

Student-Athlete Awareness of Athletic Career Transition and Transferable Skills

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Dedication

To my family -

My best friend and Grandpa, Leigh

My parents, Denny and Tonya

My brothers, David and Scott

My Grandma, Connie

My Great-Grandma, Tutu

You all are the reason I strive to accomplish my goals and dreams.

And to the student-athletes -

You all inspire me to achieve great work and enhance the total student-athlete experience.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to measure student-athlete's awareness of transferable skills, identify what skills are most transferable, and identify the resources available to aid student-athletes in the transition from athletic career retirement to a non-athletic career setting. A modified version of McKnight's (2007) survey was used to collect data regarding student-athlete awareness of career transition and transferable skills. One hundred and sixty student-athletes participated in the survey, which was comprised of three parts: (a) transferable skills, (b) career transition, and (c) demographic information. A quantitative approach utilized descriptive statistics to identify student-athlete's awareness of transferable skills, the most frequently reported transferable skills, and the resources that aid in the acquirement of transferable skills and transition from athletic career retirement to a non-athletic career setting.

The theoretical framework of the Model of Transition (Schlossberg, 1981) and Life Development Intervention (LDI) (Mayocchi and Hanrahan, 2000) was used to explain the factors that influence transition and role of transferable skills while transitioning out of sport.

The findings are consistent with previous research stated in the literature, indicating student-athletes are highly aware of transferable skills. The student-athletes who participated in this study also determined strong work ethic as the most frequently reported transferable skill. Family members and athletics department personnel such as coaches and student-athlete development staff were identified as the most useful resources for aiding in the acquirement of transferable skills and transition from athletic career retirement to a non-athletic career setting.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The power of sport in the eyes of a student-athlete: “Sports really are a microcosm of life – those values, those principles you take on with you, in whatever industry and whatever you choose to do in life” (NCAA, n.d.) A former standout Division I men’s basketball student-athlete attests that sport and the opportunity to compete in intercollegiate athletics has equipped him establish his path to success. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) is governing body that integrates athletics into higher education derived from the grounding principles of amateurism, competition, and fairness to ultimately support student-athlete success on the field, in the classroom and in life (NCAA, n.d.).

An immense amount of time and effort as a student-athlete is devoted to their sport and because of that, time restraints holds them back from inquiring job and/or internship opportunities to set themselves up for a career after sport. After years of commitment, retirement from sport is inevitable, whether that is due to injury, personal reasons, or exhausted athletic eligibility (Mayocchi and Hanrahan, 2000; McKnight, 2007; Staskeviciute-Butiene, Bradauskiene, Crespo-Hervas, 2014). Athletes, regardless of playing level, are faced with exploring ways to cope from loss of athletic identity (Petitpas, Danish, McKelvain., & Murphy, 1992). To aid in the transition process, utilizing transferable skills acquired through sport empowers student-athletes to recognize their strengths, build their personal brands, and shape their potential for achieving success in the next chapter of their lives.

Student-athletes largely conclude that they have made substantial gains in their learning, growth and development as a direct result of their participation in intercollegiate athletics (Good, 2015). Within the context of this study, intercollegiate athletics can be viewed as a valuable out-of-class learning experience that contributes to the development of a student-athlete’s

transferable skills (Chalfin, Weight, Osborne, & Johnson, 2015; Good, 2015; Lewis, 2016; Mayocchi and Hanrahan, 2000; McKnight, 2007; NCAA GOALS, 2016). Although the high-stakes culture of intercollegiate athletics pressures coaches to adopt a “win-at-all-costs” mentality, athletics department personnel must strive to holistically develop student-athletes personally and professionally (Navarro and McCormick, 2017). To accomplish this feat, there is a specific need for measuring a student-athlete’s familiarity with transferable skills, identifying what skills are most transferable, and understanding the resources available for student-athletes to transition from athletic career retirement to a non-athletic career setting.

Athletic career retirement and a student-athlete’s transferable skills acquired through sport complement one another in the transition process. Before transferable skills are defined, one must address the unavoidable change every athlete is confronted with at some point in their career, and Danish, Petitpas, & Hale (1993) identifies athletic career retirement as a critical life event. The reality is that few athletes sufficiently prepare for this critical life event, and many struggle with their adjustment to retirement (Baillie, 1993; Baillie, & Danish, 1992; Mayocchi and Hanrahan, 2000). To overcome the notion of college and professional athletes who “die twice” upon this type of critical life event, the key is for the athlete to prepare and capitalize on the transferable skills they have acquired throughout their career in competitive amateur or professional sport (Mayocchi and Hanrahan, 2000; McKnight, 2007).

Transferable skills are defined as general skills that are context and content free and are applicable across multiple domains (Wiant, 1997). Transferable skills in terms of athletics are defined as abstract skills learned in the sporting environment that are applicable to other facets of life or to another career setting (Mayocchi and Hanrahan, 2000).

To illustrate an example of transferable skills developed in athletics, consider a college golfer with little sales experience, who upon graduation has a non-athletic career goal of becoming a salesperson. A specific skill such as being able to accurately hit the golf ball in as few as shots as possible from a variety of places on the golf course throughout a round of 18 holes is considered critical to the success of an athlete who plays competitive golf. However, the ability to consistently and accurately hit the golf ball for 18 holes does not directly contribute to the performance of a salesperson in a non-athletic career setting. However, the technical skill of consistently and accurately hitting a golf ball encompasses a variety of transferable skills such as self-motivation to improve one's golf game, accomplish goals, effectively handle pressure, build confidence and mental toughness. In the skill transfer process (Mayocchi and Hanrahan, 2000), skills acquired throughout one's competitive athletic career will transfer to a variety of professional careers outside of sport, in this case, a sales position.

Studies from Danish et al. (1993) and McKnight (2007) identified transferable skills listed in Table 1 that are applicable to student-athletes in the transition from athletic career retirement to a newfound non-athletic career setting. Later explained in the literature, Chalfin et al. (2015) identified, from the eyes of employers, the most desirable transferable skills student-athletes possess, several of which are mutually listed in Table 1.

Now that it is known student-athletes acquire transferable skills from sport, studies have identified the student-athletes themselves, coaches, teammates, families, athletic administrators and support staff as resources responsible for teaching student-athletes that transferable skills give them the competitive edge in the eyes of employers (Danish et al., 1993; Good, 2015; McKnight, 2007, Navarro and McCormick, 2017; Watson, 2003). A review of how such identified individuals can serve student-athletes as a beneficial resource in the career transition

Table 1
*Transferable Skills that Aid in
 Career Transition*

Transferable Skills
Ability to perform under pressure
Teamwork
Organizational skills
Ability to meet deadlines/challenges
Ability to set and attain goals
Dedication and perseverance
Self-motivation
Patience
Adaptability/flexibility
Ability to recognize one's limitations

process, acquisition and execution of utilizing transferable skills in a non-athletic career setting will later be discussed.

Statement of the Problem

To be successful in athletic career transition, athletes must proactively become more aware of the skills and strengths they have acquired through competitive sport, build greater value to their personal brand outside of sport, and learn how to utilize and market their transferable skills in a non-athletic career setting (Chalfin et al., 2015; McKnight, 2007; Staskeviciute-Butiene, 2014). Many athletes experience tunnel vision and high athletic identity, making them unaware of what skills are transferable to other areas of life (McKnight, 2007). In addition, athletes have reported difficulties dealing with situations in non-athletic domains and delayed identity shifts because of a lack in non-athletic life experiences during their athletic careers (Park, Lavellee, & Tod, 2013).

To overcome the struggles many athletes are challenged with throughout the transition process, there is a specific need in college athletics for student-athletes to become more aware of and learn how to utilize transferable skills (Danish et al., 1993; Mayocchi and Hanrahan, 2000). Athletics support staff, family members, and coaches, which includes head coaches and assistant coaches, are heavily involved in the amount of time and investment of student-athletes. The people within this type of support system must learn how they can serve as a resource in the acquirement of transferable skills and aid in the transition out of sport (McKnight., 2007).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research study is to examine the influence of intercollegiate athletics on the learning and development of transferable skills among college student-athletes. More specifically, the study seeks to measure a student-athlete's awareness of transferable skills, identify what skills are most transferable, and identify the resources available to aid student-athletes in the transition from athletic career retirement to a non-athletic career setting.

Research Questions

1. How aware are student-athletes in terms of transferable skills acquired through sport?
2. What transferable skills do student-athletes most frequently report?
3. What resources do student-athletes identify as useful in acquiring transferable skills to aid in the transition from athletic career retirement to a non-athletic career setting?

Significance of the Study

The significance of the findings in this study are twofold. First, this study adds to the awareness and familiarity of transferable skills among student-athletes, which one day will potentially positively influence those who make the transition from competitive to a non-athletic

career setting. Recognition of transferable skills will likely help student-athletes identify and build upon their strengths (Danish et al., 1993).

Secondly, this study will likely help provide informative feedback for coaches, athletics administrators and support staff as they evaluate and structure athletics department programming around the holistic development of student-athletes. The findings will likely help connect a student-athlete's awareness and familiarity of transferable skills to the resources available to continuing developing such skills and aid in the transition out of sport into a non-athletic career setting.

Positionality

This researcher is a former NCAA Division-I student-athlete who competed for the women's golf team at the University of Kansas. This journey challenged me to develop my skills and gain valuable learning experiences on and off the golf course, central to the university's mission to provide students a "center for learning, scholarship, and creative endeavor" (University of Kansas, n.d.). Over time, my creative endeavor developed into a passion for helping other people become the best versions of themselves, with a specific audience of college student-athletes, and was shaped by the outpouring support and mentorship of my teammates, coaches, professors, and athletics support staff.

This passion led me to a career within the NCAA Life Skills field, specifically a position within the University of Tennessee Athletics Department's Student-Athlete Development program. I coordinate, collaborate, and challenge student-athletes to pursue opportunities and resources that encompass holistic development. My current work and new chapter of life helped me identify the skills that I acquired as a student-athlete but had never recognized until I transitioned into the "real world," which was not easy. I experienced low athletic identity as I

found myself with little confidence and lost without my team. I began to rely on my strong work ethic, mental toughness, competitiveness, and relationships built with athletics support staff to ease my transition process. Because of my experience as a student-athlete and current Student-Athlete Development staff member who works with a variety of SEC student-athletes, I have noticed the need for student-athletes to learn that they are capable of possessing skills acquired through their sport into the next chapter of their lives.

For this reason, I have chosen to research student-athletes' awareness of career transition and transferable skills acquired throughout their time competing. I believe that if student-athletes develop a greater understanding of transferable skills, it will ease the transition from athletic career retirement, and ultimately propel them into a successful non-athletic career setting.

Definition of Key Terms

Ability to handle pressure refers to how someone responds when put under intrinsic or extrinsic pressure (Gayatri, Saon, & Gireesh, 2016).

Awareness refers to the knowledge of something that exists, an understanding of a certain subject or situation (Marková and Berrios, 2006).

Coachable refers to the degree in which someone seeks, carefully considers, and integrates feedback to improve his or her performance toward a particular task (Ciuchta, Letwin, Stevenson, & McMahon, 2014).

Competitive nature refers to a characteristic of someone who places a high emphasis on excellence and achievement (Nguyen, 2017).

Confidence refers to a feeling, belief, or ability that one can rely on someone or something to succeed in a given situation at a given time (Hardy, Jones, & Gould, 2001).

Goal-oriented refers to a behavior in which someone focuses on the tasks that need to be performed in order to meet certain goals or achieve a certain performance standard (Lochbaum, M., Zazo, R., Çetinkalp, Z. K., Wright, T., Graham, K., & Konttinen, N., 2016).

Intercollegiate athletics refers to an institutionally-sponsored program in which sport teams and individuals compete against varsity teams and individuals from other institutions (Good, 2015).

Mental toughness refers to a psychological edge that enables someone to strive, survive, and thrive in the face of situational demands (Gucciardi, Hanton, & Fleming, 2017).

National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) refers to a member-led organization dedicated to the well-being and lifelong success of college athletes. The organization serves as the governing body for 1,123 colleges and universities and 98 athletic conferences. Nearly half a million student-athletes vie to compete in 90 championships each year in 24 sports across 3 divisions (NCAA, n.d.).

Non-athletic career setting refers to a career based setting upon a student-athlete's retirement from competition in intercollegiate athletics (Mayocchi and Hanrahan, 2000).

Red-Shirt refers to a student-athlete who is held from competition for one year in order to prolong his or her athletic eligibility. The student-athlete is a part of the team and practice roster terms of player development and/or healing from injury, but not a participant in any games, meets, tournaments, etc. (NCAA, n.d.). For example, a Red-Shirt Freshman indicates an academic Sophomore who is in his or her first season of athletic eligibility.

Self-motivation refers to someone who is driven to accomplish a certain task or desire without giving up or influence from other people (DeFreese & Smith, 2013).

Southeastern Conference (SEC) refers to one of the premier athletics conferences in the NCAA regarding a rich tradition among athletics success across all sponsored sports, superior revenue generation, and political autonomy (Good, 2015; Smith, 2014). The SEC consists of 14 institutions and sponsors over 13 sports for male and female student-athletes (Southeastern Conference, n.d.).

Sport Psychologist refers to a Sport Psychology Consultant in this study. A Sport Psychology Consultant is a term accepted by AASP (Association for Applied Sport Psychology) to describe the profession of working with athletes to develop mental skills typically within a university setting (Cropley, Baldock, Mellalieu, Neil, Wagstaff, & Wadey, 2016).

Strong work ethic refers to a set of values based on commitment and diligence. A person with a strong work ethic possess characteristics such as desire, dedication, determination, and discipline (Addis, 2010).

Student-athlete refers to a college student who is enrolled in a full-time academic course load and participates in an institution's varsity sports program. Students who receive scholarships for athletic participation and non-scholarship students are both classified as student-athletes (Good, 2015).

Teamwork refers to someone who makes an individual commitment to a group effort that ultimately determines the success of a team, company, society, or civilization (Lombardi, 1992).

Time management refers to the process of planning and organizing how to divide one's time between specific activities (Good, 2015).

Summary

Chapter 1 of this thesis presented a statement of the problem, the purpose, the research questions, definitions related to the study, the researcher's experience with career transition and

transferable skills, and significance of the study. Chapter 2 will provide an a more in-depth literature review related to intercollegiate athletics, career transition, and transferable skills developed through competition.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

As noted in Chapter 1, the athletic career transition process and transferable skills are reciprocal. To be successful in career transition, athletes must proactively focus on the importance, awareness, and marketability of transferable skills (McKnight, 2007). Chapter 2 provides a literature review based on theoretical framework supporting a general transition, athlete career retirement, and the role transferable skills play in the transition from sport to a non-athletic career setting.

Theoretical Framework

Model of Transition

Retirement may occur at any stage in an individual's life. This type of critical life event marks a point of transition from an activity in which there was a considerable commitment of time and energy invested and a significant role identification (Baillie, 1992; Danish et al., 1993).

Research by Schlossberg (1981) identified a theoretical model of transition that is not specific to sports or even retirement. A transition occurs when an "event or non-event results in a change of thought about oneself and leads to a change in one's behavior and relationships" (Schlossberg, 1981, p. 5). Throughout the complex transition process, Schlossberg (1981) suggested that adaptation to the transition is dependent on three factors: (a) social and psychological characteristics of the individual, (b) situational factors, and (c) pre-transition and post-transition environmental factors.

The first factor is focused on biological and social factors specific to the individual. Social characteristics such as gender, age, socio-economic status, ethnicity/culture, religious beliefs, and state of health contribute to the adjustment process (Schlossberg, 1981). For example, gender norms may inhibit a transition for females as they potentially experience

pressure to have children in life. Psychologically, an individual's attitude toward oneself and their sense of responsibility triggers a behavior that may influence their ability to adjust the transition equally as much as the social characteristics (Schlossberg, 1981).

The second factor is related to the situation of the transition itself. Is the individual transitioning from a role gain or loss? Is the individual in control of the decision to transition or is it forced? What is the duration of the transition and how does one perceive the particular transition? Thus, role change, source of transition, timing, duration, assessment, and control of the transition are vital factors that aid in the adjustment process (McKnight, 2005; Schlossberg, 1981).

The third factor concentrated on pre-transition and post-transition environmental factors. Schlossberg (1981) identified one's interpersonal support system and institutional support from outside agencies and organizations as a crucial resources related to the adjustment pre or post-transition. Even when the transition may not be expected, the physical setting such as climate, weather, urban or rural location, living arrangements, and workplace environmental factors greatly influences one's adjustment to the transition process. This factor tells truth to the notion, you are based on who and what you surrounded yourself by (Pfitzinger, 2001).

Schlossberg's (1981) model of transition suggested the three factors of social and psychological characteristics, situational factors, and environmental factors that influence one's ability to adapt to a critical life event. Danish et al.'s (1993) Life Development Intervention (LDI) model reinvented the wheel based on Schlossberg's (1981) theoretical framework by creating a model that identifies a process specific to athletes and the factors that play into athletic career retirement and the acquirement of transferable skills from sport.

Life Development Intervention (LDI)

Growth and change, principles of the LDI, are imperative for human development (Danish et al., 1993). A variety of factors link the Model of Transition (Schlossberg, 1981) and LDI model (Danish et al., 1993) to a process that empowers continual growth and change while of transitioning out of sport and implementation of transferable skills. Like Schlossberg's (1981) model, the LDI model revealed three main qualities that influence an athlete's adaptation to a critical life event: (a) the timing of the event, (b) the duration of the event, and (c) contextual purity of the event (Danish et al., 1993).

The timing of the transition refers to the first of the three characteristics that influence a critical life event. Timing ranges from an "on time" event by having networks of people in place upon athletic retirement to support one through the transition or an "off time" event such as an injury that suddenly forces retirement from sport (Danish et al., 1993). Second, the duration is the perceived length of the event. Transitions can be viewed as temporary, permanent, or uncertain and can be evaluated as positive, negative, or mixed critical life event (Danish et al., 1993; Schlossberg, 1981). Lastly, contextual purity refers to the number of events being experienced at once. The more events that occur simultaneously, the more difficult the transition (Danish et al., 1993). An athlete's retirement from sport can result in change in activity levels, self-esteem, contact with teammates, decreased financial resources, etc. (Danish et al., 1993).

Given the number of factors (biological, social, psychological, situational, environmental, timing, duration, and contextual purity) that influence transition, studies have supported the notion that athletes who prepare for career retirement and capitalize on transferable skills are more likely to experience a successful adjustment from their previous athletic career to a newfound chapter of life (Blinde & Greendorfer, 1985; Danish et al., 1993; McKnight, 2007).

The LDI model identified a three-step process in which counselors can help influence athletes to recognize their goals, potential, and ability to thrive and utilize transferable skills in a non-athletic career setting.

The first step requires athletes to be aware of and believe they have skills and qualities that are valuable in other settings. Many athletes do not recognize many of the skills they have acquired to excel in sport are transferable to other areas of life (Danish et al., 1993). Due to high athletic identity, athletes often struggle to balance their identity and see themselves as having other roles outside of sport. To alleviate high athletic identity, athletes begin to identify and relate to certain skills they believe they possess (Danish et al., 1993).

In the second step, it is important for athletes to build on the successful skills and qualities they possess by understanding why and how they learned such skills in a sport context (Danish et al., 1993). Once an athlete has recognized they learned skills and characteristics from success, trial and error, and continuous feedback in sport, counselors can help them begin to identify settings out of sport where they have utilized those same skills (Danish et al., 1993). The reality of this process can empower athletes and help them prepare for the third step of transferring skill from one domain to another (Petitpas et al., 1992; Danish et al., 1993).

In the third step the athlete is aware of and has identified transferable skills, and begins to focus on their perceived level of the skills they possess. For a counselor, the key to this process is helping athletes build on their strengths and prepare the athlete with ways of how they can apply transferable skills to a non-athletic career setting (Danish et al., 1993). The literature explains athletes may lack confidence in their ability to apply skills to other settings and have much of their identity tied up in sport that they have little motivation to explore non-sport roles

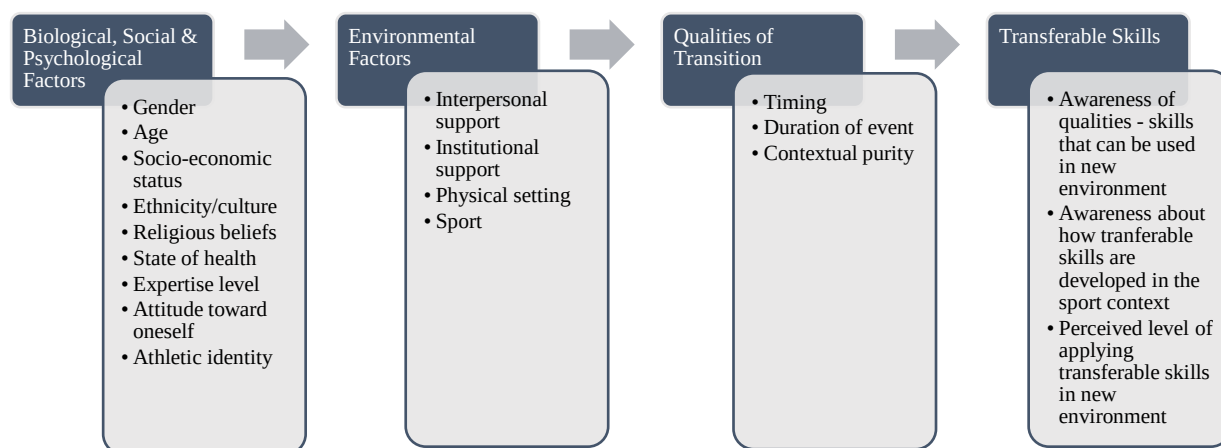


Figure 1. Transferable Skills in the Process of the Transition to Retirement from Sport. Adapted from “Athletic Career Transition and Transferable Skills” by K. McKnight, 2007, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, p. 130.

(Danish et al., 1993). Seeking out sources of social support is necessary for athletes to successfully transfer skill and recognize their potential outside of sport.

Current Student-Athlete Perspective of Transferable Skills

The LDI model recognizes that career retirement of athletes is a transition and incorporates transferable skills that are applicable to non-athletic career settings. Adapted from McKnight (2007), Figure 1 provides an illustration of transferable skills in the process of the transition to retirement from sport. Just as athletes do from their sport, it is time to transition from a theoretical perspective into the eyes and experiences of current student-athlete who compete in the NCAA.

A recent opportunity for the student-athlete voice to be heard is through the NCAA Growth, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Learning of Students in college (GOALS) study, which provided a “highly comprehensive national picture” of the lives and college experiences of NCAA student-athletes across all-sports and divisions (I, II, III) (NCAA GOALS, 2016). The

Table 2

NCAA GOALS Research

Student-Athlete Skill/Quality Developed	%
Personal Responsibility	93
Teamwork Skills	92
Work Ethic	92
Leadership Skills	88
Personal Values and Ethics	87
Self-Confidence	81
Time Management Skills	80
Understanding of Other Races	79
Study Skills	68
Commitment to Volunteerism	65

2016 study, and two other NCAA GOALS studies examined in 2010 and 2006, enabled NCAA policymakers and member institutions to deeply analyze topics such as student-athlete's college athletic, academic, and social experiences, health and well-being, time demands, recruitment, finances, and on-campus support (NCAA GOALS, 2016). Student-athletes reflected on and evaluated skills/qualities they believe are most transferable, marketable, and influential from their experience as a student-athlete in the NCAA GOALS (2016) study in Table 2.

In addition to these results, 64% of female and 49% of male student-athletes selected “preparation for a career after college” as the top topic they wish their coaches or athletic administrators talked more about (NCAA GOALS, 2016). Perhaps 93% of the student-athletes who indicated “personal responsibility” as the top skill/quality developed in college athletics can take matters into their own hands of attending addition programing related to job/career preparation. Regardless, findings from this study conclude an imperative place to start for coaches or athletic administrator in the holistic development of student-athlete is to provide

and/or encourage programming and learning opportunities for student-athletes. This will likely lead to student-athletes becoming more aware of transferable skills, building upon them, and learning how to best market those skills in the transition from college athletics to a non-athletic career setting.

Former Elite Athlete Perspective on Transferable Skills

With the purpose of examining the role of transferable skills and career assistance needs for athletes, a study by Mayocchi and Hanrahan (2000) that involved 50 in-depth interviews with former elite athletes. Interestingly, the findings revealed several types of knowledge, skills, abilities, and personal characteristics not traditional to other transferable skills found in Tables 1, 2, 4, and 5 (Chalfin et al., 2015; Danish et al., 1993; Good, 2015; NCAA GOALS, 2016). The findings are listed and described in more detail in Table 3. One of the many benefits of Mayocchi and Hanrahan (2000) finding untraditional transferable skills amongst these elite athletes is that it diversifies the awareness of acquired skills through sport, enhances the methods used to inhibit skill transfer, and encourages athletes to set goals as they transition from sport to a non-athletic career setting.

In addition to identifying and describing untraditional transferable skills, Mayocchi and Hanrahan (2000) provided implications for athletes who embark on the transition and skill transfer process as well as for coaches, parents, and counselors who provide career assistance to athletes. For athletes, it is widely suggested they become more familiar with transferable skills and identify which skills they believe they possess (Mayocchi and Hanrahan, 2000; Danish et al., 1993; McKnight, 2007). Before they embark on a particular non-athletic career, it is important for athletes to ask themselves a variety of questions that relate to the opportunity for them to be

Table 3

Transferable Skills Described by Athletes

Type of Transferable Skill	Skill Described by Athletes
Interpersonal	People skills; social skills; ability to get along and deal with people (i.e. media, TV, sponsors)
Team Related	Ability to contribute in a team to work toward a common goal; knowing how to be a team player
Supervisory/leadership	Coaching skills; leadership skills; people management skills; ability to motivate people to work well; ability to provide regular feedback on performance
Management/administrative skills	Administrative skills; financial management skills
Understanding/comprehension	Understanding of skills development; understanding of teamwork; understanding of individual differences
Self-assurance	Assertiveness; ability to say what one thinks; confidence; willingness to do things one's own way
Ambition	Will to win; will to succeed; competitiveness; desire to be the best
Will	Determination; single-mindedness

challenged, learn, and grow. For coaches and parents, Mayocchi and Hanrahan (2000) suggested they help increase the athlete's awareness of skills they possess and encourage athletes to consider how and when these skills could be applied to career related, social, or even financial settings. Lastly, Mayocchi and Hanrahan (2000) suggest to counselors that they utilize goal-setting strategies, create an action plan, and explore barriers to skill transfer in preparing athletes for the challenges faced in skill transfer to a new non-athletic domain.

Employees Targeting Student-Athletes

While college coaches focus immensely on recruiting elite prospective student-athletes within the scope of their sport, employers are constantly searching to accomplish the same feat.

A study from Chalfin et al. (2015) explored the skills and qualities that make student-athletes attractive from the employer perspective. Rather than focusing on which companies target student-athletes, the purpose was to concentrate on *why* the 50 participants actively target student-athletes to fill their entry-level positions. (Chalfin et al., 2015). Table 4 lists the skills and qualities most commonly associated with intercollegiate athletic participation.

Much of which the research stated is consistent with the skills identified as desirable skills from the employer perspective (Chalfin et al., 2015). A female talent acquisition manager in sales fully supports and understands the role and benefit of a student-athlete who competed in college athletics:

We view athletics in college as a full-time job, where other employers may not. The time, effort, and dedication the candidate has by committing time to a sport can be easily translated to our work environment. We have a very competitive culture here [sales company]. Student-athletes have a great opportunity for leadership at a young age which makes them perfect for our culture (Chalfin et al., 2015).

Table 4

*Desirable Transferable Skills
from an Employer Perspective*

<u>Transferable Skills</u>
Competitive nature
Goal-oriented
Ability to handle pressure
Strong work ethic
Confidence
Coachable
Ability to work with others
Self-motivated
Mentally tough
<u>Time management skills</u>

This study validates that student-athletes are well-suited to fill positions within their companies due to their highly valuable skills and qualities developed on and off the field of play (Chalfin et al., 2015). Employers and former student-athletes distinguished which transferable skills make student-athletes more marketable in the job market, are athletics departments doing their job correctly in terms of providing proper personnel, resources, and programming to benefit student-athletes in the next chapter of the lives?

Investment in Student-Athlete Transferable Skills

A study by Good (2015) further investigated the culture of college athletics departments and ways in which college athletics contributed to the learning and development of student-athletes. Good's (2015) study, beneficial for current and future student-athletes, interviewed 19 former student-athletes from NCAA Division I institutions currently working in a non-athletic career setting. First, the study concluded that nearly all participants identified the skills and attributes listed in Table 5 as strong indicators not only of their athletic career success, but more so propelled them to experience success in the working world (Good, 2015).

Secondly, the former student-athletes interviewed in Good's (2015) study, identified the athletics department personnel who invested in their holistic development and supported their academic, athletic, and social endeavors. To no surprise, several participants indicated their head coach, or assistant coach as their top mentor. Majority of former student-athletes applauded the student support services they received such as academic counseling, tutoring, and study hall. However, one of the participants indicated more improvement for more specific student support services, for instance career development, in the areas of career exploration and assistance with internships and employment opportunities (Good, 2015). A former female basketball player at a Division I institution concluded:

Where there could have been more, I am thinking help with summer jobs, when we did have time to work and internships. More career counseling may have been helpful...but summer time jobs that fit your current or future career interests would have been great. It's so hard for anybody to get a summer job anyway, just for a couple of months...that you want to get some practical work experience for the future... "real world" or career-related work experience (Good, 2015).

As college athletics departments continually improve resources for their student-athletes, the need for greater career development assistance from one former female student-athlete does not indicate an overall assumption of every student-athlete and their respective institution's resources. College athletics departments committed to the holistic development of student-athletes provide specific personnel, programming, and support services to ensure student-athletes are prepared to succeed in and out of their sport.

Student-Athlete Development

The NCAA established a Life Skills program in 1994 to promote and ensure the holistic development of student-athletes among the Division I, II, and III levels. More recently and popularly known as NCAA Life Skills or at many institutions named Student-Athlete Development, the program focuses on multiple facets of the student-athlete experience: personal growth, leadership development, career and professional development, and community service (NCAA, n.d.). Professionals within this unique area of college athletics passionately help develop skills and prepare student-athletes with variety experiences that are useful throughout one's student-athlete experience on or beyond the playfield.

Table 5
*Student-Athlete Self-Identified
 Transferable Skills*

Transferable Skills
Accountability
Time management skills
Handling adversity and success
Teamwork and collaboration skills
Work ethic and dedication
Network of close personal relationships
Self-motivation
Valuing education
Interpersonal skills
Self-discipline
Self-esteem
Critical thinking skills

Institutions tailor the Student-Athlete Development program to the specific needs and goals of student-athletes on their campus to ultimately set them up for success in every facet of life. Varying by institution, resources are available to assist student-athletes in preparation for the next step upon graduation whether that is playing professional sports or athletic career retirement. Specific programs, workshops, individual appointments, and academic settings allow student-athletes to be more cognizant of the skills they are able to transfer upon athletic career retirement.

A study by Navarro and McCormick (2017) confirmed that Student-Athlete Development professionals are one of the main resources responsible within athletics departments for facilitating career preparation and professional growth opportunities for student-athletes during their college career. Perhaps, a Student-Athlete Development professional could have assisted the former women's basketball player with a career development plan. Navarro and McCormick

(2017) indicated that career development programming includes one-on-one counseling sessions and/or group seminars that assist with resume creation, interview preparation, and creation of a career action step plan to enhance the student-athlete's professional development. During this time, the conversation should also be had with student-athletes about the emotional and psychological challenges they may be confronted with upon athletic career retirement as they transition into life after sports (Navarro and McCormick, 2017).

Student-Athlete Career Transition Case Study

Retirement from sport is not easy. A case study of a former student-athlete who played professional football for three years explained how gut-wrenching it was to hang up the cleats. Through all of the challenges faced in the transition, he was quick to recognize how football greatly strengthened his personal and professional skills. In his newfound role as a teacher and high school football coach, he relied on transferable skills such as communication, teamwork, and work ethic to help him be successful in a different domain. The former student-athlete felt his strength of character in football helped him develop a practical mindset, good judgment, and core values such as integrity, responsibility, and resiliency has currently led him to a successful place in his life with his family, job, and future career goals. (Lewis, 2016).

Another benefit to his college football experience is the social capital that enabled him to secure jobs and career opportunities. The former football player indicated the relationship with his coaches, athletics administrators and support staff is what led him to pursue and remain loyal to a career path as an educator and coach (Lewis, 2016). This case study adds a personal touch to an example of how powerful a student-athlete's investment in their holistic development, resources provided, and athletics department personnel can prepare them for success in a non-

athletic career setting. The reality of retirement from sport is gut-wrenching and is an emotion and transition all amateur or professional athletes face due to the loss of athletic identity.

Athletic Identity

Earlier referenced was the concept of athletes who “die twice” upon the inevitable athletic career retirement. With years of commitment, many athletes are dependent on sport for identity and gauge their self-worth on their ability as an athlete (Botterill, 1981). A critical life event as such often leads to loss of athletic identity and diminished self-esteem (McKnight, 2007). Side effects from this type of drastic lifestyle change can lead to relational, mental and physical health issues for instance depression, anxiety, eating/sleeping disorders, lower productivity, and motivation (Weigand, 2013). To help combat these issues, counseling professionals in the college athletics setting (Academic Counselors, Student-Athlete Development Professionals, and Sport Psychologists) can help increase awareness, education, screening, and intervention for side effects in student-athletes (Weigand, 2013). If athletes know that their skills developed through sport are transferable and useful in a new setting, the adequate support system they surround themselves by will equip them with the tools to be successful in the transition out of sport.

Systematic Review of Career Transition Out of Sport

To summarize the literature, Park et al. (2013) provided a systematic review of 126 studies specifically related to characteristics and qualities of athlete career transition, which included findings from McKnight (2007) and among others. Of the two themes that emerged, resources available and factors related to the quality of career transition, this systematic review validated that life skills and career/personal development programs are crucial in this process. Specifically, 28 studies reported proactive, pre-retirement (career planning, education in

transferable skills) and reactive, post-retirement support (coping with emotions, reformation of identity) programs as the most influential resources that aid in the transition out of sport (Park et al., 2013). Park et al.'s (2013) findings were also similar to the literature provided in this study in finding that athletics support staff and the coach-athlete relationship is the greatest influence on athlete career transition.

Summary

With all factors considered in terms of athletic career retirement, it is evident there is great value for athletes and their support system to understand the role of transferable skills in the process of transition to a non-athletic career setting. Therefore, the research goals for this study were to determine (a) how aware are student-athletes in terms of transferable skills acquired through sport, (b) what transferable skills do student-athletes most frequently report, and (c) what resources do student-athletes identify as useful in acquiring transferable skills to aid in the transition from athletic career retirement to a non-athletic career setting?

Chapter 3

Methods

This chapter addresses the method used in conducting this study. This chapter outlines quantitative research, the research questions, participants, the procedure, pilot study, survey instrument, and the methods used to collect and analyze the data.

Quantitative Research

The study was designed to assess the awareness of current student-athletes regarding the acquirement of transferable skills and athletic career retirement and identify which resources are useful during the transition process. Quantitative research allowed the researcher to make a generalization of what degree transferable skills influence a student-athlete's transition from a competitive career in college athletics to a non-athletic career setting. Due to the reliability and objectivity of quantitative research, the researcher was able to identify the most frequently reported transferable skills amongst student-athletes and evaluate student-athlete's awareness of transferable skills and career transition. This quantitative approach was deemed to be most effective by the principle investigator and the faculty advisor.

Research Questions

1. How aware are student-athletes in terms of transferable skills acquired through sport?
2. What transferable skills do student-athletes most frequently report?
3. What resources do student-athletes identify as useful in acquiring transferable skills to aid in the transition from athletic career retirement to a non-athletic career setting?

Participants

The study sample consisted of student-athletes who are team members on an intercollegiate athletic varsity team and enrolled as a student for the 2016-2017 academic year at

a NCAA Division I institution within the SEC. Student-athletes recruited to participate in this study competed for one of the 14 institutions within the SEC: Auburn University, Louisiana State University, Mississippi State University, Texas A&M University, University of Alabama, University of Arkansas, University of Florida, University of Georgia, University of Kentucky, University of Mississippi, University of Missouri, University of South Carolina, University of Tennessee, and Vanderbilt University. The researcher chose to evaluate student-athletes who compete in the SEC because of personal contacts within the conference and prestige amongst the NCAA on and off the field of play.

Student-athletes from the SEC who participated in the study ranged from Freshman to Red-Shirt Senior year of athletic eligibility in college. The sample size for the study was calculated based on researching the approximate number of student-athletes per institution who compete in the SEC. In total, four of fourteen SEC institutions participated in the study, there was a calculated sample size of approximately 1,955 student-athletes. 219 student-athletes started the survey and 160 student-athletes completed the survey. Approximately 3 respondents did not identify their SEC institution, sport, or year of eligibility. There was a response rate of 11.2%.

Procedure

The procedure, upon the University of Tennessee Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, for recruiting SEC student-athletes to participate in this study was sent via email addressed to the Director of Student-Athlete Development at each of the 14 SEC institutions athletics department. Each Director of Student-Athlete Development received an approval of IRB (Appendix A), informed consent form (Appendix B) letter of permission to research (Appendix C), a web link to access the survey instrument (Appendix D). Each school was asked

to consult with proper channels such as athletics administrators and student-athletes for approval of participation. Upon athletics department approval, the Director of Student-Athlete Development distributed the Qualtrics online survey via email in a web link format to approximately 1,955 student-athletes.

The email distributed to student-athletes explained that the survey is a study investigating athletic career transition and their awareness of skills acquired on and off the field of play that are transferable to a non-athletic career setting. The email also included an informed consent form and stated that participation is completely voluntary (Appendix D). No incentives were given to participants. Participation in the study will not and did not hinder athletic or academic eligibility. Email addresses of participants were deleted from the original data file to ensure anonymity.

Pilot Study

To ensure a clearly phrased, timely, and informative survey would be distributed to the participants, the researcher tested the survey with two former student-athletes. The pre-test helped determine the clarity of each question and expected time to complete the survey. Based on the success of the pre-test and similarly structured survey from McKnight's (2007) study, the researcher was comfortable distributing the survey on a larger scale of current SEC student-athletes.

Data Collection

A Qualtrics online survey was utilized through the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The online survey format was chosen because of student-athlete time demands and the ability to take the survey on their own time/pace based around their academic class schedule, practice, competitions, rehabilitation, travel, and scheduled appointments/meetings. An online survey also

allowed student-athletes to remain anonymous and answer questions more truthfully considering they are current student-athletes with several responsibilities at stake.

Upon the researcher initially emailing the Director of Student-Athlete Development at each of the 14 SEC institutions, the researcher allowed four weeks for the Qualtrics online survey to be reviewed for approval and distributed to student-athletes via email. After an additional four weeks, the researcher sent a follow-up email to the Directors of Student-Athlete Development inquiring approval and distribution of the survey. Institutions who did not respond to the follow-up email were no longer considered a part of this study. The researcher remained in contact via email with the four institutions that approved to distribute the survey. The researcher received an email copy of the survey distributed to student-athletes. The researcher requested that the survey be redistributed for a second round of student-athlete participation at each of the four institutions. No duplicate survey participants were found.

Survey Instrument

The questionnaire consisted of three sections: (a) transferable skills, (b) career transition, and (b) demographic information. This study's 26-item questionnaire is structured similarly to McKnight's (2007) 35-item survey. McKnight's (2007) study was chosen because it aligns with the purpose of this study. Furthermore, McKnight's (2007) questionnaire properly addressed athlete career transition and transferable skills to the researcher's needs, goals, relatability, and adaptability of surveying student-athletes competing in the SEC.

The questionnaire, found in Appendix D and Appendix D (continued), consisted of 26 questions and averaged approximately 6-8 minutes to complete. Each participant's email address was deleted and responses remained anonymous. Each of the three sections are explained in further detail.

Instrumentation

Part A: Transferable Skills

In the first section, closed-ended questions determined the student-athlete's awareness and perception of which transferable skills they believe they have acquired throughout their time competing as within the SEC. Specifically, McKnight (2007) asked questions about the student-athlete's level of "self-efficacy in utilizing transferable skills and the awareness of the perceived relevance/value of transferable skills" (p. 40). Questions adapted from McKnight's (2007) questionnaire are relative to student-athletes who have acquired transferable skills in a competitive athletic career in the SEC to a non-athletic career setting.

To assess transferable skill self-efficacy, four questions (9, 11, 12, and 13) rated on a 5-point rating scale were asked. Question 9 (Do you think that becoming aware of transferable skills will make career transition easier?) anchored by 1 (Not at all) and 5 (Absolutely). Question 11 (Do you feel confident that your skills will be transferable to a non-athletic career?) anchored by 1 (Not at all) and 5 (Extremely). Question 12 (Would learning about transferable skills increase your confidence in having skills that can be used in non-athletic career?) anchored by 1 (Not at all) and 5 (Absolutely). Question 13 (Do you have doubts concerning your ability to begin a new non-athletic career?) anchored by 1 (No doubts) and 5 (Absolutely doubtful).

To assess the athletes' awareness of transferable skills, five questions (1, 4, 5, 7, and 8) were asked. Question 1 (How familiar are you with transferable skills that can be learned as a student-athlete and that can be useful in non-athletic settings?) and question 8 (Have you noticed any of your skills transfer from your sport to another setting in your own life?) were rated on a 5-point rating scale, question 1 anchored by 1 (Not at all) and 5 (Extremely) and question 8 of 1 (Never) and 5 (Always). Questions 4 (Where did you become more familiar with transferable skills?), question 5 (Who do you believe helps you become more familiar with transferable

skills?) and question 7, (Which skill[s] do you feel you possess that could be transferred to another career?) were categorical questions, and the participants responded by selecting one or multiple boxes, which each box selected equaled 1, whereas an unselected box equaled 0.

To examine relevance/value, five questions (2, 3, 6, 10, and 14) were asked. Question 2 (Do you view yourself as having skills acquired in sport that can be transferred to another career?), question 3 (Is transferring skills from your sport to another job or career something you have considered), question 10 (Are you interested in learning more about how you can develop your transferable skills?), and question 14 (Do you believe being aware of transferable skills is important for a successful transition out of sport?) were independent questions rated on a 5-point rating scale. The questions 2, 3, 10, and 14 were anchored by 1 (Not at all) and 5 (Extremely). Question 6 (Which skill[s] do you view as being the most transferable to another career?) was categorical, and the participants responded by selecting one or multiple boxes, which each box selected equaled 1, whereas an unselected box equaled 0.

Part B: Career Transition

In the second section, closed-ended questions were focused on the student-athlete's awareness of career retirement from their sport. The student-athlete's ability to transfer skills from a competitive athletic career in the SEC to a non-athletic career setting was also assessed. McKnight (2007) stated in terms of career transition, "it is important to look at emotional response, favorable attitude towards retirement, and social resources available for retirement" because the student-athlete's awareness of career transition itself may moderate the use and learning of transferable skills (p. 39).

Emotional readiness was assessed by asking two independent questions on a 5-point rating scale. Question 15 (Do you ever consider what your life would be like once you have to

stop playing your sport?) anchored by 1 (Never) and 5 (Always). Question 17 (How ready are you to transition from sport to a full-time career?) anchored by 1 (Not at all) and 5 (Extremely).

Favorable attitude was assessed by asking one independent question, question 16 (Do you view athletic retirement as a negative transition?) on a 5-point rating scale anchored by 1 (Never) and 5 (Always).

Social resources were assessed by asking three questions: Question 18 (How satisfied are you with how much your coaches and teammates have prepared you to enter a non-athletic career?) on a 5-point rating scale anchored by 1 (Not at all) and 5 (Extremely). Question 19 (Who do you believe is responsible for helping student-athletes make the transition from sport to a non-athletic career setting?) and question 20 (What resources do you feel would aid you in the transition from being an active student-athlete to a life with a non-athletic career?) were categorical questions. The participants responded by selecting one or multiple boxes, which each box selected equaled 1, whereas an unselected box equaled 0.

Part C: Demographic Information

In the final section, student-athletes were asked to state their gender, ethnicity, which SEC institution they compete for, what sport they play, and current year of NCAA athletic eligibility. With a minimal risk for re-identification, the demographic information stated above allowed the researcher to make conclusions specific to the diversity student-athletes and their perceived level career transition and transferable skills.

Data Analysis

The question format used in this study was based off of closed-ended questions on a 5-point rating scale. General descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency, and

percentage) were calculated to analyze the closed-ended questions. All analyses were completed using the SPSS statistical program.

Summary

Chapter 3 addressed the method of quantitative research in the study in addition to outlining the research questions, participants, the procedure, pre-test, survey instrument, and the methods used to collect and analyze the data.

Chapter 4

Results

The study was centered around the three following research questions: (a) How aware are student-athletes in terms of transferable skills acquired through sport, (b) what transferable skills do student-athletes most frequently report, and (c) what resources do student-athletes identify as useful in acquiring transferable skills to aid in the transition from athletic career retirement to a non-athletic career setting? In seeking an answer to these questions, a survey was distributed to SEC student-athletes. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and quantitative methods.

Descriptive and Quantitative Analysis

Part A: Transferable Skills

In first section, Part A of the survey addresses the questions on attitudes toward and awareness of transferable skills acquired through competition in the SEC.

Familiarity with Transferable Skills: Table 6 indicates the student-athletes' answers to question 1, which asked how familiar they were with transferable skills acquired as a student-athlete and that can be useful in a non-athletic career setting. Of the 160 student-athletes who responded, 94.4% (n=151) were "Extremely familiar" (scale point 5), "Very familiar" (scale point 4), or "Somewhat familiar" (scale point 3) with transferable skills.

Perception of Transferable Skills: Table 7 illustrates student-athletes' answers to question 2, which asked to what degree they viewed themselves as having skills acquired through sport that can be transferred to a non-athletic career setting. Of the 160 student-athletes who responded, 96.3% (n=154) "Definitely" (scale point 5) or "Probably" (scale point 4) viewed themselves as having transferable skills.

Table 6

*Question 1: Familiarity with
Transferable skills*

Familiarity	N	%
Extremely (5)	35	21.9
Very (4)	72	45
Somewhat (3)	44	27.5
Not Very (2)	7	4.4
Not at all (1)	2	1.3
Total	160	100
Mean = 3.82, Standard Deviation = 0.868		

Table 7

Question 2: Perception of Transferable Skills

Perception	N	%
Definitely yes (5)	106	66.3
Probably yes (4)	48	30
Might or might not (3)	6	3.8
Total	160	100
Mean = 4.63, Standard Deviation = 0.558		

Consideration of Skill Transfer: Table 8 highlights the respondents' answers to question 3, which asked how often student-athletes had considered transferring skills from their sport to a non-athletic career setting. Of the 160 responses, 63.1% (n=101) "Definitely" (scale point 5) have considered and 30% (n=48) "Probably" (scale point 4) have considered transferring skills from their sport to a non-athletic career setting.

Table 8

Question 3: Consideration of Skill Transfer

Consideration	N	%
Definitely yes (5)	101	63.1
Probably yes (4)	48	30
Might or might not (3)	10	6.3
Probably not (2)	1	0.6
Total	160	100
Mean = 4.56, Standard Deviation = 0.642		

Where Familiarity with Transferable Skills Increased: Table 9 shows the student-athletes' responses to the categorical question "where did you become more familiar with transferable skills?" (Question 4). Of the 160 student-athletes who responded, 75% (n=120) identified their "College/University" and 65% (n=104) identified "Sport" as where they become more familiar with transferable skills. 43.1% (n=69) of student-athlete respondents equally identified "Home" and "High School" as less influential places of becoming familiar with transferable skills.

Table 9

Question 4: Where Familiarity with Transferable Skills Increased

Where Familiarity Increased	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
College/University	120	75	40	25
High School	69	43.1	91	56.9
Home	69	43.1	91	56.9
Sport	104	65	56	35
None	2	1.3	158	98.8
Other	4	2.5	156	97.5

Table 10

Question 4b: Responses to the Category of "Other"

Response	N	%
As an athlete, I think that you are continuously becoming more familiar with these skills. From when we are young until now.	1	33.3
Common sense	1	33.3
National team	1	33.3
Total	3	100

Clarification of “Other” in Question 4: The participants who selected the “Other” box for the question “where did you become more familiar with transferable skills?” (Question 4) explained their responses in Table 10.

Who Assists in Familiarity of Student-Athlete Transferable Skills: Table 11 shows the student-athlete responses to the categorical question “who do you believe helps you become more familiar with transferable skills?” (Question 5). Of the 160 responses, 73.1% (n=117) identified “Family” and 70.6% (n=113) identified “Yourself” as the most influential people/person who assists in one’s familiarity of transferable skills. 20.6% (n=33) of student-athletes identified an “Athletics Administrator” and a “Sport Psychologist” as least influential in increasing familiarity of transferable skills.

Skills that are the Most Transferable: Table 12 illustrates the student-athlete’s responses to the categorical question “which skill(s) do you view as being most transferable to another career?” (Question 6). Of the 160 student-athletes who responded, 92.5% (n=148) selected “Strong work ethic” and 85.6% (n=137) selected “Goal-oriented” as skills they saw as most transferable. “Coachable” 68.8% (n=110) and “Confidence” 65.6% (n=105) were selected as least transferable to another career.

Student-Athlete’s Possession of Transferable Skills: Table 13 shows the student-athletes’ responses to categorical question “which skill(s) do you feel you possess that could be transferred to another career? (Question 7). Of the 160 student-athletes who responded, 87.5% (n=140) selected “Strong work ethic” as the skill they saw themselves possessing and that they could transfer to a non-athletic career setting, followed by “Time management” 80.6% (n=129). One respondent selected the “Other” box, which indicated no significant information.

Table 11

*Question 5: Who Assists in Familiarity of Student-Athlete**Transferable Skills*

Individuals	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Academic Advisor	56	35	104	65
Athletics Administrator	33	20.6	127	79.4
Coach (Head Coach, Assistant Coach, etc.)	93	58.1	67	41.9
Family	117	73.1	43	26.9
Friends	70	43.8	90	56.3
Mentor/Role Model	86	53.8	74	46.3
Professor/Teacher	52	32.5	108	67.5
Sport Psychologist	33	20.6	127	79.4
Strength & Conditioning Coach	51	31.9	109	68.1
Student-Athlete Development Staff	63	39.4	97	60.6
Teammates	94	58.8	66	41.3
Yourself	113	70.6	47	29.4
None	0	0	160	100
Other	0	0	160	100

Table 12

Question 6: Skills that are the Most Transferable

Transferable Skills	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Ability to handle pressure	125	78.1	35	21.9
Coachable	110	68.8	50	31.3
Competitive nature	117	73.1	43	26.9
Confidence	105	65	55	34.4
Goal-oriented	137	85.6	23	14.4
Mentally tough	121	75.6	39	24.4
Self-motivation	130	81.3	30	18.8
Strong work ethic	148	92.5	12	7.5
Teamwork	128	80	32	20
Time Management	135	84.4	25	15.6
Other	0	0	160	100

Table 13

Question 7: Student-Athlete's Possession of Transferable Skills

Transferable Skills	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Ability to handle pressure	112	70	48	30
Coachable	115	71.9	45	28.1
Competitive nature	114	71.3	46	28.8
Confidence	95	59.4	65	40.6
Goal-oriented	125	78.1	35	21.9
Mentally tough	114	71.3	46	28.8
Self-motivated	127	79.4	33	20.6
Strong work ethic	140	87.5	20	12.5
Teamwork	123	76.9	37	23.1
Time management	129	80.6	31	19.4
Other	1	0.6	159	99.4

Table 14

Question 8: Noticing Skills Transfer

Noticed	N	%
Always (5)	41	25.6
Frequently (4)	98	61.3
Somewhat (3)	20	12.5
Rarely (2)	1	0.6
Total	160	100

Mean = 4.12, Standard Deviation = 0.628

Noticing Skills Transfer: Table 14 indicates the student-athletes' answers to question 8, which asked how often they had noticed skill transfer from their sport to another setting. Of the 160 respondents, 61.3% (n=98) "Frequently" (scale point 4) and 25.6% (n=41) "Always" (scale point 5) noticed skills transfer throughout their lives.

The Effect of Awareness on Transition: Table 15 unfolds the participants' answers to question 9, which asked to what degree the student-athletes thought that becoming aware of transferable skills would make career transition easier. Of the 160 student-athletes who responded, 45% (n=72) believed it is "Absolutely easier" (scale point 5) and 39.4% (n=63) believed becoming more aware of transferable skills would make the transition process "Very much easier" (scale point 4).

Interest in Learning About Transferable Skills: Table 16 reveals the student-athletes' answers to question 10, which asked their level of interest in learning more about transferable skills. Of the 160 respondents, 34.4% (n=55) would be "Mostly interested" (scale point 4),

Table 15

Question 9: The Effect of Awareness on Transition

Awareness	N	%
Absolutely easier (5)	72	45
Very much easier (4)	63	39.4
Somewhat easier (3)	19	11.9
Not much easier (2)	6	3.8
Total	160	100

Mean = 4.26, Standard Deviation = 0.811

Table 16

*Question 10: Interest in Learning About
Transferable Skills*

Interest	N	%
Definitely interested (5)	49	30.6
Mostly interested (4)	55	34.4
Might or might not be interested (3)	46	28.8
Not really interested (2)	10	6.3
Total	160	100

Mean = 3.89, Standard Deviation = 0.811

30.6% (n=49) would “Definitely be interested” (scale point 5), and 28.8% (n=46) “Might or might not be interested” (scale point 3) in learning more about the skills they have acquired throughout their time as a student-athlete.

Confidence in Skills Transfer: Table 17 illustrates the participants’ answers to question 11, which asked how confident student-athlete felt transferring their skills to a full-time career. Of the 160 student-athletes who responded, 48.1% (n=77) felt “Very confident” (scale point 4) and 35.6% (n=57) felt “Extremely confident” (scale point 5) in their ability to transfer their acquired skills from sport into a full-time career.

Table 17

Question 11: Confidence in Skills Transfer

Confidence	N	%
Extremely confident (5)	57	35.6
Very confident (4)	77	48.1
Somewhat confident (3)	26	16.3
Total	160	100

Mean = 4.19, Standard Deviation = 0.696

Table 18

*Question 12: Learning About Skills**Increases Confidence in Their Use*

Increase Confidence	N	%
Really increase (4)	55	34.4
Absolutely increase (5)	50	31.3
Somewhat increase (3)	49	30.6
Not really increase (2)	6	3.8
Total	160	100
Mean = 3.93, Standard Deviation = 0.877		

Learning About Skills Increases Confidence in Their Use: Table 18 reveals student-athletes' answers to question 12, which asked how they felt regarding learning more about transferable skills to increase their confidence in utilizing skills that can be used in a non-athletic career setting. Of the 160 student-athletes who responded, 65.7% (n=105) stated it would "Really increase" (scale point 4) or "Absolutely increase" (scale point 5) their confidence in transferability.

Doubts When Beginning a New Career: Table 19 indicates the student-athletes' answers to question 13, which asked to what degree they had doubts about their ability to begin a new career in a non-athletic career setting. Of the 160 respondents, 41.3% (n=66) had "Some doubts" (scale point 3) and 33.8% (n=54) had "Very few doubts" (scale point 2) about their ability to begin a new career.

Importance of Awareness of Transferable Skills: Table 20 shows the student-athletes' answers to question 14, which asked how important they believe that being aware of transferable skills is important for a successful transition out of sport. Of the 160 student-athletes who responded, 81.3% (n=130) believed that it is "Really important" (scale point 4) or "Extremely important" (scale point 5) to be aware of transferable skills in the transition out of sport.

Table 19

*Question 13: Doubts When Beginning a
New Career*

Doubts	N	%
Absolutely doubtful (5)	9	5.6
A lot of doubts (4)	14	8.8
Some doubts (3)	66	41.3
Very few doubts (2)	54	33.8
No doubts (1)	17	10.6
Total	160	100

Mean = 2.65, Standard Deviation = 0.979

Table 20

*Question 14: Importance related to
Awareness of Transferable Skills*

Importance of Awareness	N	%
Extremely important (5)	54	33.8
Really important (4)	76	47.5
Somewhat important (3)	26	16.3
Not really important (2)	4	2.5
Total	160	100

Mean = 4.13, Standard Deviation = 0.767

Part B: Career Transition

Part B includes questions about student-athlete's awareness of the career transition itself upon athletic career retirement.

Table 21

Question 15: Consideration of Life After Sport

Consideration	N	%
Always (5)	38	23.8
Frequently (4)	71	44.4
Sometimes (3)	38	23.8
Rarely (2)	12	7.5
Never (1)	1	0.6
Total	160	100

Mean = 3.83, Standard Deviation = 0.899

Consideration of Life After Sport: Table 21 reveals the student-athletes' answers to question 15, which asked to what degree student-athletes had considered what life would be like once they stopped playing their sport. Of the 160 respondents, a total 44.4% (n=71) of student-athletes "Frequently" (scale point 4) considered what life would be like when they stopped playing their sport.

Negative Transition: Table 22 highlights the student-athletes' answers to question 16, which asked to what degree they viewed athletic career retirement as a negative transition. Of the 160 student-athletes who responded, 41.3% (n=66) "Sometimes" (scale point 3) and 30% (n=48) "Rarely" (scale point 2) view athletic career retirement from sport as a negative transition.

Readiness to Enter a Full-Time Career: Table 23 shows the respondents answers to question 17, which asked how ready student-athletes felt they are to enter a full-time career upon transition from sport. Of the 160 student-athletes who responded, 35.6% (n=57) felt "Somewhat"

Table 22

*Question 16: Athletic Retirement as a
Negative Transition*

Negative Transition	N	%
Always (5)	3	1.9
Frequently (4)	22	13.8
Sometimes (3)	66	41.3
Rarely (2)	48	30
Never (1)	21	13.1
Total	160	100

Mean = 2.61, Standard Deviation = 0.945

Table 23

*Question 17: Readiness to Enter a
Full-Time Career*

Readiness	N	%
Extremely (5)	15	9.4
Very (4)	35	21.9
Somewhat (3)	57	35.6
Not very (2)	41	25.6
Not at all (1)	12	7.5
Total	160	100

Mean = 3.00, Standard Deviation = 1.076

ready (scale point 3), 25.6% (n=41) felt “Not very” ready (scale point 2), and 21.9% (n=35) felt “Very” ready (scale point 4) to enter a full-time career upon athletic career retirement.

Satisfaction with Preparation: Table 24 illustrates the student-athletes’ answers to question 18, which asked to what degree they were satisfied with how their coaches and teammates had prepared them to enter a non-athletic career. Of the 160 respondents, 38.1% (n=61) were “Very” satisfied (scale point 4) and 35.6% (n=57) were “Somewhat” satisfied (scale point 3) with preparation from coaches and teammates.

Table 24

*Question 18: Satisfaction with Preparation
from Coaches and Teammates*

Satisfaction with Preparation	N	%
Extremely (5)	17	10.6
Very (4)	61	38.1
Somewhat (3)	57	35.6
Not very (2)	21	13.1
Not at all (1)	4	2.5
Total	160	100
Mean = 3.41, Standard Deviation = 0.934		

Responsible for Assisting in Transition: Table 25 shows how student-athletes responded to the categorical question “Who do you believe is responsible for helping student-athletes make the transition from sport to a non-athletic career setting?” (Question 19). Of the 160 student-athletes who responded, 73% (n=117) reported “Athletics Support Staff,” 65% (n=104) reported “Family Members,” and 63% (n=101) reported the “Student-Athlete” themselves as being most responsible for helping student-athletes make the transition from sport. 59% (n=95) of student-athletes also reported “Coaches” are responsible. Student-athletes reported “Friends” 39%

(n=62) and “Sport Governing Bodies (NCAA, SEC, etc.)” 23% (n=36) as the least responsible for helping them make the transition from sport to a non-athletic career setting.

Table 25

Question 19: Individual(s) Responsible for Assisting in Transition

Individual(s) Responsible	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Athletics Support Staff	117	73.1	43	26.9
Coaches	95	59.4	65	40.6
Family Members	104	65	56	35
Friends	62	38.8	98	61.3
Sport Governing Bodies (NCAA, SEC, etc.)	36	22.5	124	77.5
Student-Athlete	101	63.1	59	36.9
Other	8	5	152	95

Clarification of “Other” in Question 19: The student-athletes who selected the “Other” box for the question “who do you believe is responsible for helping student-athletes make the transition from sport to a non-athletic career setting?” (Question 19) explained their responses in Table 26.

Table 26

Question 19b: Responses to the Category of “Other”

Response	N	%
Counselors	1	12.5
Mentors and bosses	1	12.5
Someone specific for this topic	1	12.5
Yourself	5	62.5
Total	8	100

Table 27

Question 20: Resources That Aid in the Transition Out of Sport

Resources	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Career planning workshops	78	48.8	82	51.3
Counseling from athletics support staff	82	51.3	78	48.8
Information about transferable skills	60	37.5	100	62.5
Job shadowing/internship/job experience	126	78.8	34	21.3
Support from family	113	70.6	47	29.4
Support from friends	80	50	80	50
Support from sport agents	34	21.3	126	78.8
Other	0	0	160	100

Resources That Aid in the Transition Out of Sport: Table 27 shows the student-athletes who responded to the categorical question “what resources do you feel would aid you in the transition from being an active student-athlete to a life with a non-athletic career?” (Question 20). Of the 160 student-athletes who responded, 79% (n=126) chose “Job shadowing/internship/job experience” and 71% (n=113) chose “Support from family” as resources that would most help them in the transition to a non-athletic career setting. The resources least selected by student-athletes to aid in the transition out of sport was “Information about transferable skills” 38% (n=60) and “Support from sport agents” 21% (n=34).

Part C: Demographic Information

The final section, part C, of the survey addresses the gender of participants, ethnicity, SEC institution, year of athletic eligibility, and competitive sport.

Gender: Table 28 shows that, of the 160 surveys returned, 36.3% (n=58) were male, 63.8% (n=102) were female (Question 21).

Table 28

*Question 21: Gender of
Participants*

Gender	N	%
Female	102	63.8
Male	58	36.3
Total	160	100

Ethnicity: Table 29 shows that, of the 160 surveys returned, 75% (n= 120) selected their ethnicity (Question 22) as White, 15% (n=24) were Black or African American, 1.3% (n=2) were American Indian or Alaska Native, 2.5% (n=4) were Asian, and 6.3% (n=10) selected other.

SEC Institution: Table 30 indicates which SEC institution the student-athlete competed for at the time of completing the survey (Question 23). Of the 158 student-athletes who identified which SEC institution they attended, 5.1% (n=8) were from the University A, 19% (n=30) from the University B, 19% from the University C, and 57% (n=90) from the University D.

Year of Athletic Eligibility: Of the 157 student-athletes who identified their current year of athletic playing eligibility (Question 24), Table 31 shows participants ranged from Freshman to Red-Shirt Senior.

Table 29

Question 22: Ethnicity of Participants

Ethnicity	N	%
White	120	75
Black or African American	24	15
Other	10	6.3
Asian	4	2.5
American Indian or Alaska Native	2	1.3
Total	160	100

Table 30

Question 23: SEC Institution

SEC Institution	N	%
University A	8	5.1
University B	30	19.0
University C	30	19.0
University D	90	57.0
Total	158	100.0

Table 31

*Question 24: Current Year of
Athletic Eligibility*

Athletic Eligibility	N	%
Freshman	28	17.8
Red-Shirt Freshman	12	7.6
Sophomore	31	19.7
Red-Shirt Sophomore	8	5.1
Junior	23	14.6
Red-Shirt Junior	9	5.7
Senior	36	22.9
Red-Shirt Senior	10	6.4
Total	157	100

Competitive Sport: Table 32 shows the competitive sport each student-athlete competed in at their respective SEC institution (Question 25). Of the 156 student-athletes who identified which competitive sport they play in the study, 11.6% (n=18) competed in a revenue generating sport (Basketball, Football) and 88.6% (n=138) competed in Olympic sports (Golf, Softball, Swimming & Diving, etc.).

Table 32

Question 25: Competitive Sport

Sport	N	%
Baseball	7	4.5
Basketball	7	4.5
Equestrian	2	1.3
Football	11	7.1
Golf	15	9.6
Gymnastics	3	1.9
Rowing (Big 12)	10	6.4
Soccer	13	8.3
Softball	13	8.3
Swimming & Diving	25	16
Tennis	15	9.6
Track & Field/Cross Country	23	14.7
Volleyball	12	7.7
Total	156	100

Additional Comments: At the conclusion of the survey, student-athletes were given the opportunity to disclose any additional comments (Question 26). Of the 8 additional comments disclosed, 3 student-athletes disclosed insignificant information related to the study in the additional comments box. 2 student-athletes indicated they are on the Rifle team at their respective university. 1 student-athlete revealed “(anonymous person) has prepared me for life

outside of college sports.” 1 student-athlete reported “mentors and internships are key in the transition.” 1 student-athlete candidly revealed her perception of athletic identity.

Summary

This concludes the reporting of the results in this study. Chapter 5 discusses the implications of the results from Chapter 4, offers suggestions to improve the career transition process and transferability of skills acquired by student-athletes, provide suggestions for future research, and discuss the limitations of the study.

Chapter 5

Discussion

This study was designed to research student-athlete's awareness of transferable skills, identify what skills are most transferable, and the resources available to aid student-athletes in the transition from athletic career retirement to a non-athletic career setting. Chapter 5 discusses the implications of the results found in Chapter 4, offers suggestions to improve the career transition process and transferability of skills acquired by student-athletes, provides suggestions for future research, and identifies the limitations of the study.

Implications of Transferable Skills and Career Transition

The implications of this study focus on the process of student-athletes acquiring transferable skills from sport and utilizing those skills for the transition from their collegiate athletic career to a non-athletic career setting. There are three main responses to the research questions from this study: (a) this research supports previous literature that concludes student-athletes are aware of transferable skills and believe transferable skills are helpful in the athletic career transition process, (b) strong work ethic, goal-oriented, and time management were the most frequently reported transferable skills acquired amongst student-athletes, and (c) student-athletes identify sport, family members, athletics support staff, and job/job shadow/internship experience as the greatest resources to aid in the athletic career transition process.

In response to the first of three research questions in this study, 151 of the 160 student-athletes who participated in this study (94.4%) indicated they are aware and familiar with transferable skills. 93.1% (n=149) of those 160 student-athletes have considered transferring skills from their sport to a non-athletic career setting. Such great awareness of transferable skills by student-athletes supports the theoretical framework of Schlossberg's (1981) Model of

Transition and Mayocchi and Hanrahan's (2000) LDI in the process of athletic career transition. Awareness of transferable skills leads to an awareness of how such skills were developed.

In addition to awareness of transferable skills, biological, social, and situational factors influence the athletic career transition process. To begin this process, more than two-thirds (68.1%, $n=109$) of the 160 participants in this study revealed they are spending time during the day to assess what their life will look like after sport and their readiness to pursue a full-time post-athletic retirement. The question regarding career readiness (question 17) triggered the greatest variance ($sd = 1.076$) of all questions asked. The diversity of readiness may reflect on the equal representation of athletic eligibility ranging from Freshman to Senior. It is believed that Seniors possess greater signs of transferability due to the time they have had to enhance their skills compared to Freshman in college (Good, 2015). This confirms that biological, social, and situational factors are engrained into the process student-athletes face transitioning from an athletic career to a non-athletic career setting.

The second of three research questions in this study is answered as the student-athletes indicated the most frequently reported transferable skills. Without hesitation, "Strong work ethic" was identified as the most transferable (92.5%, $n=148$) as well as the skill student-athletes believe they possess (87.5%, $n=140$) more often than the other nine skills listed. It is also without much surprise that skills such as time management, self-motivation, goal-orientation, teamwork, coachable, competitive nature, mental toughness, and ability to handle to pressure ranged from 70-80% of the responses.

All the listed transferable skills were compiled based on previous research of athletes who identified the most desirable skills and only confirmed their existence (Chalfin, 2015; Danish et al., 1993; Good, 2015; Mayocchi and Hanrahan, 2000; McKnight, 2007; Petitpas et

al., 1992). It could also be assumed that because the participants are SEC student-athletes, the level of excellence expected of them daily is the standard for variety of transferable skills they possess. A coach's "win-at-all-costs" mentality may tap into this as they recruit and train some of the best players in the country. However, one of the costs may be "Confidence" as only 59.4% (n=95) of student-athletes believe confidence is a skill acquired through sport and transferable to a non-athletic career setting.

Several studies, two specifically from McKnight (2007) and Danish et al. (1993), report athletic identity is high amongst student-athletes and rapidly declines once they retire from sport, finding themselves lost in the transition. The overall low transferability of the skill "Confidence" (59.4%, n=95) amongst the student-athletes surveyed in this study is likely reflective of their high athletic identity and likeliness to experience depression, anxiety, and, mental health issues. "Competitive nature" (73.1%, n=117) follows suit in the eyes of student-athletes. In Chalfin et al.'s (2015) employer perspective study, competitive nature is the top ranked most desirable skills amongst student-athletes. While 73% of student-athletes believe this skill is transferable to a non-athletic career setting, the "win-at-all-costs" mentality may not be as transferable to the workforce as employers think it is.

What does this mean from an employer's perspective? In Chalfin et al.'s (2015) study, employers rank confidence and competitive nature as two of the top five qualities/skills associated with college athletics participation. For instance, the golfer earlier referenced in the literature who wants to pursue a career in sales, confidence and competitive nature is likely a skill marketable amongst a salesperson to be successful at their job. Employers can learn from findings in this study that while confidence and competitive nature are two the lowest of ten

ranked transferable skills, student-athletes rank time management and goal-oriented as two of the top four skills transferable to a non-athletic career setting.

As the researcher evaluates the results of this study from a theoretical standpoint, the findings indicate that environmental factors are the greatest influences on the process student-athletes embark on as they transition from athletic career retirement to a non-athletic career setting (Schlossberg, 1981). The third research question is answered by incorporating awareness of transferable skills and indicating what resources student-athletes identify as useful during the athletic career retirement process.

Many of the 160 participants indicated attending a college/university (75%, n=120) and involvement in sport (65%, n=104) as the main resource for enhancing their familiarity and knowledge of transferable skills (Mayocchi and Hanrahan, 2000). Such findings point to the environmental factors (physical setting, sport, interpersonal and institutional support) that lead to awareness of transferable skills amongst student-athletes (Schlossberg, 1981).

Diving a little deeper into the relationship of environmental factors and awareness of transferable skills, two student-athletes indicated transferable skills are “common sense” and they continually become more familiar with transferable skills overtime instead of identifying an individual source(s). Interestingly, one student-athlete marked participation from their national team as the direct source of familiarity. The researcher is curious as to what programming or strategies are implemented on the national level that are not being implemented on the collegiate level. McKnight’s (2007) study that provided commonly cited transferable skills did not indicate a significant difference between college and professional athletes and the sources of where they became more familiar with transferable skills. However, this supports the notion that environmental factors are the greatest influence in the athletic career transition process.

Tied directly to the environmental factors that influence the athletic career transition process, the researcher asked who had helped the student-athletes increase their familiarity with transferable skills. Of the 160 who responded, the interpersonal support system emerged as over 70% selected “Family” (73.1%, n=117) and “Yourself” (70.6%, n=113) supporting McKnight’s (2007) findings. The finding of family members being the most influential person(s) in the familiarity of their transferable skills and athletic career transition strikes the researcher because when student-athletes were asked the source of where they learned about transferable skills, only 69 of 160 (43.1%) indicated “Home.” While the researcher may partially assume those considered family members live within the home, the findings suggest that it is best to educate student-athlete’s families on the importance of transferable skills and athletic career transition.

In terms of institutional support system that consists of athletics department personnel, student-athletes identified “Coach” (58.1%, n=93) as highest selected individual(s) amongst athletics department personnel. The term “Coach” serves as umbrella for head coaches, assistant coaches, special events coaches, etc. While this selection is to no surprise, student-athletes reported the Student-Athlete Development staff (39.4%, n = 63) as the second most influential athletics department personnel to assist with the familiarity of transferable skills and transition out of sport.

In much surprise of the researcher and contrary to McKnight’s (2007) findings, sport psychologists and athletics administrators are the least beneficial resources (20.6%, n = 33) amongst athletics department personnel to aid in student-athlete’s acquirement of transferable skills and athletic career transition process. It is valid to believe sport psychologists are often the most equipped and properly educated professionals within the athletics department to aid student-athletes in athletic identity loss and career transition while athletics administrators are

paid the most money to operate the athletics department (Danish et al, 1993; Mayocchi & Hanrahan, 2000; NCAA, n.d.) The findings suggest it may be more beneficial for family members, coaches, and student-athlete development staff to assist student-athletes in the acquirement of transferable skills from sport and aid in the athletic career transition process (McKnight, 2007).

What is important for sport psychologists and athletics administrators to know is there are other athletics department personnel (coaches, student-athlete development staff) who play a greater role in the student-athlete's development. According to the results, the best form of institutional support is to encourage the student-athletes engage with the programming and personnel in place to help student-athletes develop holistically and prepare for the next step upon athletic career retirement.

Specifically, for coaches and student-athlete development staff, it is important to know that 126 of the 160 student-athletes surveyed (78.8%), reported "Job shadowing/internship/job experience" as beneficial resources and opportunities to aid in the transition process. Mayocchi and Hanrahan (2000), Navarro and McCormick (2017), and 82 student-athletes (51.3%) suggest counseling sessions specific to the individual, their desired career path, and readiness to transition from sport to a non-athletic career setting is another influential form of environmental factors that influence the athletic career transition process.

In summary, the three research questions and discussion of this study focus on the need to determine ways to improve the process of helping student-athletes through the transition from athletic career retirement to a non-athletic career setting. The theoretical framework that breaks down the process of athletic career transition (Mayocchi and Hanrahan, 200; Schlossberg, 1981)

identifies the student-athlete awareness of transferable skills, the most frequently reported skills, and what resources aid in the holistic development of student-athletes.

Further Research

One suggestion for the future is qualitative research related to student-athlete's awareness of transferable skills and the role athletic identity plays in career transition. Specifically interview two student-athletes from each of the 14 SEC school: (a) student-athlete in a revenue generating sport and (b) a student-athlete in an Olympic sport.

A second suggestion is evaluating other conferences within the NCAA whether that is at the Division I, II, or III level. The intensity, demands, and political power of certain schools and conferences may play a factor in the awareness of student-athletes transferable skills, which is of interest of the researcher.

A third suggestion is identifying an institution within the SEC (or other conferences) with low scores of student-athlete awareness of transferable skills or severely low thoughts of negative transition. Evaluating institutions with low scores could target programming and certain athletics department personnel that can be improved for the betterment of student-athletes.

Limitations

A limitation is that participants were not given a long-answer response option to many of the questions. This meant that the researcher did not give student-athletes the opportunity to explain why or why not they felt a certain way in response to the questions. The responses to many questions would have been richer if the participants had a chance to provide more detail after each question rather than the final comments box (question 26).

A second limitation is over half (57%, n=90) of the participants were from the University D. The total population of student-athletes who participated in the study derived from

professional connections the researcher has with the Director of Student-Athlete Development at each institution within the SEC. Therefore, the results may not be generalizable to many institutions outside of the University of D.

Conclusion

This study investigated how current student-athletes measure awareness of transferable skills, identify what transferable skills are most frequently reported, and the resources available to aid in their transition from athletic career retirement to a non-athletic career setting. The findings will help educate families of student-athletes and athletics department personnel by revealing student-athlete's understanding of transferable skills, their awareness of career transition, and the resources that influence their familiarity of transferable skills. The theoretical framework of Model of Transition and LDI explained the factors that influence transition and role of transferable skills while transitioning out of sport.

The findings are consistent with previous research stated in the literature, indicating student-athletes are highly aware of transferable skills. The student-athletes who participated in this study also determined strong work ethic as the most frequently reported transferable skill. Family members and athletics department personnel such as coaches and student-athlete development staff were identified as the most useful resources for aiding in the acquirement of transferable skills and transition from athletic career retirement to a non-athletic career setting.

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Appendix

Appendix A



THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

November 10, 2016

Michelle Lynn Woods,
UTK - Kinesiology Recreation & Sport Studies

Re: UTK IRB-16-03331-XP

Study Title: Student-Athlete Perception of Transferable Skills Acquired Through Competition in the Southeastern Conference

Dear Michelle Lynn Woods:

The UTK Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed your application for the above referenced project. It determined that your application is eligible for expedited review under 45 CFR 46.110(b)(1), category (7). The IRB has reviewed these materials and determined that they do comply with proper consideration for the rights and welfare of human subjects and the regulatory requirements for the protection of human subjects.

Therefore, this letter constitutes full approval by the IRB of your application (version 1.2) as submitted, including IRB SEC Informed Consent Form (v2.0), IRB SEC Permission to Conduct Study Introduction Letter (v3.0), IRB SEC Survey Instrument (v3.0) and IRB SEC Introduction to Research Email (v.2.0). The listed forms have been dated and stamped IRB approved. Approval of this study will be valid from November 10, 2016 to November 9, 2017.

In accord with 45 CFR 46.116(d), informed consent may be altered, with the cover statement used in lieu of an informed consent interview. The requirement to secure a signed consent form is waived under 45 CFR 46.117(c)(2). Willingness of the subject to participate will constitute adequate documentation of consent.

In the event that subjects are to be recruited using solicitation materials, such as brochures, posters, web-based advertisements, etc., these materials must receive prior approval of the IRB. Any revisions in the approved application must also be submitted to and approved by the IRB prior to implementation. In addition, you are responsible for reporting any unanticipated serious adverse events or other problems involving risks to subjects or others in the manner required by the local IRB policy.

Finally, re-approval of your project is required by the IRB in accord with the conditions specified above. You may not continue the research study beyond the time or other limits specified unless you obtain prior written approval of the IRB.

Sincerely,

Colleen P. Gilrane, Ph.D.
Chair

Institutional Review Board | Office of Research & Engagement
1534 White Avenue Knoxville, TN 37996-1529
865-974-7697 865-974-7400 fax irb.utk.edu

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Appendix B

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

Student-Athlete Perception of Transferable Skills Acquired Through Competition in the Southeastern Conference

INTRODUCTION

You are invited to participate in a research study in which the researchers seeks to determine the student-athlete perception of transferrable skills developed on and off the field of intercollegiate athletics play then carried into a non-athletic career setting. I am asking you to participate in my study because you have been identified as a Division I National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) student-athlete that competes on an intercollegiate athletic varsity team within the Southeastern Conference.

PARTICIPANT INVOLVEMENT IN THE STUDY

Participation in this study requires answering a series of 26 questions total about demographic information and student-athlete's awareness and perception of transferable skills acquired throughout their participation in intercollegiate athletics. Participation in this study will take approximately 10-12 minutes to complete.

RISKS

Responses are kept anonymous and there is a minimal risk for re-identification of respondents. Participants may experience discomfort when responding to some of the questions asked by the researcher. Participating in this study will not have an effect on your athletic or academic standing. Participants can choose to opt out of the study until submitting the survey.

BENEFITS

There are no direct benefits to you as a participant of this study; however, the study will contribute to the body of knowledge about student-athlete's awareness perception of the transferable skills they have acquired throughout participation in Division I NCAA intercollegiate athletics in the Southeastern Conference. No compensation will be provided for participation in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Every attempt will be made to keep the information in this study confidential. Data will be stored securely and will be made available only to persons involved the study. No reference will be made in oral or written reports which could link participants to the study. Only the principle investigator and faculty advisor will have access to the hard copy data.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, (or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study,) you may contact the researcher at the University of Tennessee, Michelle Woods, at 1801 Volunteer Boulevard, Knoxville, TN 37996, and (865) 974-8882 or the faculty advisor, Jim Bemiller, J.D., (865) 974-0359. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, contact the University of Tennessee IRB Compliance Officer at (865) 974-7697 or utkirb@utk.edu.

PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Completion of this survey indicates your consent to participate in this study. All participants must be 18 or older.

Appendix C



THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

November 11, 2016

University of South Carolina Athletics
Student-Athlete Development
1302 Heyward Street, #321
Columbia, SC 29208

Dear Director of Student-Athlete Development,

I am writing to request permission to conduct a research study at your SEC institution. I am a graduate student at the University of Tennessee. This study is entitled *Student-Athlete Perception of Transferable Skills Acquired Through Competition in the Southeastern Conference*.

The objective of this study is to determine the awareness and perceptions of skills student-athletes have acquired throughout their career competing for an institution in the NCAA Division I Southeastern Conference (SEC). Student-athletes at each SEC institution are asked to take part in an online survey, which will take 10-12 minutes to complete. Responses are kept anonymous and there is a minimal risk for re-identification of respondents.

The findings may help guide coaches, athletics administrators, and support staff on what student-athletes understand about transferable skills and also what skills they perceive that they have acquired throughout their career as a student-athlete competing in the SEC. These findings may also allow student-athletes be more aware and educated on the skills they have acquired throughout their intercollegiate athletics career, which may help ease the transition from an athletic setting to a non-athletic career setting.

I have provided copies of the survey instrument, consent form, permission to research letter, as well as a copy of my resume. The assistance requested from the athletics department includes asking for support from athletics administration and student-athletes to permit, facilitate, and distribute a survey by email to all student-athletes. This research does not request financial responsibility from the university or athletics department.

Upon completion of the study, I will provide the Athletics Department with a copy of the full research report and findings. If you have any questions or would like to obtain additional information regarding the research study, please do not hesitate to contact me (865) 974-8882 or mwoods34@vols.utk.edu. My faculty advisor, Jim Bemiller, J.D., may also be contacted (865) 974-0359 or jimb@utk.edu. Thank you for your time and consideration.

If you agree to participate in this study, at your earliest convenience, please distribute the survey by email to all student-athletes and copy me mwoods34@vols.utk.edu acknowledging your consent to carry out this study at your SEC institution. I appreciate your time and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Michelle Woods
Recreation & Sports Management Masters Candidate
Graduate Assistant in Student-Athlete Development

Thornton Athletics Student Life Center
Office of the Provost
1801 Volunteer Blvd, Knoxville, TN 37996-3101
865-974-8882 865-974-4691 fax

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Appendix D

Survey Instrument Page: 1

Title: Student-Athlete Perception of Career Transition and Transferable Skills Acquired Through Competition in the SEC

Introduction to participants, beginning of survey:

Dear SEC Student-Athlete:

You are being invited to participate in a research study by answering the attached Qualtrics survey about your perception of transferable skills acquired throughout your experience as a student-athlete competing in the Southeastern Conference. The information you provide may allow to student-athletes, coaches, athletics administrators, and support staff to be more aware and educated on the skills student-athletes have acquired throughout their intercollegiate athletics career and could help ease the transition from an athletic setting to a non-athletic career setting.

Student-athletes at each SEC institution are asked to take part in an online Qualtrics survey, which will take 10-12 minutes to complete. You may skip any question(s) at any time, responses are kept anonymous and there are minimal risks for breach of confidentiality for those participating in this study.

Please click the link below

https://utk.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_0Vt7JTCm77rvHlP

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher, Michelle Woods, at 1801 Volunteer Boulevard, Knoxville, TN 37996, and mwoods34@vols.utk.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, contact the University of Tennessee IRB Compliance Officer at utkirb@utk.edu.

Thank you for your time,

Michelle Woods

Q1 How familiar are you with transferable skills that can be learned as a student-athlete and that can be useful in non-athletic settings?

- ☐ Extremely (5)
- ☐ Very (4)
- ☐ Somewhat (3)
- ☐ Not Very (2)
- ☐ Not at all (1)

Survey Instrument Page: 2

Q2 Do you view yourself as having skills acquired in sport that can be transferred to another career?

- ☐ Definitely yes (5)
- ☐ Probably yes (4)
- ☐ Might or might not (3)
- ☐ Probably not (2)
- ☐ Definitely not (1)

Q3 Is transferring skills from your sport to another job or career something you have considered?

- ☐ Definitely yes (5)
- ☐ Probably yes (4)
- ☐ Might or might not (3)
- ☐ Probably not (2)
- ☐ Definitely not (1)

Q4 Where did you become more familiar with transferable skills?

- ☐ Home (1)
- ☐ High School (2)
- ☐ College/University (3)
- ☐ Sport (4)
- ☐ None (5)
- ☐ Other (6) _____

Q5 Who do you believe helps you become more familiar with transferable skills?

- ☐ Yourself (6)
- ☐ Family (1)
- ☐ Friends (2)
- ☐ Mentor/Role Model (3)
- ☐ Professor/Teacher (8)
- ☐ Athletics Administrator (4)
- ☐ Coach (Head Coach, Assistant Coach, etc.) (5)
- ☐ Teammates (7)
- ☐ Strength & Conditioning Coach (11)
- ☐ Academic Advisor (12)
- ☐ Student-Athlete Development Staff (14)
- ☐ Sport Psychologist (13)
- ☐ None (9)
- ☐ Other (10) _____

Survey Instrument Page: 3

Q6 Which skill(s) do you view as being most transferable to another career?

- ☐ Competitive nature (1)
- ☐ Goal-oriented (2)
- ☐ Ability to handle pressure (3)
- ☐ Strong work ethic (4)
- ☐ Confidence (5)
- ☐ Teamwork (6)
- ☐ Coachable (7)
- ☐ Self-motivated (8)
- ☐ Mentally tough (9)
- ☐ Time Management (10)
- ☐ Other (11) _____

Q7 Which skill(s) do you feel you possess that could be transferred to another career?

- ☐ Competitive nature (1)
- ☐ Goal-oriented (2)
- ☐ Ability to handle pressure (3)
- ☐ Strong work ethic (4)
- ☐ Confidence (5)
- ☐ Teamwork (6)
- ☐ Coachable (7)
- ☐ Self-motivated (8)
- ☐ Mentally tough (9)
- ☐ Time management (10)
- ☐ Other (11) _____

Q8 Have you noticed any of your skills transfer from your sport to another setting in your own life?

- ☐ Always (5)
- ☐ Frequently (4)
- ☐ Somewhat (3)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Never (1)

Survey Instrument Page: 4

Q9 Do you think that becoming aware of transferable skills will make career transition easier?

- ☐ Absolutely easier (5)
- ☐ Very much easier (4)
- ☐ Somewhat easier (3)
- ☐ Not much easier (2)
- ☐ Not at all easier (1)

Q10 Are you interested in learning more about how you can develop your transferable skills?

- ☐ Definitely interested (5)
- ☐ Mostly interested (4)
- ☐ Might or might not be interested (3)
- ☐ Not really interested (2)
- ☐ Definitely not interested (1)

Q11 Do you feel confident that your skills will be transferable to a non-athletic career?

- ☐ Extremely confident (5)
- ☐ Very confident (4)
- ☐ Somewhat confident (3)
- ☐ Not very confident (2)
- ☐ Not at all confident (1)

Q12 Would learning about transferable skills increase your confidence in having skills that can be used in non-athletic career?

- ☐ Absolutely increase (5)
- ☐ Really increase (4)
- ☐ Somewhat increase (3)
- ☐ Not really increase (2)
- ☐ Not at all increase (1)

Q13 Do you have doubts concerning your ability to begin a new non-athletic career?

- ☐ Absolutely doubtful (5)
- ☐ A lot of doubts (4)
- ☐ Some doubts (3)
- ☐ Very few doubts (2)
- ☐ No doubts (1)

Survey Instrument Page: 5

Q14 Do you believe being aware of transferable skills is important for a successful transition out of sport?

- ☐ Extremely important (5)
- ☐ Really important (4)
- ☐ Somewhat important (3)
- ☐ Not really important (2)
- ☐ Not at all important (1)

A15 Do you ever consider what your life will be like once you have to stop playing your sport?

- ☐ Always (5)
- ☐ Frequently (4)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Never (1)

Q16 Do you view athletic retirement as a negative transition?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Frequently (4)
- ☐ Always (5)

Q17 How ready are you to transition from sport to a full-time career?

- ☐ Extremely (5)
- ☐ Very (4)
- ☐ Somewhat (3)
- ☐ Not very (2)
- ☐ Not at all (1)

Q18 How satisfied are you with how much your coaches and teammates have prepared you to enter a non-athletic career?

- ☐ Extremely (5)
- ☐ Very (4)
- ☐ Somewhat (3)
- ☐ Not very (2)
- ☐ Not at all (1)

Survey Instrument Page: 6

Q19 Who do you believe is responsible for helping student-athletes make the transition from sport to a non-athletic career setting?

- ☐ Coaches (1)
- ☐ Student-Athletes (2)
- ☐ Athletics Support Staff (3)
- ☐ Family Members (4)
- ☐ Friends (5)
- ☐ Sport Governing Bodies (NCAA, SEC, etc.) (6)
- ☐ Other (7) _____

Q20 What resources do you feel would aid you in the transition from being an active student-athlete to a life with a non-athletic career?

- ☐ Counseling from athletics support staff (1)
- ☐ Support from family (2)
- ☐ Support from friends (3)
- ☐ Support from sport agents (4)
- ☐ Career planning workshops (5)
- ☐ Job shadowing/internship/job experience (6)
- ☐ Information about transferable skills (7)
- ☐ Other (8) _____

Q21 What is your gender?

- ☐ Male (1)
- ☐ Female (2)
- ☐ Other (3)

Q22 What is your ethnicity?

- ☐ White (1)
- ☐ Black or African American (2)
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native (3)
- ☐ Asian (4)
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (5)
- ☐ Other (7)

Survey Instrument Page: 7

Q23 What Southeastern Conference institution do you compete for?

- ☐ University of Alabama (1)
- ☐ University of Arkansas (2)
- ☐ Auburn University (3)
- ☐ University of Florida (4)
- ☐ University of Georgia (5)
- ☐ University of Kentucky (6)
- ☐ Louisiana State University (7)
- ☐ University of Mississippi (8)
- ☐ Mississippi State University (9)
- ☐ University of Missouri (10)
- ☐ University of South Carolina (11)
- ☐ University of Tennessee (12)
- ☐ Texas A&M University (13)
- ☐ Vanderbilt University (14)

Q24 What is your current year of NCAA playing eligibility?

- ☐ Freshman (1)
- ☐ Red-Shirt Freshman (2)
- ☐ Sophomore (3)
- ☐ Red-Shirt Sophomore (4)
- ☐ Junior (5)
- ☐ Red-Shirt Junior (6)
- ☐ Senior (7)
- ☐ Red-Shirt Senior (8)

Q25 Within the Southeastern Conference, what collegiate sport do you play?

- ☐ Baseball (1)
- ☐ Basketball (2)
- ☐ Equestrian (3)
- ☐ Football (4)
- ☐ Gymnastics (5)
- ☐ Golf (6)
- ☐ Rowing (Big 12) (7)
- ☐ Soccer (8)
- ☐ Softball (9)
- ☐ Swimming & Diving (10)
- ☐ Track & Field/Cross Country (11)
- ☐ Tennis (12)
- ☐ Volleyball (13)

Q26 Additional Comments:

Vita

Michelle Lynn Woods was raised in Manhattan, Kansas to the parents of Denny and Tonya Woods and is the oldest child to her favorite twin brothers, David and Scott. Michelle grew up loving sports as a multi-sport athlete in golf, basketball, and swimming and knew she wanted to work in area she could help other people. Michelle proudly attended the University of Kansas as a student-athlete on the women's golf team. In May 2015, she earned a Bachelor of General Studies in Communication Studies, minored in Leadership Studies, and finished her golf career as a Women's Golf Coaches Association (WGCA) Academic All-American.

Michelle continued her education at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in the Recreation & Sport Management graduate program. She served as a member of the Partners in Sports student organization and a Graduate Assistant in Student-Athlete Development in the University of Tennessee Athletics Department. Michelle believes she played an integral role in the holistic development of student-athletes by coordinating personal and leadership development, community service, and career and professional development opportunities and programming. Upon completion of her master's degree, Michelle plans to continue her career in the field of Student-Athlete Development and help prepare student-athletes for success in the next chapter of their lives.