Overall, data from GOALS and SCORE suggest that students are generally well-adjusted and satisfied with their lives. When asked to rate their overall happiness on a four-point scale of very happy to not happy at all, an overwhelming majority in both studies reported being at least somewhat happy (89 percent in GOALS and 98 percent in SCORE). Additionally, 81 percent of former student-athletes are reportedly satisfied or completely satisfied with their lives.

A similarly high level of satisfaction is attributed to their education as well. Overall, 73 percent of former Division I student-athletes reported they were satisfied or completely satisfied with their educational experiences. Also, former student-athletes who reported graduating from college were more likely to report being very happy than those students who did not graduate. Specifically, 74 percent of college graduates reported being very happy compared to 61 percent of non-graduates.

The former Division I student-athletes also tended to report high self-esteem. In fact, 96 percent reported being satisfied with themselves compared to 87 percent of the general population in the Monitoring the Future study.

There is evidence of college athletics having a positive effect on mental and physical health. Respondents in both the GOALS and SCORE studies reported being more physically active than the general population. Former student-athletes have a lower prevalence of tobacco use compared to the general population. There also is a very low incidence of reported drug use among former student-athletes, with marijuana being the most common drug used. And, former student-athletes tend to be happy and exhibit higher self-esteem than other groups within the population.

Both the GOALS and SCORE surveys also questioned student-athletes on how their athletics experiences, as well as their college experiences in general, affected their relationships with members of racial and ethnic groups different from their own.

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### Self-Esteem Percentages of Former Student-Athletes (Bold) and Non Student-Athletes (Parentheses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Mostly Agree</th>
<th>Mostly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I take a positive attitude toward myself</td>
<td>55 (40)%</td>
<td>40 (50)%</td>
<td>3 (5)%</td>
<td>1 (2)%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel I am a person of worth, on an equal plane with others</td>
<td>69 (55)%</td>
<td>28 (38)%</td>
<td>2 (3)%</td>
<td>1 (&lt;1)%</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to do things as well as most other people</td>
<td>69 (55)%</td>
<td>29 (30)%</td>
<td>1 (1)%</td>
<td>&lt;1 (&lt;1)%</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel I do not have much to be proud of</td>
<td>3 (3)%</td>
<td>3 (4)%</td>
<td>9 (25)%</td>
<td>84 (65)%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the whole, I’m satisfied with myself</td>
<td>64 (47)%</td>
<td>32 (40)%</td>
<td>3 (7)%</td>
<td>1 (2)%</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* worded negatively, reversed coded
Student-athletes said that their teams in general presented a more open, respectful environment than even their universities did overall.

In general, male and female student-athletes reported similar attitudes regarding the atmosphere at the school; however, on a few items regarding the team atmosphere, gender differences emerged. One area in which males and females differed significantly was in how they perceived the institution recruits toward diversity compared with how the team does so. Females reported stronger agreement that the institution recruits with a focus on diversity more so than the team, while men leaned more toward the team being the frontrunner in this category.

While males and females agreed that both the atmosphere at the school and the atmosphere on the team are respectful of members of the opposite sex, both groups reported that the team atmosphere generally is more respectful of the opposite sex when compared with the general school atmosphere. Females in particular reported much higher levels of agreement that the team atmosphere is respectful of the opposite sex. Females also reported much higher levels of agreement that the team atmosphere is respectful of other racial ethnic groups than males.

Another interesting finding – both respondents from the “majority group” (defined in this case as white, non-Hispanic) and the “minority group” (defined as any other race/ethnicity or multi-racial) viewed the team as a more inclusive, respectful environment when compared with the institution.

The GOALS and SCORE studies also focused on idea of “campus integration,” which is important given the notion some people have that athletics inhibits participants’ opportunities to engage in other campus activities. GOALS and SCORE asked the student-athletes if they believed that was true.

The GOALS data were particularly illuminating. The level of campus integration was measured using two scales – one that questioned the level of interest among student-athletes in participating in a variety of college activities, including performance groups, media, student government, religious clubs, academic groups, intramural sports, cultural clubs or organizations focused on a particular hobby like a sewing club.

Among GOALS respondents, most student-athletes said they were actively involved in their campus community outside of athletics and also reported their athletics participation benefited them socially. When asked about a variety of college clubs and organizations, 75 percent of student-athletes reported either current involvement or plans to participate in the future. The most popular was intramural sports, with 50 percent claiming current or intended future involvement. Other popular options included religious groups (35 percent) and academic and hobby groups (just over one-fourth).

The student-athletes were asked not only to respond with their current participation or intentions to participate, but also whether their not planning on participating was due to a lack of interest or a lack of time. Most reported a lack of interest with the exception of intramural sports. Of the 50 percent of student-athletes who report not participating in intramurals, more than half claimed lack of time as the reason.

“Athletics are a great way to shape people’s confidence and work ethic, and create lifelong healthy exercise and eating habits. I can honestly say participating in sports is one of the most positive experiences I have had in my life.”

-Former Division I women’s soccer student-athlete