



Research



# How are NCAA Graduation Rates Calculated?



November 2018

# NCAA Graduation Rates

- ▶ Federal Graduation Rate: Federally mandated calculation for all schools that offer athletic scholarships. Counts all transfers as academic failures, so essentially measures the percentage of students who complete a BA/BS from their initial school within six years.
- ▶ Graduation Success Rate (GSR): Division I rate that accounts for transfers in/out. Also tracks graduation over six years.
- ▶ Academic Success Rate (ASR): Division II, III variations of the GSR. More inclusive cohort definition reflecting that many Division II and all Division III student-athletes do not receive athletic scholarships.



# Example 1: GSR Calculation for Team (Single Cohort)






	Federal Rate	GSR
<b>First-Year Participants</b> 	$\frac{12}{20}$	$\frac{12}{16}$
<b>Transfers In+ (Only used in GSR calculation)</b> 		$\frac{4}{6}$
<b>Overall</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Federal Rate = (Green) / (Green + White + Red)</li> <li>GSR = (Green) / (Green + Red)</li> </ul>	$\frac{12}{20}$ (60%)	$\frac{16}{22}$ (73%)

 = Graduates

 = Likely transfers (Departed in good academic standing)

 = Likely non-graduates (Departed in poor academic standing)

# Example 2: GSR Calculation for Team (Single Cohort)

	Federal Rate	GSR
First-Year Participants 	$\frac{1}{1}$	$\frac{1}{1}$
Transfers In+ (Only used in GSR calculation)    		$\frac{0}{3}$
Overall <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Federal Rate = (Green) / (Green + White + Red)</li> <li>GSR = (Green) / (Green + Red)</li> </ul>	$\frac{1}{1}$ (100%)	$\frac{1}{4}$ (25%)



= Graduates





= Likely transfers (Departed in good academic standing)



= Likely non-graduates (Departed in poor academic standing)

# Example 3: GSR Calculation for Team (Single Cohort)

	Federal Rate	GSR
First-Year Participants 	$\frac{4}{6}$	$\frac{4}{6}$
Transfers In+ (Only used in GSR calculation) 		$\frac{2}{3}$
Overall <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Federal Rate = (Green) / (Green + White + Red)</li> <li>GSR = (Green) / (Green + Red)</li> </ul>	$\frac{4}{6}$ (67%)	$\frac{6}{9}$ (75%)



= Graduates



= Likely transfers (Departed in good academic standing)



= Likely non-graduates (Departed in poor academic standing)

# Division I Graduation Success Rate (GSR)

- ▶ In the GSR calculation, student-athletes who depart a school while in good academic standing (would have met NCAA's and school's progress-toward-degree standards) are essentially passed from that school's cohort to another school's cohort. In the Federal rate, they are all considered non-graduates.
- ▶ Student-athletes who depart in poor academic standing (e.g., SA's GPA or credit accumulation does not have them on-track to graduate in 5 years or less) are deemed non-graduates by both the Federal rate and the GSR.
- ▶ Research shows that these are good assumptions, but not perfect when compared to a student-centered graduation statistic (that is, follow the student longitudinally from school to school until graduating or stopping out). Possible some mistakes made in both directions. NCAA research has shown that the GSR is much closer to a true student-centered graduation rate relative to the Federal calculation.

# Division I Graduation Success Rate (GSR)

- ▶ In addition to accounting for likely transfers in/out, the GSR also includes mid-year enrollees (not included in the Federal calculation) and nonscholarship athletes at Division I schools that do not offer athletics scholarships.



# Comparison of Division I GSR and Federal Grad Rate Cohorts

(2015-2018 Graduating Classes)

	Federal Rate	GSR
Enrolled (Under Federal Definition)	89,392	89,392
Enrolled as Frosh in January	0	3,244
Two-Year College Transfers	0	9,988
Four-Year College Transfers	0	7,945
Non-Scholarship Athletes (Only at Schools Not Offering Aid)	0	10,482
<b>Total Enrolled</b>	<b>89,392</b>	<b>121,051 (+35.4%)</b>
Allowable Exclusions (Death, Military, Church Mission, etc.)	275	344
Left Eligible	0	24,298
Participants on Teams No Longer Sponsored by Institution	0	1,123
<b>Total Denominator</b>	<b>89,117</b>	<b>95,286 (7.0%)</b>

# Division II Academic Success Rate (ASR)

- ▶ The Division II Academic Success Rate (ASR) is calculated in much the same way as the Division I GSR. The primary difference is:
  - ▶ The ASR includes all non-scholarship freshmen (“walk-ons”)
  - ▶ Whether or not the school or squad offers aid does not matter
  - ▶ As a result, the ASR counts about 50% more student-athletes than the federal graduation rate

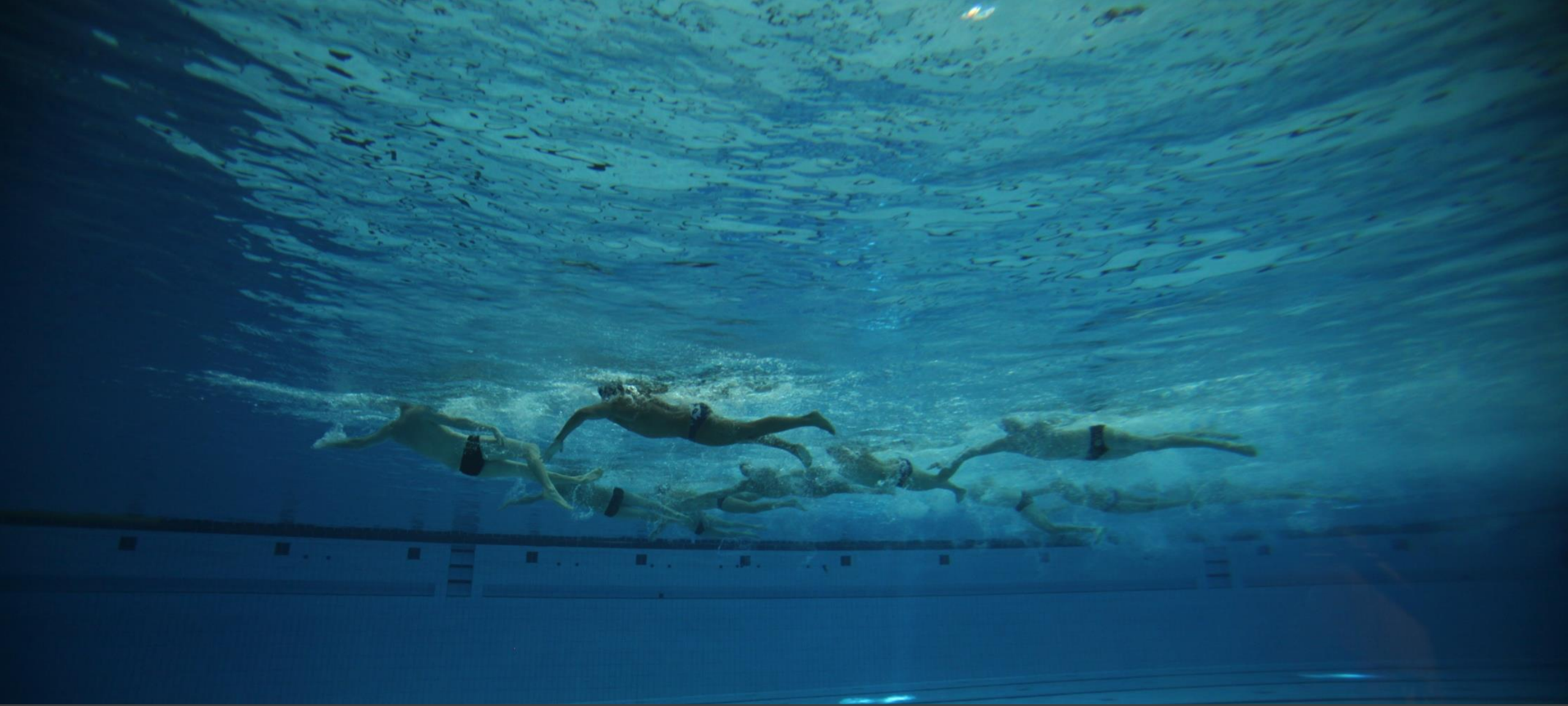
# Comparison of Division II ASR and Federal Grad Rate Cohorts

(2015-2018 Graduating Classes)

	Federal Rate	ASR
Enrolled (Under Federal Definition)	68,763	68,763
Enrolled as Frosh in January	0	1,259
Two-Year College Transfers	0	17,393
Four-Year College Transfers	0	13,599
Non-Scholarship Athletes	0	35,772
<b>Total Enrolled</b>	<b>68,763</b>	<b>136,786 (+99%)</b>
Allowable Exclusions (Death, Military, Church Mission, etc.)	165	324
Left Eligible	0	33,284
Participants on Teams No Longer Sponsored by Institution (non-Fed.)	0	1,324
<b>Total Denominator</b>	<b>68,598</b>	<b>101,854 (+48%)</b>

# Division III Academic Success Rate (ASR)

- ▶ The Division III Academic Success Rate (ASR) is calculated in much the same way as the Division I GSR and the Division II ASR. Primary differences include:
  - ▶ The reporting of Division III graduation rates for student-athletes is voluntary. In the latest reporting cycle, 213 (47%) schools participated.
  - ▶ The student-athlete cohort is different. Since Division III prohibits athletics scholarships, a student-athlete must be listed on an official roster on or after the first date of competition during the championship season to be included in the cohort.



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