12-19-2005 NCAA-First GSR Numbers
Interview with Myles Brand, Walt Harrison, Kevin Lennon, Todd Petr, Eric Christianson

ERIC: Thank you for joining us today to discuss the NCAA's new Graduation Success Rate.

Joining me on the call today are the following individuals: Dr. Myles Brand, President of the NCAA; Dr. Walter Harrison, President of the University of Hartford. President Harrison is chair of the NCAA's Committee on Academic Performance; he's also chair of the NCAA Executive Committee. Also joining me are Kevin Lennon, NCAA Vice President for Membership Services; and Todd Petr, NCAA Managing Director for Research.

In just a moment, I'll turn the call over to President Brand for open comments, followed by opening comments by President Harrison and also by Kevin Lennon, who will explain some of the methodology behind our new Graduation Success Rate.

And after their opening comments, we will take questions from the news media on the line today.

I now would like to turn the call over to Dr. Brand.

DR. BRAND: Thank you, Eric. And thank you all for joining us today.

I'm very pleased to announce the first graduate success rate data. This is a very important shift in the way we calculate graduation rates.

The federally-mandated rate is a six-year

rate in which essentially the federal government, Department of Education, counts those who are beginning and looks at the same institution six years later and sees who graduates.

That's helpful, but inaccurate. It's inaccurate because it fails to take into account those student athletes who transfer into the program and those student athletes who exit the program.

If you take into account those student athletes who enter the program late, either from community college or from some other four-year institution and graduate, and take into account the student athletes who leave a particular athletic program and go somewhere else to graduate, and that's about 35 percent of all the student athletes, then you get a very different set of numbers.

And, in fact, what happens is the graduation rate overall for student athletes increases from 62 percent up to 76 percent. That is a dramatic difference, and it's due to a much more accurate counting.

I urge the Federal Department of Education to adopt for all students this more accurate way of counting. Our students today are far more mobile than they have been in the past. In fact, 60 percent of the

students are taking coursework or transferring to other institutions as part of their education. And we must respect that migration of students in order to get accurate data.

That 76 percent rate includes both men and women. As in the case of the federal rate, women graduate at a higher proportion than men. Interestingly, in several of the key sports: Baseball, the federal rate is 47 percent, it goes up to 65 percent on this more accurate GSR (Graduate Success Rate) way of counting; in basketball, it goes from 44 percent to 58 percent -- still low in comparison but significantly higher than the federal rate, 14 points higher; and in football, it goes from a federal rate of 54 percent for all Division I football to 64 percent.

Those are very significant differences. I think it speaks highly of the work that's being done in our athletic departments throughout the country to assure a genuine opportunity for young men and women to receive a college education at our fine institutions.

Let me turn it over now to Walt Harrison, President of the University of Hartford, to talk about the committee that is generating these rates and looking at it at this point.

I might add that these rates are based upon

1995 to '98 students entering. We have not yet calculated sanctions for these students who don't succeed at the level we expect or even what the cutoff line is as we did in the APR. This is a first-year dry run to make sure that everyone understands the methodology and how we proceed. But these early findings are really spectacular and demonstrate the quality of our athletic programs.

Walt.

DR. HARRISON: Thanks, Myles.

I thought I'd just concentrate on how this fits into what we're trying to do in academic reform. Our goal really is to provide greater transparency and greater accountability so that you, members of the media and the general public, can get a better idea of what we are doing right and what we're not doing right in intercollegiate athletics at the Division I level.

So we now released two rates. The first rate that we released last year, the APR rate, is a term-by-term, year-by-year rate; and so it gives you kind of realtime accountability for how student athletes are doing. This rate, as Myles explained, the Graduation Success Rate is a historical rate; so it tells you how students are moving toward graduation over a much larger period of time. So I think what we've done here is to provide accountability both on a realtime basis,

year-by-year, and over a historical basis.

And as a management tool, I think presidents and athletic directors would be well-advised to use both these rates together. The APR rate tells you what your teams are doing right now, and the Graduation Success Rate tells you how your teams have done over a great period of years.

When I look at the Graduation Success Rate for my own institution, for example, I see a lot of markedly improved graduation scores in many sports. I think that -- as a leader of an institution, however, I don't use that to pat myself on the back -- I try to understand why the scores are better in the graduation success rates than they are in the federal rates and then what that tells me about the programs, and so I think in that capacity, it certainly explains a lot.

And it also has some limitations. And students who entered between 1995 and 1998, which would be the ones tracked by this rate, in some of our sports, a lot of water has gone over the dam since then.

Take, for example, women's soccer, where our federal rate was 22 percent and our Graduation Success Rate was 80 percent. That tells me something about how the coach who was the head coach then operated, but we are actually two coaches further down the road

than we were in '95 to '98. So I can use this rate well, but I have to combine it with the APR, which gives me a more up up-to-date, year-by-year rate.

And with that, that's just sort of my opening comments. And I'll turn it over to Kevin Lennon to explain a little bit about how it works in detail.

MR. LENNON: Thank you, President Harrison.

Under the leadership of President Brand, President Harrison, and our Division I Board of Directors, we are beginning to see implementation at all levels of the academic reform package which has been paramount to the NCAA for some time.

I'd like to talk a little bit about the multifaceted approach that the Board has supported as it relates to academic reform and then specifically how this Graduation Success Rate will be used as it relates to academic reform.

Walt talked about the APR as being a measurement of eligibility graduation and retention done on a term-by-term basis for all scholarship athletes. As most of you are aware, we are in the process of collecting the second year of APR data, and that will be released publicly this coming February 2006. The Graduation Success Rate measures the ultimate outcome being graduation, as Dr. Brand talked about, for classes

beginning in 1995 through 1998.

One point on the methodology that we continue to stress here obviously is the transfer issue that Dr. Brand spoke about. Transfers that arrive on our campuses who have academic success will be counted favorably for the first time for those institutions; and conversely, transfer students who leave an institution but were in good standing will no longer be held against that particular sports team. That is the fundamental change with the Graduation Success Rate. And, as Dr. Brand talked about, a much improved metric from that perspective.

As you think about academic reform and the final component of increased accountability for teams and for institutions based on the academic success, it's our belief that these two new metrics, the APR working with the GSR, provide a much-improved measurement tool to examine how successful we have been and, in turn, to place accountability in terms of penalties and rewards on those sports teams.

It's true that the APR, that realtime rate, is where most of the penalties and rewards will be based -- on realtime, team-by-team performance. The GSR, however, in that it is a historical look at a team's previous academic success, is something that the

Committee on Academic Performance is continuing to discuss how it may best be used with academic reform and in particular with penalties and rewards.

The thinking at this point in time is that in the historical penalty phase, where you have institutions that have historically been underperforming based on their APR scores, when you hit penalties such as prohibition against postseason competition or restricted membership status, that the GSR will be something that an institution can point to -- again, having collected additional years of GSR data when these penalties will be implemented -- to explain and provide a historical perspective on the academic success that they have had with their student athletes.

It clearly measures a different group of students, but it is an indication of a historical performance of a particular sports team. And we imagine that that type of information will be made available as mitigation, if you will, for institutions subject to the most severe penalties in the incentives/disincentives program.

Having said that, we are now at the contemporaneous penalty phase this year. Institutions who would be subject to the loss of scholarships or student athletes who fail to meet academic commitments

and who are not retained, we are seeing in some instances that institutions are submitting these GSR scores as an indication of the past academic success they have had with their teams.

So institutions are noting this as a means of talking about their academic commitment, and it is something that is certainly being considered by the staff and by the committees as they look at contemporaneous penalties.

So much work will continue with the Committee on Academic Performance as it relates to all of the academic reform issues, but that is basically how the GSR and the APR will play their way out from a penalties-and-rewards perspective.

I think with that, Eric, we'll just turn it over to questions.

ERIC: Great. We'd like to now go to the operator for her to explain how reporters can ask questions today.

THE OPERATOR: At this time, if you'd like to ask a question, please press the star key followed by the digit 1 on your touch-tone phone. Once again, it is star 1 for questions today.

Our first question comes from Dennis Dodd with CBS SportsLine. Go ahead, sir.

DENNIS DODD: I guess this is for maybe Dr. Brand or Kevin.

Specifically, in 1A football, there's only a handful of head coaches that have been around, you know, since '95 to take full accountability for their graduation rates. What does that say, either good or bad, about, you know, the rates they produce? I just made a cursory look-through, and I think most of them are above the average, 65 percent.

DR. BRAND: I think that's a correct observation. There is turnover in coaches -- not just in football, but other sports as well. And what we're then talking about is the continuity in the program of emphasizing academic performance, and even as coaches change, there often is that kind of continuity. It gives us a context in which to look at the academic performance.

It's important to note that not every team has a higher GSR than a federal rate.

DENNIS DODD: Right.

DR. BRAND: In fact, only three-quarters of the teams, all told, have higher GSRs. And the reason for that is that some teams may have practices longstanding in which they attract, for example, transfer students, and those transfer students do not succeed

academically -- or say they flunk out.

If you have a lot of those students coming into the program, say, from community college, two-year schools, and then not succeeding academically, then your GSR will be lower than your federal rate. And we can pick up those patterns now over the long-term which are not possible on the APR or the federal rate.

DENNIS DODD: And consequently, what does it say about these programs that the overwhelming majority of which do have turnover and quite a bit in coaching? And just looking at this thing, it looks like half of 1A football falls below that average.

DR. BRAND: Well, usually, half fall below the average.

DENNIS DODD: Well, yeah. I'm not a math major, exactly.

DR. BRAND: Okay.

DENNIS DODD: Thank you.

ERIC: Thank you. Next question, please.

THE OPERATOR: Yes. We go next to Wendell Barnhouse of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram. Go ahead, sir.

ERIC: Wendell, go ahead.

WENDELL BARNHOUSE: Yeah, Kevin, I guess this is for you.

This is just kind of, as Myles said, kind of a dry run. What should we take these numbers to look at when we get on the website? I mean, is it apples and oranges to compare them to the federal rates? Or should we just compare them to the average? In other words, if we look at a certain school and compare their team graduation rates, should we base it on the average? Or what's the fair way to look at these numbers right now?

DR. BRAND: I think both ways. Because, first of all, the federal rate really is inaccurate and it's unfair. And a lot of the discussion in the past has been about the federal rate and wondering why we're not getting above 50 percent, for example.

So I think as a matter of fairness and accuracy, we need to compare the federal rates with the GSR and then better understand what our student athletes are doing. So that is a major step forward in my book.

Of course, it always looks interesting to compare one team to another, and I'm sure you'll do that as well. And we've released all the information on the federal and GSRs for all teams and all sports in Division I; so I expect you'll do that.

But I think you have to keep in context the real accurate numbers you now have about graduation rates; and, frankly, they look good.

WENDELL BARNHOUSE: Right. I guess my point was since there's nothing with the GSR rates to compare it previous, you know, years, and since this is the first time, is it -- you know -- and I understand that the federal rate has been kind of, you know, it's not fair -- but is it just -- since you got one set of GSR numbers right now, is it -- I mean, not to knee-jerk one way or the other to say, "Hey, this team is doing really good or really bad"?

DR. BRAND: Well, I think, you know, high rates should always be praised. You don't -- Wendell, you're right. We don't have enough data here, and that's why we're running a trial run.

We do have a complete data set, unlike we had with the APR. But we don't have year after year to look at trends. And we will have that in the next couple years; so that's why we're doing a trial run now.

WENDELL BARNHOUSE: Right. And I would -- Myles, also I was just curious if each year when either the Final Four or the NCAA Tournament, or recently when the Bowl match-ups were announced, a gentleman down in Orlando whose name is escaping me right now --

DR. BRAND: Richard Lavender (phonetic).

WENDELL BARNHOUSE: Yeah. The Associated Press always picks it up, and it's always based on the

graduation rates from the federal government, which are six years old. How unfair has that been to, you know, compare, you know, current stuff to not only the federal rate but something that was, you know, on classes from, you know, six years past? It seems to me that a lot of times that gets ignored and people say, "Oh, my gosh, the teams in the bowls are graduating 41 percent," or whatever it is.

DR. BRAND: Yeah, I think that's a fair comment. It is old information in the sense, as we know, the coaches may have changed; certainly, the students have changed. So it is somewhat out of date, and I think that's problematic. And that's why we've also created the APR, which is realtime, as you know.

The APR rates, I should say, don't have large enough databases, sport by sport, school by school, to be as accurate as the GSR is right now. And so we put in a margin of error for the APRs and took that into account and will take it into account as we're issuing sanctions.

So one needs to look at a margin of error on small data sets, say, any team but football, frankly, that we don't have with respect to the other teams.

So let's be careful how we use those APR and understand and interpret them correctly with the

margin of errors in them. It's too easy just to look at the raw scores and draw conclusions on APRs.

WENDELL BARNHOUSE: Thank you very much.

ERIC: Next question, please.

THE OPERATOR: Yes. We go next to David Wharton with the Los Angeles Times. Go ahead.

DAVID WHARTON: Good morning. I just wanted to be clear on something. While the NCAA continues to grapple with how to use the GSR in terms of potential historical penalties, it can be used now or it can be submitted by schools in consideration of the APR situation?

MR. LENNON: Yes. This is Kevin. That's right. We're now beginning to receive rate requests based on the contemporaneous penalties which again are tied back to two years of APR scores. And institutions have been submitting their GSR scores, again as a historical look at how well they have done in graduating their student athletes. And that is simply one of a number of factors that the staff and the committee would consider in determining whether the penalty is appropriate or not.

DR. BRAND: Walt, you might want to comment on the next steps the CAP Committee will take with respect to GSR cutoff points and penalties.

DR. HARRISON: Sure. I'd like to double back for just a minute to say that although earlier we were talking about whether the federal rates are fair. I think that the way I'd like to put it is that the GSR gives you a more accurate snapshot of how well your students are graduating than the federal rate does. It's accuracy that I'm interested in, and I think this is a much more accurate rate.

As Myles suggested, there are two sets of penalties we're looking at: The so-called contemporaneous, which are based on APRs. And so they're -- those are the warning shot penalties. And so, we are -- those penalties, which will be released in February, will be messages to teams that they're not moving in the right direction and that they need to pay attention to them.

The second phase of penalties, the historical penalties, where GSR will become important to us, are those penalties for the worst-performing teams. You might call it the worst of the worst. So there the penalties will be more severe, but the numbers of teams affected will be much smaller because we're really going to aim at those teams that are really significantly underperforming.

So I suspect that we will use the APR

accumulated over a number of years and the GSR to try to identify the worst-performing teams. And those are the teams that will be subject to the historical penalties, which will be the much more severe set of penalties.

ERIC: Next question, please.

THE OPERATOR: Yes. We go next to Pete Thamel with the New York Times. Go ahead, please.

PETE THAMEL: This question is for Dr. Brand.

Myles, this is obviously an issue -- the transfers especially -- that men's basketball coaches have particularly been kind of railing about for years. What's been their reaction to you guys changing this formula? And why did it take so long? I mean, this has been out there for probably about a decade.

DR. BRAND: We've listened happily to the basketball coaches. They were right. And we learned to take this into account.

It's a complicated issue, not just in the methodology but to collect the data over a period of years; so it has taken some time. And we really haven't started, Pete, academic reform in earnest for the last several years. So we've actually reacted pretty quickly once we got going.

The basketball coaches have been pleased

with this approach because when a student athlete transfers to another school or, for example, the small handful that might go to the pros, and they leave in good academic standing, then it does not count against the team.

The key issue here, of course, is leaving in good academic standing. We want the student athletes, while they're enrolled in school, to succeed academically, but we do understand that they may want to do something differently with their lives or move to another institution for lots of good reasons -- get a different major or more playing time -- whatever reason they have -- and continue their studies at that point.

So I think the coaches now understand that this methodology really respects that transferability, provided that the student athletes are in good academic standing.

PETE THAMEL: Thank you.

ERIC: Next question, please.

THE OPERATOR: We go next to Steve Wieberg with USA Today.

STEVE WIEBERG: Quick question for Kevin.

For purposes of comparison to past benchmarks, we have the overall GSR for Division I and the other divisions. Do we have that for the federal

rate as well? I notice it's not listed. Or is that something that's not going to be released until February?

MR. LENNON: Steve, this is Kevin. I'm going to turn it over to my colleague Todd Petr.

MR. PETR: Hi, Steve. All of that information on the federal rate will be released with the January release when the information on federal, as well as some more detailed information on GSR, are all released in sort of the format you've seen before.

STEVE WIEBERG: All right. And then quick a question for Myles, if I could.

The 60 percent that you've referred to of all students transferring at some point during their college careers -- I'm not just talking about athletes, but students overall -- that just struck me as high. Could I ask you the origin of that, Myles?

DR. BRAND: Yeah. We need to be careful here. It's a good question.

The 60 percent is all students who are taking coursework at some other institution -- many of whom transfer, some who do not, who transfer the coursework credits back to their home institution. The actual transfer numbers are probably closer to 35 percent.

If you look at the press release, we've

captured about 35 percent of the students that were lost under the federal rate, and that's what makes it more accurate. But about 60 percent of the students are taking coursework outside of their home institution.

STEVE WIEBERG: I mean, that could include somebody who was, like, taking a couple of hours of community college credits over the summer.

DR. BRAND: That's correct. That's correct. So if you're looking for the transfer number, the actual number of students that transfer, we don't have an actual head count, but we note that there's a 35 percent increase in the database size doing it this way rather than the federal rate. And that's a good surrogate to the numbers who transfer.

STEVE WIEBERG: Okay. Thanks.

ERIC: Next question, please.

THE OPERATOR: Yes. We go next to Liz Clarke with the Washington Post.

ERIC: Hi, Liz. Go ahead.

LIZ CLARKE: Thanks so much. I believe these are both for Kevin.

And am I correct in thinking that the federal rate is the rate, the only rate, that exists for all college students and also all non-scholarship student athletes? Is that right?

MR. LENNON: No. Your first part is correct.

LIZ CLARKE: Okay.

MR. LENNON: But the federal graduation rate there does talk about individuals who enter in a given year are on scholarship.

LIZ CLARKE: Okay. Can you repeat that? You mean the federal rate, the one that we're talking about, is not being quite as accurate. The whole reason that this was retooled, that federal rate, that does include scholarship athletes?

MR. LENNON: Yes, it does.

LIZ CLARKE: Oh, I'm sorry. Okay. So that's just like the broad, the biggest net. It includes everybody; is that right?

MR. LENNON: No. By way of example, let's take the year 1995, which would have been the first year that's being reported as a part of this four-year group from '95 to '98. They take a snapshot of every scholarship student athlete that enrolled as a freshman in 1995. Six years later, they ask: Out of those students how many graduated?

LIZ CLARKE: Right. I'm sorry. Let me interrupt because I totally understand that. I have not phrased this question well.

If I want to talk about the universe of college students who either do not play any sports at all or are walk-ons, the only way I can speak about their graduation rate is in terms of the federal numbers. I'm trying to figure out if there's any corollary that exists to a GSR for the average college student who doesn't play sports.

DR. BRAND: Liz, this is Myles. The answer is no. And that's one of the reasons we're urging the Department of Education to adopt this more accurate metric.

LIZ CLARKE: Exactly. Exactly. But until and unless they do that, there is no way to compare the GSR for Division I athletes to -- there's no corollary, there's no number compiled in the same way for non-athletes?

DR. BRAND: That's correct. But except that we have an intuition -- and for example, the Knight Commission had an intuition about what kind of graduation we expect, say, over 50 percent. And we've all been using that intuition about what we think is a normal performance of students. And I think by this more accurate way of counting, we can see how that intuition fits into what the actual numbers are for student athletes. And they seem good to me.

LIZ CLARKE: But, I mean, there's no sort of meaningful comparison to draw anymore to non-student athletes, is there? I mean, beyond intuition?

DR. BRAND: Beyond intuition. I'm in agreement that the federal rate is inaccurate for the regular student body, as well as it is for athletes.

LIZ CLARKE: Okay. And this is a very miniscule question, a very narrow question: In the process of compiling all this data, did you break out any information about the percentage of men's basketball players who leave early for the NBA either successfully or unsuccessfully?

I'm curious, what percentage of that subset leaves in good standing? Did you come across that? And I'm just curious, if you did, what percentage that is?

MR. PETR: In the graduation -- this is Todd, by the way.

LIZ CLARKE: Thanks, Todd.

MR. PETR: In the Graduation Success Rate data, specifically these data, there is no -- we don't have them at the individual level. So if a person leaves, we don't know. I will say that we have data like this, not just for one year, but from our academic -- the APR data. And first of all, it's a very, very small number -- 1 percent, I believe, that leave for the pros,

or less than 1 percent.

DR. BRAND: I thought it was 8/10ths of a percent.

MR. PETR: That's right.

LIZ CLARKE: Okay. Okay. So that's the big group we're talking about. And I'm asking about what percentage people of that subset is in good academic standing.

MR. LENNON: I believe that over half of them that we saw in this last year were in good academic standing when they left.

LIZ CLARKE: Okay. Thank you all. Appreciate it.

ERIC: Next question, please.

THE OPERATOR: Yes. We go next to Jackie Sherrill (phonetic) with Division I Sports Radio New York. Go ahead, please.

ERIC: Jackie, go ahead.

JACKIE SHERRILL: Yes. The question I have, when students drop out of school, and you say these kids that are football or basketball players that go into the NFL or the National Basketball League in good standing, is that at the beginning of the semester? Or is that the day they drop out? Or is that at the end of the semester?

MR. LENNON: Jackie, this is Kevin. That would actually be at the end of the term. To receive that point, if you will, that eligibility point -- and the numbers that Todd gave are exactly right -- it's over half in men's basketball, and it's a much higher percentage actually in football and other sports. We're taking the snapshot of that term. They had to have completed all of their academic commitments.

So it's not taken at the beginning of the term. It's literally taken at the end. And those students would have been eligible had they come back to campus. That's our key criteria.

DR. HARRISON: Yeah. Kevin, any kid that leaves early after the, i.e., Basketball Draft or the Final Four or leaves in spring for the football after draft, then those kids would be counted against the APR? They dropped out of school.

MR. LENNON: And that's assuming they do not come back to campus the next year; they're not retained. They've simply left campus, did not finish their academic work, and did not come back to campus -- that is correct, Jackie. Those would be what we call, in our vernacular, "0-for-2s."

ERIC: Thank you. Next question, please.

THE OPERATOR: Yes. We go next to Ted

Hutton with the South Florida Sun Sentinel. Go ahead, please.

TED HUTTON: Yeah. This might be more for Walter.

But with this increase, you jumped from the federal rate overall in talking of 62 to 76, a 14 percent increase. Now, the APR has been set at a projected 50 percent graduation rate, the cutoff for the APR. With this increase now to 76 percent under this new thing, would there be any chance to moving that APR cutoff point higher?

DR. HARRISON: It's a great question. That's one of the things we have talked about looking at once we have all this data. We're not going to do it immediately, but one of the things we want to take a look at is whether that's the right point given the new GSR data.

TED HUTTON: And then as part of that also, if we're -- if the federal, you know, do take this and kind of have a similar rate, then you should -- you'll create an apples-to-apples comparison with the overall student population, which now, at this point, won't be able to be done. And it'll be done on an institution-by-institution basis.

Is that -- is there some point you're

talking about that maybe at that point you're not having, you know, tying the APR and GSR to the individual institution rather than having a generic cutoff point that, you know, that all the colleges and universities meet?

DR. HARRISON: Well, we've certainly talked about that. There are a whole range of institutions in Division 1 that -- and I'm not talking about their athletic teams, but about their academic profile. At the moment, the way we're planning to handle that is through appeals and waivers. But as we get more sophisticated with this data, I think your question is, Would you build it into the way it measures the rates? We might. At the moment, we're really at that beginning phases of understanding what all these rates mean.

TED HUTTON: Okay.

ERIC: Next question, please.

THE OPERATOR: We go next to Doug Lederman with Inside Higher Education.

DOUG LEDERMAN: Hi. Thanks for taking the time. One quick sort of housekeeping question: What was the -- and then I have a follow-up. What is the reason why there are no institutional rates being released today? And that's probably for either maybe Todd or Kevin.

And then secondly, I guess maybe a little more importantly -- and I realize this is hard to generalize. But what are the -- and maybe this is for Dr. Harrison -- if you are a president looking at a rate going down or just a low rate period on this GSR, what are the things you're going to be -- what is suggested to you? What are the things that you as a president would be concerned about as you see either a lower rate than the grad -- than the federal rate or just a low rate period? What are the things you're likely to want to explore on your campus and that particular team?

MR. LENNON: This is Kevin, Doug. Let me take the first part of your question there.

While an institution's rate will be issued in about a month, as we've talked about, academic reform is really reshaping the focus of the unit of analysis to the team level. And I think that can't be lost in terms of all of the reform efforts here.

And what we're trying to do by releasing just the team score is to put the appropriate emphasis on team academic performance. That is where the penalties, that's where the rewards, that's where the incentives -- all of the things that are part of academic reform are driven by team -- individual team performance.

So it's our hope that, again, this next

month here, we can focus on what those numbers mean. And then at a later point in time, we'll provide a broader analysis there as it relates to an institution's GSR.

DR. HARRISON: Okay. So now it's over to me? I think that it's -- let me try to take two of -- the two possibilities that you'd look at as a President, at least -- that is to say where your GSR rate is significantly higher than your federal rate and then the opposite.

If your GSR rate in a sport were significantly higher, then the federal rate, I think you'd look primarily at transfer students, and you'd probably -- you could conclude that the transfer students who left were leaving when they were academically eligible and that those that were coming in were graduating. So it would indicate that -- the difference between the two rates would indicate that you were having a better look at how transfer students did.

And I think conversely, if your GSR rate is lower than your federal rate, and we want a conclusion that reached -- I mean, we're just talking about generalizing. I'd have to look at specific teams. But I think one of the obvious conclusions would be that students are transferring in and not graduating. And at the federal rate, they're not counted at all. I've

always said it's as if they never existed. Now, they exist, and you are held accountable for how well they're moving through to graduation.

So at least without knowing what team we're talking about, one of the first things I'd look at would be to see how well are the students who have transferred in are doing and progressing toward graduation.

DOUG LEDERMAN: Thanks. If I could have just a quick follow-up, Dr. Harrison.

You made sort of a distinction between whether the federal rate was unfair or just inaccurate. And I guess one of the -- there's been several repeated mentions of the reasons why athletes transfer in or out.

I guess what I'm driving at is aren't the reasons that athletes tend to transfer in or out, or all the movement for them, very different from the reasons that, on the -- in general, the reasons why students in general move around? Aren't there different explanations for the trans -- the great movement among athletes and non-athletes?

DR. HARRISON: Well, I would defer to Kevin or Myles perhaps. But from what I know, I think the answer is a little bit like what Billy Martin used to say on those Miller Lite commercials: "I feel very strongly both ways."

I think that in some cases, they are different. You have to look at it sport by sport. In some cases and some sports, they are different. They transfer for athletic reasons, as opposed to academic. And in other sports, I think they may be more similar to what other -- what the general student body does. So I'm not -- yes in some instances; but in some instances, no.

DOUG LEDERMAN: Okay. Thanks.

MR. PETR: This is Todd. I'll just follow-up. I think that any evidence that I have will show that there's no more transfer behavior among student athletes than there is general students. And, in fact, my guess would be -- I don't have -- I haven't seen firm numbers on the total number of transfers, but I guess the behavior is more prevalent in the student body as a whole.

But the impetus for transfer may be different in some instances and may be the same in others. If somebody doesn't have the right degree program or something like that, anybody's going to transfer. It's something certainly that we'd like to know more about, and we'll work with the folks at the Department of Education to try to learn more about it.

ERIC: Thank you. Next question, please.

THE OPERATOR: We go back to Steve Wieberg

from USA Today.

STEVE WIEBERG: I just had a quick follow-up on the APR 925 equating to the 50 percent grad rate.

Kevin, if I'm not mistaken, wasn't that equating to the 50 percent federal grad rate?

MR. LENNON: That's correct.

STEVE WIEBERG: And could you tell me what it would equate to as a GSR?

MR. LENNON: I don't think we're able to do that yet, in part because we're still collecting the second year of APR data. I will note -- and just to pick up on something that Walt mentioned before -- I think there -- once we are comfortable that we have the GSR information available and we can provide it to the Committee of Academic Performance, I think they are interested in anchoring that APR score off of a projected Graduation Success Rate. And we just haven't been able to do that.

The federal rate was available. That's why the group said 50 percent on the federal rate. But I think there's a clear interest in beginning to anchor an APR score on a projected Graduation Success Rate because it's a more accurate measure, as we've talked about today.

Walt, do you have anything to add to that?

DR. HARRISON: No. That's correct.

Someone asked earlier about what took you so long. And I think one of the reasons we used the graduation rate, the federal graduation rate, even though we knew we were going to have a more accurate GSR to tag the APR, is we wanted to get going. So we used that rate because that is what was available to us. And we assumed that when we had a more accurate measurement, we'd study it and see if we couldn't use the more accurate measurement. And that's what I think we'll do over the next year or two.

ERIC: Next question, please.

THE OPERATOR: We go next to Mike Murror (phonetic) with the Davis Enterprise.

MIKE MURROR: Hi. I think these questions are both for Todd.

When will the transitional Division I schools start to appear in this state? I think there are three that are in their third year post-moratorium. Do you know when those schools are going to start appearing in GSR data?

MR. LENNON: Yes. It's likely that they'll begin to appear as -- in the year as the cohort sort of catches up. Obviously, we're six or seven years back

with the graduation cohort. So as the cohort catches up to their move into Division I -- so if they actually made the initial move in 2000 or '01, that's -- when we get to that cohort, that's approximately when they will move to a Division I reporting as to they could have been in Division II. And so they'll appear somewhere, but they won't get GSR until their cohort year comes to pass.

MIKE MURROR: And also, how is it -- how many students are sort of double-counted in this data? I know that if a student transferred between Division I institutions during this cohort, would they be counted twice?

MR. LENNON: It's possible that a student could be counted twice if they initially enrolled somewhere and then moved within the system. I think that's a vast minority of the transfers that we see. And because we don't have this at the individual level, I can't give you a firm number on that. But as we begin to get into -- as we develop more data, more years of data in the APR, we'll be able to track that directly. But I don't have an answer for you today.

MIKE MURROR: Thank you.

ERIC: Next question, please.

THE OPERATOR: We go next to Brad Wolverton with the Chronicle of Higher Education.

ERIC: Brad, go ahead.

BRAD WOLVERTON: Hi. I think with the earlier discussion about the turnover of coaches, has there been any talk about making the coaches take their old school's GSR rates with them, kind of maybe penalizing them with loss of scholarships or whatever when they move to a different college?

DR. HARRISON: This is Walt. I'll take a stab at this. And then Myles or Kevin might want to jump in.

Yes. There's been talk about it. No. We've reached -- no, we have not reached any conclusion on it. And I don't think even the talk would have to do with the penalties following them as much as simply public awareness that this is what a coach's record has been.

But I'd say, right now, it's only -- we've only discussed it as a possible incentive to coaches.

BRAD WOLVERTON: Thanks.

ERIC: Next question, please.

THE OPERATOR: We go back to Wendell Barnhouse with the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

WENDELL BARNHOUSE: Yeah. This is for Kevin or Todd, I guess.

Just to understand the -- I know the Fed

rate was on a six-year window. The '95/'98 cohorts, for instance, for a certain school that I'm looking at, is that also a six-year window? In other words, is it '95 to '98, that three-year period? And then does it go out to 2001/2004?

MR. LENNON: Yeah, that's correct. The '95 group would get until the summer of 2001 to graduate and so on and so forth. Yeah, it is a six-year window like the federal rate.

WENDELL BARNHOUSE: Right. So this is kind of -- these GSRs, it's kind of based on a three-year snapshot, for lack of a better term. You know, in other words, you're talking about kids that came in '95, '96, and '97; correct?

MR. LENNON: And '98.

WENDELL BARNHOUSE: And '98. Right. I'm sorry. Four years, right. I got you. Okay. So you're talking about a pretty large -- you know, you're talking about a pretty large group that you've looked at here. So it's not just a one-year type, as far as the GSR is concerned. It's not just based on one class that's come in. It's basically four classes over a six-year period; correct?

MR. LENNON: That is true. And that's also the way the federal rate is recorded. In fact, that's

the law that says you have to report it that way. So we modeled it on that.

WENDELL BARNHOUSE: Right. But they tend to do it on a year-by-year basis. So you guys have taken -- I know that the Fed rate that you've got here mirrors that same time period, correct, as far as when you are matching up GSR with the Fed rates for each school; correct?

MR. LENNON: Yes. And on the January release, there'll be a most recent year released on the federal data as has been in the past.

WENDELL BARNHOUSE: Right. Thanks.

THE OPERATOR: We have no further questions in queue.

ERIC: Okay. Thank you again for joining us today.

I'd like to remind everyone that the GSR press release and the GSR data can be accessed online through the NCAA website at NCAA.org.

Thank you for joining us today.

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