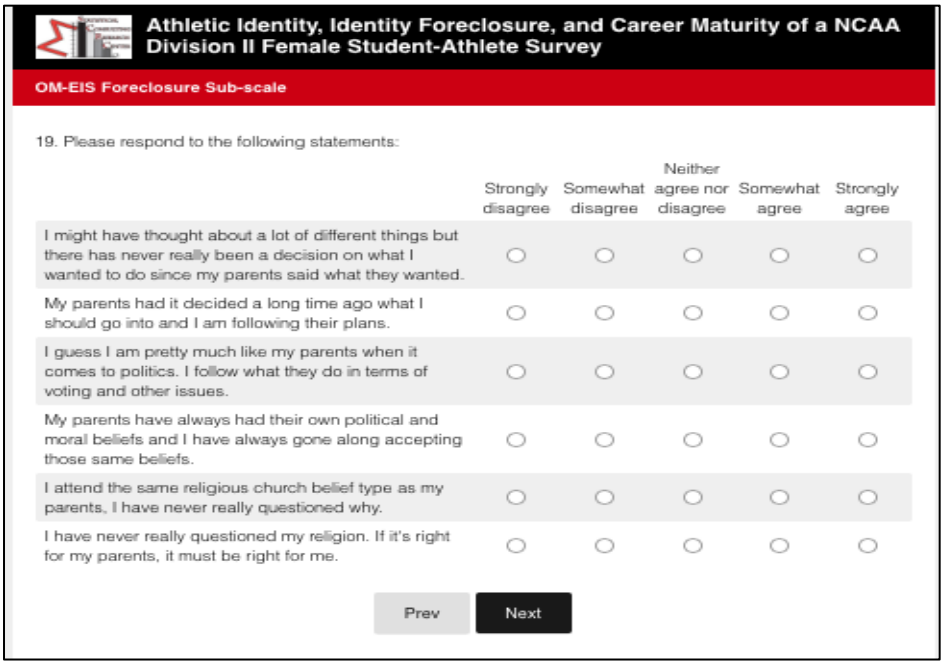

Athletic Identity, Identity Foreclosure, and Career Maturity of a NCAA Division II Female Student-Athlete Survey

OM-EIS Foreclosure Sub-scale

19. Please respond to the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I might have thought about a lot of different things but there has never really been a decision on what I wanted to do since my parents said what they wanted.	○	○	○	○	○
My parents had it decided a long time ago what I should go into and I am following their plans.	○	○	○	○	○
I guess I am pretty much like my parents when it comes to politics. I follow what they do in terms of voting and other issues.	○	○	○	○	○
My parents have always had their own political and moral beliefs and I have always gone along accepting those same beliefs.	○	○	○	○	○
I attend the same religious church belief type as my parents. I have never really questioned why.	○	○	○	○	○
I have never really questioned my religion. If it's right for my parents, it must be right for me.	○	○	○	○	○

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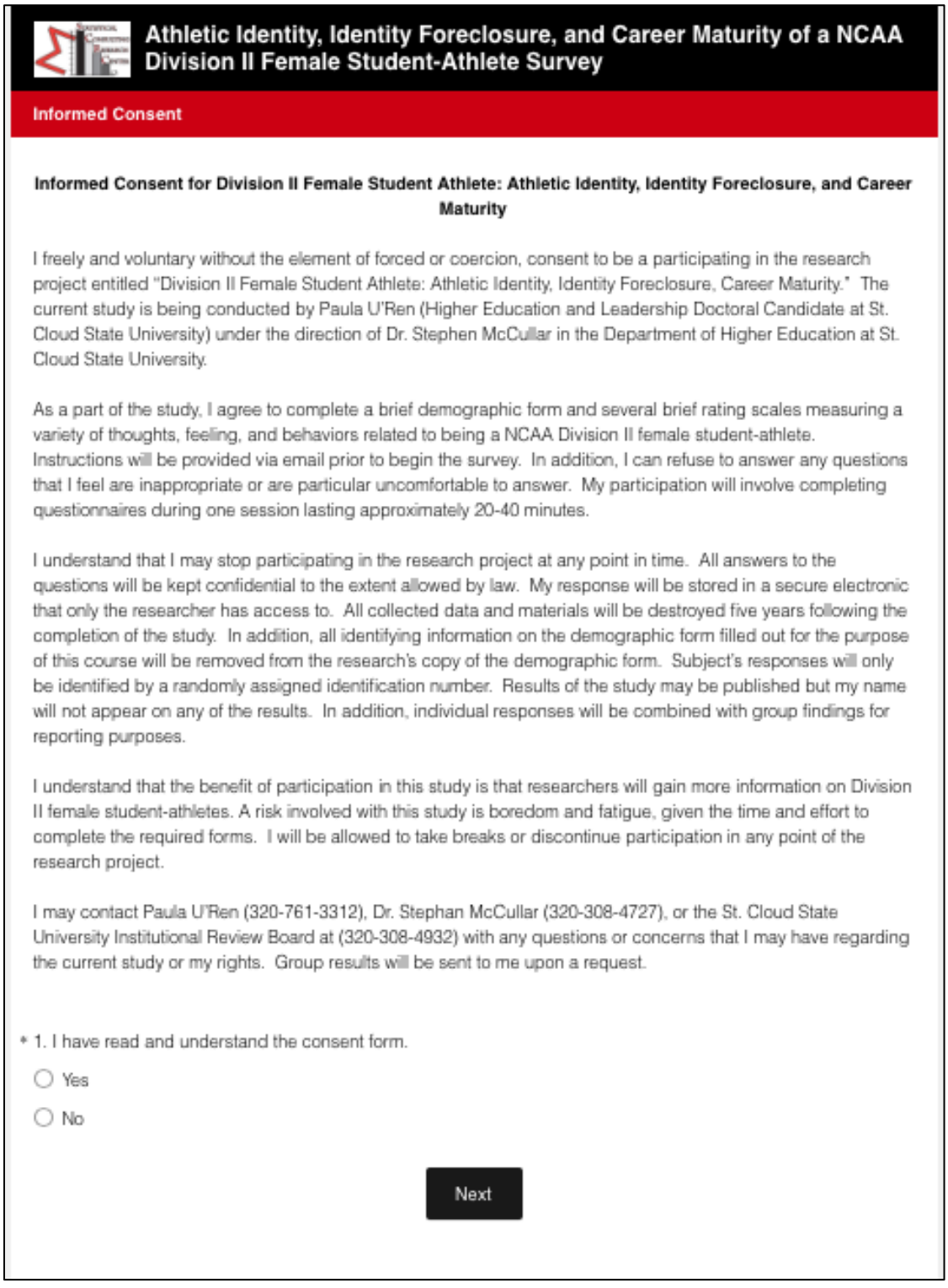
Appendix B: Consent Form and IRB Approval



Athletic Identity, Identity Foreclosure, and Career Maturity of a NCAA Division II Female Student-Athlete Survey

Informed Consent

Informed Consent for Division II Female Student Athlete: Athletic Identity, Identity Foreclosure, and Career Maturity

I freely and voluntary without the element of forced or coercion, consent to be a participating in the research project entitled "Division II Female Student Athlete: Athletic Identity, Identity Foreclosure, Career Maturity." The current study is being conducted by Paula U'Ren (Higher Education and Leadership Doctoral Candidate at St. Cloud State University) under the direction of Dr. Stephen McCullar in the Department of Higher Education at St. Cloud State University.

As a part of the study, I agree to complete a brief demographic form and several brief rating scales measuring a variety of thoughts, feeling, and behaviors related to being a NCAA Division II female student-athlete. Instructions will be provided via email prior to begin the survey. In addition, I can refuse to answer any questions that I feel are inappropriate or are particular uncomfortable to answer. My participation will involve completing questionnaires during one session lasting approximately 20-40 minutes.

I understand that I may stop participating in the research project at any point in time. All answers to the questions will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law. My response will be stored in a secure electronic that only the researcher has access to. All collected data and materials will be destroyed five years following the completion of the study. In addition, all identifying information on the demographic form filled out for the purpose of this course will be removed from the research's copy of the demographic form. Subject's responses will only be identified by a randomly assigned identification number. Results of the study may be published but my name will not appear on any of the results. In addition, individual responses will be combined with group findings for reporting purposes.

I understand that the benefit of participation in this study is that researchers will gain more information on Division II female student-athletes. A risk involved with this study is boredom and fatigue, given the time and effort to complete the required forms. I will be allowed to take breaks or discontinue participation in any point of the research project.

I may contact Paula U'Ren (320-761-3312), Dr. Stephan McCullar (320-308-4727), or the St. Cloud State University Institutional Review Board at (320-308-4932) with any questions or concerns that I may have regarding the current study or my rights. Group results will be sent to me upon a request.

* 1. I have read and understand the consent form.

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Next

ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

720 4th Avenue South MC 204K, St. Cloud, MN 56301-4498

Name: Paula U'Ren

Address 1217 11th Avenue SE
ST. Cloud, MN 56304 USA

Email: pjuren@stcloudstate.edu

IRB PROTOCOL DETERMINATION: Exempt Review

Project Title: Athletic identity, identity foreclosure, and career maturity of the Division II female team sport student-athlete

Advisor Steven McCullar

The Institutional Review Board has reviewed your protocol to conduct research involving human subjects. Your project has been: **APPROVED**

Advisor updated from Michael Mills 8/2/16

Please note the following important information concerning IRB projects:

- The principal investigator assumes the responsibilities for the protection of participants in this project. Any adverse events must be reported to the IRB as soon as possible (ex. research related injuries, harmful outcomes, significant withdrawal of subject population, etc.).

- For expedited or full board review, the principal investigator must submit a Continuing Review/Final Report form in advance of the expiration date indicated on this letter to report conclusion of the research or request an extension.

-Exempt review only requires the submission of a Continuing Review/Final Report form in advance of the expiration date indicated in this letter if an extension of time is needed.

- Approved consent forms display the official IRB stamp which documents approval and expiration dates. If a renewal is requested and approved, new consent forms will be officially stamped and reflect the new approval and expiration dates.

- The principal investigator must seek approval for any changes to the study (ex. research design, consent process, survey/interview instruments, funding source, etc.). The IRB reserves the right to review the research at any time.

If we can be of further assistance, feel free to contact the IRB at 320-308-3290 or email ri@stcloudstate.edu and please reference the SCSU IRB number when corresponding.

IRB Institutional Official:

Dr. Latha Ramakrishnan
Interim Associate Provost for Research
Dean of Graduate Studies

OFFICE USE ONLY

SCSU IRB# 1339 - 1632	**Type:** Exempt Review	**Today's Date:** 8/3/2016
1st Year Approval Date: 8/2/2016	**2nd Year Approval Date:**	**3rd Year Approval Date:**
1st Year Expiration Date: 8/1/2017	**2nd Year Expiration Date:**	**3rd Year Expiration Date:**