

Examining the Prevalence and Impact of Gangs in College Athletic Programs Using Multiple Sources

A Final Report

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INTRODUCTION

Gangs in the United States have permeated areas and institutions previously unaffected by these anti-social and particularly violent youth groups until recent decades. Their geographic expansion has been documented by a substantial body of research that has focused primarily on the prevalence and impact of youth gangs in major American cities (e.g., Curry, Ball, & Fox, 1994; Miller, 1975). Contemporary research has demonstrated that these youth gangs have spread rapidly (e.g., Egley, Howell, & Moore, 2010; Klein, 1995) and the latest estimates provided by the 2008 National Youth Gang Survey suggest that approximately 27,900 gangs with 774,000 members exist in the United States (Egley, Howell, & Moore, 2010). The negative impact of youth gangs has also been well-established. Gang members have been disproportionately involved in delinquent and criminal activities as both offenders (Thornberry, 1998) and victims (Curry, Decker, & Egley, 2002; Peterson, Taylor, & Esbensen, 2004). Most notable has been their representation in violent crimes including homicides (Curry, Egley, & Howell, 2004; Miller, 1982; Tita & Abrahamse, 2004). Fortunately, most gang-involved youth have a relatively short duration of membership (Esbensen, Huizinga, & Weiher, 1993; Hill, Lui, & Hawkins, 2001; Thornberry, Krohn, Lizotte, & Chard-Wierschem, 1993) and interventions are focused on those stages in the life course during which the onset and continuity of gang activities is most likely to be established.

Recent research has also examined the infiltration of youth gangs into various social institutions that serve youths and young adults in the United States. The existence of gangs in America's schools has been repeatedly documented (e.g., Howell & Lynch, 2000;

Tromanhauser, Corcoran, & Lollino, 1981) and these groups have negatively impacted individual students and the school as an organization (Burnett & Walz, 1994; Howell & Lynch, 2000; Hutchison & Kyle, 1993). In fact, there is a strong relationship between gangs and school crime (Burnett & Walz, 1994; Howell & Lynch, 2000), dropout rates (Hutchison & Kyle, 1993), and other anti-social outcomes. The problems posed by these groups in the larger communities served by those schools have created an inter-generational cycle of academic failure and criminal involvement. The presence of gangs in schools is not surprising considering the typical ages of gang members and the compulsory nature of our educational system. Gangs in the military, however, are counter-intuitive considering the structured and selective nature of this institution but their presence has been reported (United States Army, 2006; National Gang Intelligence Center, 2007).

Youth gang members as student athletes in colleges and universities have surprised even the most attentive observers. This reality is startling considering that gang membership has been correlated with academic failure (Esbensen & Deschenes, 1998; Hill, Howell, Hawkins, & Battin-Pearson, 1999; Thornberry, Krohn, Lizotte, Smith, & Tobin, 2003) and serious criminal involvement as offenders (Curry, Egley, & Howell, 2004; Miller, 1982; Thornberry, 1998; Tita & Abrahamse, 2004). That said, media reports have documented that gang members have been recruited by college athletic programs (e.g., Davidson, 1986; Grumment, 1993; Hooper, 1997; LiCari & Hall, 1994; Schlabach, 2000) and a few reports have portrayed these student-athletes as involved with crimes including homicide (e.g., Berkin, 2004; Mushnick, 2004, Bosworth, 1991; and Radford, 2009), and as victims (e.g., Faught, 2003; Johnson, 2007). Interestingly, no systematic research has examined the extent of gangs in college athletic programs, an institution that is ubiquitous in American society.

The purpose of the current study is to examine the prevalence and impact of gang-involved student-athletes participating in collegiate athletic programs. First, we present a review of the existing literature regarding gangs generally as well as in several institutions to establish the context for our study of gang membership in college athletics. Next, the methodology of the present study is discussed, followed by the findings provided by college athletes, athletic department administrators, and campus law enforcement executives. These findings provide the first systematic examination of gangs in college sports from several sources that have first-hand knowledge of these programs and individuals. Lastly, policy implications of this study are presented.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The Prevalence of Gangs

Gangs are not a new phenomenon and youth gangs have been present in the United States since at least the 19th century. The gangs of the late-19th century were primarily new immigrant groups, as popularized in the movie, *Gangs of New York*. The next generation of American youth gangs emerged in the 1920's and most were disorganized groups comprised of recent immigrants. These gangs faded without substantial impact on the criminal justice system or social service agencies. The latest cycle of youth gangs came to life in the 1960s and represented a distinct break with the gangs of the 1890's or the 1920's, as significant numbers of racial and ethnic minorities were involved. Intergenerational gangs also emerged for the first time in large numbers. However, the economic and demographic parallels between gang involvement in the 1960's and earlier examples suggest the importance of underlying economic causes of gang membership.

Miller (1975) published the first estimate of the magnitude of the nation's gang problem in 1975. Six of the twelve cities in the study were classified as gang problem cities and it was estimated that there were between 760 and 2,700 gangs comprised of 28,500 to 81,500 members in these areas (Miller, 1975). The largest concentration of gangs was in California where more than 30 percent of all U.S. gangs were located (Miller, 1975). In 1988, the National Youth Gang Suppression and Intervention Program surveyed 98 cities or localities and found that 76 percent had organized gangs or gang activities (Spergel and Curry, 1993). *Chronic* gang problem cities often had long histories of serious gang problems, and *emerging* problem gang cities were often smaller locales that had recognized and begun to deal with a usually less serious but often acute gang problem since 1980. Thirty-five of the jurisdictions in their study provided estimates of 1,439 gangs and 120,636 gang members.

In 1991, Curry et al. (1994) attempted to develop national estimates of the scale of the gang problem. Ninety-five percent of police departments in cities with populations over 200,000 people reported the presence of gangs, crews, posses, or drug organizations engaged in criminal activity (Curry et al., 1994). They estimated that there were 4,881 gangs with 249,324 members responsible for 46,359 gang-related incidents (Curry et al., 1994). In 1994, Curry and his colleagues' conducted another national survey of gangs in smaller jurisdictions. This survey included all U.S. cities ranging in population from 150,000 to 200,000 people and also included a random sample of smaller cities (Curry, Ball & Decker, 1996). Eighty-seven percent of these cities reported gang crime problems in 1994, resulting in a conservative estimate of 8,625 gangs, 378,807 gang members, and 437,066 gang crimes for the U.S. in 1993, based on local law enforcement records (Curry et al., 1996).

In 1991, Klein (1995) identified 261 cities in the United States with gang crime problems. The following year, Klein extended his list of problematic gang cities to approximately 800 and by 1995 concluded that there were between 800 and 1,100 U.S. cities with gang crime problems, more than 9,000 gangs, and at least 400,000 gang members in any given year. In 1995, the National Youth Gang Center (NYGC) (1997) conducted its first assessment of the national gang problem. The estimates produced by that assessment, the National Youth Gang Survey, were larger than those of any prior one year survey and 1,499 law enforcement agencies estimated that a total of 23,388 youth gangs existed in the United States (National Youth Gang Center, 1997). In addition, a total of 664,906 gang members were estimated by 1,499 responding police and sheriff's departments (National Youth Gang Center, 1997). In 2008, law enforcement estimates indicated that there were approximately 27,900 gangs with 774,000 members in the United States (Egley, Howell, & Moore, 2010).

These studies have documented the dramatic increase in gangs, gang members and gang crime that began in the late 1980's and increased steadily to current levels. The numbers of gang members have reflected individual youths who have been involved or potentially involved as victims or offenders in gang-related violence. These studies have suggested that gang membership and gang crime were no longer isolated in a small number of neighborhoods or cities and have penetrated into various aspects and institutions of American life.

Gangs and crime.

Gang membership has a distinct impact on involvement in crime. Researchers have consistently found that being in a gang increased both the amount of crime an individual committed as well as the seriousness of those crimes. As such, gangs have *facilitated* involvement in crime. Even when youth have offended prior to joining a gang, their offending

levels have increased dramatically after joining a gang and decreased upon leaving the gang (Thornberry et al., 1993). Gang members have been involved disproportionately in the most serious crimes, particularly violence and homicide. Walter Miller (1982) was the first to examine gang homicides. Based on a limited sample of nine gang cities, his work demonstrated that gang homicides' represented a significant part of the homicide problem in these cities (Miller, 1982). At the time, Los Angeles and Chicago were the two cities with large proportions of homicides attributable to gang members (Miller, 1982).

In 1996, 1,330 gang homicides were reported by cities with populations over 100,000 people (Curry et al., 2004). This figure declined steadily to 1,082 in 1999 and 1,080 in 2000 (Curry et al., 2004). However, a dramatic increase was observed over the next 3 years in cities with populations over 100,000 people and the number of gang homicides rose to 1,451 for 2003, the highest level recorded by the NYGC survey methodology (Curry et al., 2004). This was an increase of 34% over 1999, the lowest point in the trend (Curry et al., 2004). It is important to note that this increase occurred during a period in the United States when overall homicide levels were falling since their peaks in the early 1990s, making the increased gang homicides more troubling and significant while reinforcing the distinctive character of gang homicides.

Historically, Chicago and Los Angeles have stood out for their exceptionally high levels of gang violence, particularly gang homicides. To a large extent, changes in gang homicide figures for all cities with populations over 100,000 people in the United States are driven by changes in gang homicides in Chicago and Los Angeles. In 2003, Los Angeles and Chicago accounted for 39% of all gang homicides reported nationally for cities with populations over 100,000 people, and in 2002 they accounted for 53% of all gang homicides, the largest proportion in the eight years that the NYGC had counted gang homicides (Curry et al., 2004).

Because of their prominent role in gang homicides occurring in the United States, the cities of Los Angeles and Chicago have been the sites of a considerable number of studies of gang homicides. Forty-five percent of all homicides in Los Angeles County could be classified as gang related, whereas in Chicago, roughly one quarter of all homicides were classified as such. Tita and Abrahamse (2004) examined gang homicides in Los Angeles County for the period 1981–2001. They documented small declines in the proportion of all homicides attributed to gangs from 1995 to the years 2000 and 2001 when the percentages jumped to 41 and 48, respectively (Tita & Abrahamse, 2004). It is important to underscore that gang members were overrepresented both as offenders and victims in homicides (Curry et al., 2004; Tita & Abrahamse, 2004). Gang membership has been identified as a risk factor for violent victimization that in-turn has led to a large volume of retaliatory violence, including homicides.

Looking across these studies of gang homicides, several conclusions can be drawn. First the *trend* in gang homicides has appeared similar to that for youth homicides in the United States, a dramatic increase in the early-1990's and leveling off by the end of the decade. Despite this pattern, the overall *level* of gang homicides has been considerably higher than for other subcategories of homicide, including those linked to domestic disputes and robberies, reinforcing the consistent finding that gang membership has been a significant risk factor for involvement in violence, both as a perpetrator and a victim. Finally, the individual and situational *characteristics* of gang homicides have been distinctive from those of homicide in general. Gang homicides have been far more likely to involve males, racial or ethnic group minority members, and firearms and to occur outside with multiple participants, than were other homicides (Klein & Maxson, 2006) . These studies suggested that gangs have represented something uniquely

troubling when it comes to violence; that is, gangs have made dramatic differences in the level and nature of violence, particularly lethal violence.

Gang membership and activities change across different stages of the life course. There are identifiable risk factors for gang membership and these as well as protective factors may be responsible for encouraging or preventing gang membership. The established dynamic life course processes—onset, continuity, and desistance—also occurs during the stages of gang membership (Thornberry, 1998). Gang membership may be therefore viewed as a trajectory. Trajectories are typically age-graded and evolve through several dimensions such as school, family, or work. Without a doubt, gang membership alters individuals' speech, dress, attitude, mentality, and for many, the outcome of one's life during arguably the most pivotal period—adolescence. Youthful gang behavior can also have a lasting impact on adult life. As noted above, gang members have been far more involved in violent acts, which in turn have increased their likelihoods of future imprisonments, removing opportunities for employment, marriages and stable lives. Data from Rochester and Denver indicated that while gang members comprised a minority of the sample, 30% and 14% respectively, they committed the vast majority of the violent acts in those cities, 69 and 79 percent, respectively (Thornberry, 1998).

The duration of gang involvement gains theoretical importance upon examination of the mean frequency of violent acts reported during gang membership. Sustained gang involvement translates into more delinquency and crime. Simply put, the longer one remains in the gang the more violent acts that person is likely to commit. Generally, gang membership does not last for a long time. Gang membership has been shown to be fairly short-lived, 3% to 5% of gang members remained in the gang longer than four years while 55% to 69% retained membership for a period of one year or less (Esbensen et al., 1993; Hill et al., 2001; Thornberry et al, 1993).

Research suggests that even though gang membership is of short duration, it has long lasting effects on opportunities throughout one's life.

The small group of individuals who do not transition out of gangs is of great concern. Thornberry et al. (2003) found that the increased length of gang involvement "indicates a deeper penetration along the trajectory of gang membership and therefore potentially more extensive consequences of membership" (p. 44). It may be more difficult for stable or long-term gang members to turn to conventional lifestyles, but those who leave gangs early are more likely to live socially productive lives.

Since gang members are often the targets of other gang members' violence, it should come as no surprise that those involved in gangs are also disproportionately victimized. The St. Louis middle school youth that Curry et al. (2002) surveyed were *six times* more likely to get shot at and *four times* more likely to have been shot than non-gang-involved youth. Peterson et al. (2004) found that gang members were more likely than non-gang youth to report having been victims of assault (66% to 48%), robbery (25% to 7%), and aggravated assault (43% to 9%) over the previous year.

Gangs in Schools

In many parts of the country, schools fail communities by not educating and graduating their students, and communities fail schools by providing negative environments. In the 1980's, Wilson (1987) noted that more than one-half of the African-American and Latino youths attending Chicago public schools dropped out before graduating, and of those graduating, less than one-half could read at or above the national average. Such school failure serves to isolate children from avenues for success. Communities also fail schools by not providing a safe environment in which teachers can teach and students can learn, both within the school and in

surrounding neighborhoods, and by neglecting to provide adequate resources to address educational and social problems. These related failures could lead to a variety of gang problems.

The nature and magnitude of the gang problem in schools.

The presence of gangs in schools across the United States was summarized most clearly by Howell and Lynch (2000) in their review of the 1989 and 1995 School Crime Supplements (SCS) to the National Crime Victim Surveys (NCVS) that were originally analyzed in a report by Chandler, Chapman, Rand, and Taylor (1998). When multiple indicators of gang presence in schools were used, more than one-third of students (37%) reported the existence of gangs at their schools (Howell & Lynch, 2000). These proportions were significantly higher among Hispanic students (nearly two-thirds) and black students (almost one-half) than for white students (roughly one-third) (Howell & Lynch, 2000). Older students were more likely overall to report gangs in their schools but 14 to 18 year olds reported roughly similar percentages, around 40% of respondents in these age groups indicated that gangs were present in their schools (Howell & Lynch, 2000). The size of the city in which the school was located had a positive relationship with the prevalence of gangs and schools in communities greater than 100,000 people were most likely to report gangs (Howell & Lynch, 2000). In addition, the lower the household income of students, the more likely it was that they reported the existence of gangs in their schools (Howell & Lynch, 2000). Gang presence was also positively related to the availability of drugs in schools and was positively correlated with higher levels of crime in schools (Howell & Lynch, 2000). Students who reported gangs in their schools also stated that their schools' took more security measures (Howell & Lynch, 2000). The unique contribution of gangs to school crime cannot be isolated from these data but they provided powerful evidence of the prevalence of gangs in

schools and the concentration of such a presence among specific age, ethnic, income and population groups.

Tromanhauser, Corcoran, and Lollino (1981) surveyed over 12,000 students in Chicago's public schools. They concluded that school-based gang activity could be found in all twenty of Chicago's school districts, and just over one-half of the students reported that gangs were active in their own school (Tromanhauser et al., 1981). Ten percent of students responded that they had been intimidated or attacked by gang members, or solicited for membership (Tromanhauser et al., 1981). Other research in Chicago has linked the high dropout rate in that city's schools to the presence of gangs. Hutchison and Kyle (1993) interviewed random samples of students that entered two predominantly Hispanic Chicago high schools in 1979. Based on these interviews, Hutchison and Kyle (1993) concluded that gangs were in control of specific classrooms and whole floors at the two schools. In addition, gang members routinely sold drugs including cocaine and heroin inside the schools and students reported that administrators had not intervened to control this situation (Hutchison & Kyle, 1993). A large number of non-gang students and students who were members of rival gangs avoided those parts of the school either by cutting classes or dropping out of school altogether (Hutchison & Kyle, 1993). Based on more recent research, however, these experiences in Chicago appear to be extreme cases.

Curry, Decker and Egley (2002) examined patterns of gang involvement among middle school students in St. Louis. They found gradations of gang membership ranging from full gang memberships, to affiliations, to friendships with gang members (Curry et al., 2002). These results suggested that gangs in schools reflected the characteristics of gangs in the neighborhood (Curry et al., 2002). Burnett and Walz (1994) examined the characteristics and impacts of in-school gangs. The presence of gangs in neighborhoods was linked to their presence in schools and gangs

exhibited a number of negative effects on schools including increased violence and fear of victimization (Burnett & Walz, 1994). Similarly, Hill et al. (1999; 2001) have underscored the importance of community factors in understanding gang presence in schools and pointed to multiple risk factors.

The relationship between gangs in schools and negative learning and crime outcomes.

There has been more research regarding the presence of gangs in schools than has examined the effects of gangs on students' learning outcomes. Most research on the presence of gangs in schools has measured their influence on such negative outcomes as victimization, offending, or peer involvement in negative behaviors. While there are inadequate data on the effects of gang membership on education, it remains a critical area of research (Kodulboy and Evenrud, 1993).

Spiegel (1995) concluded that most research has supported the finding that gang members typically performed poorly in school and/or frequently dropped out of school. This observation is consistent with the view that gangs offer their own set of values, opportunities for achievement, and sources of status to youth. The gang requires a level of commitment from its members and the greater that commitment the lower will be the member's commitment to successful school participation. Vigil (1988) has portrayed gang involvement as commitment to an alternative set of values distinctly different from those necessary for school success. Because of the oppositional nature of gang culture, school values and pro-social behaviors are inconsistent with what gangs are about (Padilla, 1992 and Moore, 1991).

Schools also provide higher levels of supervision of behavior than exist in neighborhoods. And the behavior of gang members in schools, that often involves fighting, selling drugs, disrespecting teachers and other students, often leads to increased suppression

efforts. For gang members not used to or tolerant of such monitoring, this can produce additional problems of adjustment to the rules of school. This situation has been exacerbated by the growth of zero tolerance policies. Klein (1995) suggested that because of their inability to deal with gang problems in ways other than suppression, high levels of gang member suspension and expulsion paved the way for higher dropout rates. Such consequences for neighborhoods and gang members are almost always negative. The irony is that as gang members are pushed out of school to increase safety, neighborhoods and gang members themselves almost always become worse.

Gangs in the Military

Although the presence of gang activity in middle and high schools is unfortunate, it is not unexpected. The population of street gang members in the United States is predominantly between the ages of 13 and 24 (Klein & Maxson, 2006; National Youth Gang Center, 2000). Given compulsory education laws, a good portion of these gang-involved individuals will find themselves on the grounds of the middle and high schools that serve their communities, resulting in the various issues discussed above. However, gang activity has begun to migrate into other public institutions, such as the military.

A recent analysis conducted by the National Gang Intelligence Center (NGIC) (2007) found that gang activity among activity-duty personnel has emerged on domestic and foreign military installations. This activity was identified in most branches of the military and primarily involved individuals at the junior enlisted ranks (National Gang Intelligence Center, 2007). According to the NGIC report, the crimes committed by gang-involved military personnel were similar to what was found in gang impacted communities, including homicide, armed robbery, aggravated assault with a firearm, and drug distribution (National Gang Intelligence Center,

2007). Reviews of gang activity in the Army conducted by the Army's Criminal Investigation Command reported similar types of criminal activity by active duty personnel connected to gangs (United States Army, 2006). The NGIC concluded that this gang membership disrupted order and discipline within the military and ultimately undermined the ability of the soldiers to perform their duty and the performance of their units (National Gang Intelligence Center, 2007). In addition, the related criminal activity of these gang-involved soldiers threatened the safety and security of other military personnel on base and members of the communities that surrounded military installations (National Gang Intelligence Center, 2007). Lastly, the presence and activity of these gang-involved soldiers created a negative perception of the military among the general public (Eyler, 2009).

The entry of gang members into the military raises an important question about why these individuals would join an organization that has rigid standards of social control. One of the reasons suggested by the National Gang Intelligence Center (2007) was that gang members entered to receive combat training, which they could share with members of their gang once discharged. On the other hand, they also acknowledged that some may have simply joined to get away from their gang lifestyle (National Gang Intelligence Center, 2007). The military has long been recognized as an environment that provides young men the opportunity to transition out of their troubled past (Eyler, 2009). However, there has been no empirical effort to examine why gang-involved individuals enlist in the military and how various motives may relate to maintaining ties to their gangs.

Whatever the reasoning for gang members entering military, Eyler (2009) suggested that this presence and related problems can be attributed to flaws within the military's recruiting process. He noted that recruiters usually lacked the knowledge and training to identify gang

members in their screening process. As a result, identification of gang members' trying to enter the service often rested on the self-admission of the recruits, which was unlikely to occur if these individual recognized it may screen them out. Eyster further argued that these knowledge limitations were compounded by the pressure on recruiters to provide a continuous stream of enlistments, which provided disincentives to pry too deeply into backgrounds as to cause disqualifications. Even in cases where evidence of gang activity is uncovered in the screening process, the military's "moral waiver" clause allows recruiters to enlist gang-involved recruits.

It is important to acknowledge there has been no systematic effort to identify how many gang-involved individuals are in the United States Military as a whole, nor any effort to reasonably measure their related criminal and otherwise disruptive activities. Nonetheless, the activities observed to date have provided an important consideration for the study of gangs. Unlike juvenile gang members being compelled to attend middle and high schools, this activity in the military represents the willingness of some gang members to voluntarily join a conventional adult organization. This is contrary to the common observation of gang members removing themselves from conventional institutions such as families and schools as they become more committed to their gangs (Vigil, 1988; Padilla, 1992; Moore, 1991; Decker & Van Winkle, 1996). Moreover, the military represents a total institution (Goffman, 1961) that exerts considerable energy socializing enlisted men and women into their primary role as soldiers, yet it appears that some gang members still hold on their gang identities. Thus, the military environment fails to provide the turning point that places some individuals on a path away from gang life.

Gangs in College Athletics

The issue of college athletes involved in disruptive behaviors and criminal activities is not new. In one of the few empirical efforts to explore criminal conduct among college athletes, Crosset, Benedict and McDonald (1995) found that male student-athletes were significantly more likely to be reported for sexual assault than male non-student-athletes. A review of news reports provided a broad picture of college athletes being arrested for a wide variety of crimes, including drug trafficking, aggravated assault, burglary, rape and homicide (e.g., Blaudschun, 1992; Eskenazi, 1989; Kern, 1996; Larimer, 1991; Wise, 2003). One explanation for this behavior was a sense of entitlement among athletes who have been placed on a pedestal given their athletic talents, which arguably bred a feeling among these individuals that they were beyond legal and ethical standards (Eskenazi, 1989). Alternatively, it has been argued that athletic programs ignored the problematic backgrounds of recruits, including criminal histories, because their high levels of talent (Larimer, 1991).

In a recent *Sports Illustrated* article it was noted "... even as criminal incidents involving players appear to have become more widespread in recent years, the scope of the problem has never been fully examined" (Dohrmann & Benedict, 2011, pp. 32-33). In response to this concern, *Sports Illustrated (SI)* and *CBS News* conducted 7,030 background checks on all 2,837 athletes listed on the rosters of the magazine's preseason Top 25 list of college football programs as of September 1, 2010. While there are problems with checking criminal and juvenile backgrounds, the investigation by *SI* and *CBS* found that 7.2% of the football players had "criminal" records before or after entering college. The 204 athletes with law enforcement records were suspected of committing a total of 277 crimes; most common were the 105 drug and alcohol offenses, but these football players were also involved with 56 violent crimes

(Dohrmann & Benedict, 2011). The authors encountered difficulties checking juvenile records and were unable to search these documents in most states but still found that 58 of the 277 total arrests or 20.9% were committed by these student-athletes when they were juveniles (Dohrmann & Benedict, 2011). Juvenile records have proven notoriously difficult to obtain but other researchers have found, for instance, that 5.8% of the 1,920 undergraduate students who were arrested while attending one state's flagship university also had juvenile arrest records (Jennings, Khey, Mahoney, & Reingle, 2010). The *Sports Illustrated* study also found that only two of the twenty-five schools regularly performed any criminal background checks on recruits and none searched their juvenile records; individual schools and coaches had varied policies concerning the recruitment of criminally-involved athletes (Dohrmann & Benedict, 2011).

Two of the most interesting studies involving collegiate athletics were conducted by Cullen, Latessa, and Kopache (n.d.) and Cullen, Latessa, and Byrne (1990). This research involved a survey of student athletes and football coaches concerning NCAA rule violations. Edward Latessa, the pioneering scholar on rule infractions, designed the self-report survey for student athletes and coaches (Cullen et al., n.d.; 1990). One of the favorable findings was that 60% of the student athletes reported no rule violations, and a majority of the others reported only minor infractions, including free meals, small cash payments, and long-distance telephone calls, among others (Cullen et al., n.d.). However, there were reports of free cars, substantial financial payments and academic fraud (Cullen et al., n.d.). "A potentially disquieting finding is that a quarter of the respondents admitted to gambling on sporting events, with a small percentage reporting placing bets on games in which they played and three respondents stating that they 'had received money from a gambler for not playing well'" (Cullen et al., n.d., p. 1). The second study, a survey of football coaches, showed that they were aware of serious cheating, substance

abuse and student athletes who were neither motivated academically nor able to complete undergraduate course requirements (Cullen et al., 1990). The coaches also reported that the intense pressure to win was likely the motivating factor that allowed “cheating and corruption” (Cullen et al., 1990, p. 61). The coaches stated that “they find themselves in circumstances that create powerful incentives to ‘do what it takes’ to produce a ‘successful program’” (Cullen et al., 1990, p. 63). Although this research was conducted almost twenty-five years ago, it seems as if these conclusions could be written today. While the issues may have shifted in the past twenty-five years, or our investigations have started to look at different issues including gang affiliation, the same ugly problems remain in collegiate athletics. Unfortunately, systematic studies of these problems are rare, but media reports can provide us with snapshots of the problems of the student athlete.

While gang membership may be a background factor that programs are willing to overlook in highly talented athletes, the actual participation of gang-involved individuals in college athletics appears illogical at first glance when considering the empirical literature on gangs and education. Gang membership has been correlated with low academic achievement (Esbensen & Deschenes, 1998; Hill et al., 1999; Thornberry et al., 2003). In addition, as individuals increasingly become committed to their gang they withdraw from school life, which often leads to declined attendance rates, disciplinary actions, poor academic performance, and ultimately dropping out of school (Klein, 1995; Spergel, 1995). This pattern of low academic achievement and dropping out creates obvious challenges for gang-involved athletes attempting to meet the academic standards to enter college. However, it is important to acknowledge that these patterns are not universal and some gang-involved athletes may perform at minimally qualifying academic levels or even excel. Moreover, there is considerable flexibility in the

minimum academic standards set by the National Collegiate Athletic Association and a recent report by the Associated Press found that many universities admitted athletes at much lower academic thresholds than their average student populations (Zagier, 2009).

In addition to academic barriers for gang-involved athletes being recruited and admitted to universities, the idea of gang-involved athletes is at odds with the conventional wisdom that athletics provides a protective factor to gang membership (Cole, 1996). Sport participation arguably provides a mainstream alternative to gangs for entertainment, excitement, and socialization. Hence, individuals who participate in sponsored athletics would be less likely to join or affiliate with gangs. However, gang membership and sports participation are not always mutually exclusive, as is often assumed.

Atencio and Wright's (2008) ethnographic study of high school aged basketball players from disadvantaged communities found that highly talented athletes often had to negotiate the realities of living in neighborhoods with gangs. One of the key findings of their research was the relationship between the athletes' skill levels and their ability to play basketball at different parks, particularly as it related to the presence of gangs. The different parks observed in their study varied in the skill levels of basketball played. Two of the athletes Atencio and Wright observed were top-rated high school players that played on a contending state championship high school team, and as a result they had the skill sets to compete at any of the area's park courts. Alternatively, less skilled players were restricted to playing in parks with low levels of basketball play, and feared confrontation with gang members when they ventured away from these locations. The physical skills of the highly talented, however, allowed them to transcend any concern of being confronted by gang members. Atencio and Wright noted that: "... the more talented players were not concerned about personal safety because the gangsters supported them,

and, indeed, took on a mentoring and protective role" (p. 272). The gang members reportedly admired the talented players and subsequently provided them protection to play at the various parks. In return, these athletes needed to maintain positive relations with these gang members to preserve their protections.

Although Atencio and Wright's (2008) research was focused on a limited group of athletes in one community, their observations likely reflect a common experience for talented high school athletes. A number of college athletes, particularly basketball and football players, have come from economically disadvantaged communities (Davis, 1996; Sack & Theil, 1979), and disadvantaged communities have represented the primary locales for the presence of gangs and related criminal activities (Bursik & Grasmick, 1993; Curry & Spergel, 1988; Hagedorn, 1991; Rosenfeld, Bray, & Egley, 1999). It is reasonable to assume that these athletes would have negotiated the presence of gangs in their schools and neighborhoods similar to Atencio and Wright's observed athletes. This assumption has been supported by athletes themselves (Kahn, 1995). However, there is currently no empirical evidence on the prevalence of such experiences among highly talented and potentially college-bound athletes. Nor is there empirical evidence on the nature of the relationship between these athletes and gangs. In particular, questions remain whether such athletes remain loosely affiliated for the purpose of protection as Atencio and Wright observed or if these athletes eventually become members of the gangs that offer them protection.

Similarly, no research has examined whether athletes with histories of gang involvement make it to college-level athletic programs. However, the issue of individuals with gang histories in college sports has been documented in journalistic accounts (e.g., Davidson, 1986; Grumment, 1993; Hooper, 1997; LiCari & Hall, 1994; Schlabach, 2000). The most notable of these accounts

was ESPN's *Outside the Lines* sports journalism show that aired a 1997 episode entitled *Turf Wars: Gangs and Sports*. One of the show segments focused on the recruiting athletes with gang ties in the Los Angeles area by the University of Colorado football team in the mid-1980's. The assistant coach who conducted the recruiting at that time stated that the football program was looking to recruit inner-city athletes under the belief they would improve the team's performance (Schlabach, 2000). Three top players on the football team during this period were specifically identified in the report as being gang members and the assistant coach stated he knew of their gang membership during the recruiting process (Hooper, 1997).

While these reports indicated there has been some level of athletes with a history of gang involvement participating in college sports, this alone does not necessarily mean these athletes are going to create problems once they arrive on campus. Similar to the argument at times offered by the military for recruiting enlisted-level soldiers with less than ideal pasts (Eyler, 2009), the opportunity to participate in colleges athletics is a second chance that offers a way out for high school athletes with a gang history. At the same time, however, it is important to acknowledge the empirical literature on gangs that reveals gang membership and affiliation is correlated with higher frequencies of criminal offending and victimization relative to individuals with no gang involvement (Curry et al., 2002; Thornberry, 1998). Again, there have been no systematic efforts to examine if athletes with a gang history continue this identity while in college and what relationship this may have with criminal conduct. However, there have been a few reported incidents in media reports of gang-involved college athletes (Bosworth, 1991; Radford, 2009). The most notable of these reported offenses was a 2003 incident involving a Rutgers University football player who worked for a local gang and was indicted for involvement in the murder of a rival gang member (Berkin, 2004; Mushnick, 2004).

Incidents reported in the news have also captured situations where college athletes have found themselves as victims of gang violence. These athlete victims have come from community colleges, small universities, and universities with major sports programs (Dillon, 2005; Houtz, 1993; Kahn, 1995; Maeshiro, 2003; Raley & Withers, 1990; Uranga & Coca, 2007; Whiteside, 2002). In 2003, an Oregon State University football player, just days before entering the NFL draft was reportedly caught in the crossfire of a cycle of retaliatory gang shootings (Faught, 2003). In 2004, a University of Oregon football recruit was killed after disrespecting a gang member just two days before he was to report to training for his first season (Johnson, 2007). In a few incidents that involved homicides, the athletes were alleged by police to be gang members but their coaches denied these affiliations (Bloomekatz, 2009; Raley & Withers, 1990). Absent the above case involving the University of Colorado, this last point raises the question of whether coaches have knowledge of the backgrounds of their athletes, particularly as they relate to criminal activity and gang involvement.

In sum, there is anecdotal evidence that participation in gangs and collegiate athletics are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Moreover, this limited evidence suggests there have been highly talented gang-involved athletes who have been able to meet the academic eligibility criteria to enter colleges and universities and participate on athletic teams. Unfortunately, this evidence has been based solely on journalistic accounts and there have been no systematic empirical research efforts to address these issues. This raises an important question as to whether this evidence of gang-involved college athletes is only anecdotal in prevalence or a more emerging and pervasive issue that is similar to what the military is confronting. The present study will explore this question through the collection of survey and interview data from university and law enforcement officials, and student-athletes. Although the evidence to date has

suggested this question could be posed to community colleges, small four year colleges, and major university, we narrow our focus to the latter group. Specifically, we explore the prevalence gang-involved athletes in universities that have Division I athletic programs in major athletic conferences.

METHOD

Examining gangs in college athletics is a sensitive issue. The knowledge or acknowledged presence of gang members in a university's athletic programs has the potential to create a negative public image. It raises possible accusations that a university through its athletic department is recruiting skilled athletes without consideration of their character, particularly in circumstances where these student-athletes have histories of criminal conduct and violence. Similarly, athletes may be reluctant to discuss their own gang experiences due to concerns that it will jeopardize their athletic scholarships, or they are unwilling to discuss their knowledge of gang activities by their teammates in fear that it will violate trust with these peers or bring a negative spotlight on their program.

The present study employed several data collection strategies to counter these potential limitations in gathering data on gang-involved college athletes. First, data on the perceptions of and experiences with gang-involved athletes were gathered through surveys and interviews from three sources: university athletic directors, campus police chiefs and student athletes. These sources provided the ability to have some degree of triangulation in the data on this sensitive topic. Second, support for the research was sought from representatives of each of these data sources. Backing for the athletic director survey was obtained from the Division 1A Athletic Directors' Association, the organization for athletic directors of major college athletic conferences. The association handled the initial distribution of the surveys. Letters of support for

the research from two campus police chiefs encouraged completion of the survey by fellow law enforcement executives and were mailed with the campus chiefs' surveys. Lastly, a student-athlete was involved in the interviews of athletes at one of the two universities where this research was conducted. Third, this study followed standard Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocol and offered all respondents confidentiality in their responses. This report contains no mention of specific universities or individuals in relation to the survey or interview findings. While these strategies do not guarantee complete disclosure or full participation, they improved upon the results that would otherwise be found from a single source of data collection without peer sponsorship.

The present study was designed as an exploratory analysis of gang-involved college athletes that moves beyond anecdotal journalistic accounts. Surveys were sent to athletic directors and campus police chiefs from universities with major athletic programs, which were defined by their athletic program's membership in athletic conferences that are linked to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division 1A Bowl Championship Series (BCS). Established in 1998, the BCS represents a formal agreement between eleven college athletic conferences and three non-conference affiliated Division 1A football programs (Independents) on a system for deciding the national champion in college football.¹ As the present study is interested presence of gangs in college athletics in general, and not only football programs, the surveys were administered to all 120 institutions with BCS conference football programs as well as 10 additional colleges with Division 1A basketball programs in BCS affiliated conferences. Specifically, this added seven athletic programs from the Big East

¹ The athletic programs selected were based on 2008 conference affiliation. The conferences include the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), Big East Conference, Big Ten Conference, Big 12 Conference, Conference USA, Mid-American Conference, Mountain West Conference, Pac-10 Conference, Southeastern Conference (SEC), Sun Belt Conference, and the Western Athletic Conference (WAC). The non-affiliated schools are the University of Notre Dame, the United State Military Academy (Army), and the United States Naval Academy (Navy).

conference and three schools from the Sun Belt conference without football programs at the 1A level. While gang-involved athletes may have also participated in athletic programs at the community college, small four year college, and other university levels, this study only focused on schools from BCS affiliated conferences as a starting point given it represents the first exploratory effort on this issue. In total, 130 athletic programs were included in this sample.

In addition, interviews of student-athletes were conducted at two universities, one in the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) and the other in the Southeast Conference (SEC). In order to maintain confidentiality, the athlete responses are aggregated under the identifiers "University A" and "University B". These interviews were not designed to be representative of all Division 1A athletes. Rather, they were intended to be exploratory in nature, capturing an alternative perspective from those represented by university officials in the above surveys. More detail is provided in the following sections on the interview questions asked of the athletes and administration protocol, as well as the questions and administration protocols for the athletic director and campus chief surveys.

Athletic Director Survey

Athletic directors were surveyed because of their oversight responsibility for all athletic programs at their universities. Although the athletic directors do not have the same level of contact with athletes as do coaches, they are the most likely to be knowledgeable of discipline and other issues involving student-athletes for all university athletic teams. The survey was primarily composed of closed-ended questions, with a limited number of open-ended questions to give alternative responses not found among the closed-ended options or to allow for brief elaboration on responses. The substantive survey questions were organized into four topic areas that were presented in the following order: general patterns of criminal and disruptive activities

among student athletes at athletic director's university, general perceptions of gangs in collegiate sports, general knowledge that athletic directors and athletic department coaches have on gangs, and direct experience with gang-involved athletes at the university. The survey provided a generic definition of a gang drawn from law enforcement and research definitions, it stated: a street gang is any durable, street-oriented youth group whose own identity includes involvement in illegal activities. In addition, the respondents were asked to provide their knowledge on the questions asked without reference to a given time period regarding the activity or issue in question. This lack of time reference was intended to allow for the broadest possible reporting given the exploratory nature of the research. Appendix A contains a copy of the athletic director survey with aggregate responses.

As noted above, the surveys were initially sent out by the Division 1A Athletic Directors Association. This process was facilitated by the president of the association at the time. The researchers subsequently conducted follow-up phone calls with the athletic directors who had not responded to the initial distribution of the survey. These efforts resulted in 71 of the 130 athletic directors providing a completed survey, a 54.6% response rate.

Campus Police Chief Survey

Campus police departments are a primary source of knowledge on the criminal and disruptive activities that occur on university campuses, including the behaviors of student-athletes. The personnel of these agencies also interact with the law enforcement agencies that serve the communities surrounding the campus, providing them with additional knowledge about the off-campus activities of the student-athletes. In addition, campus chiefs, through networking with peers at other universities likely have some knowledge of trends regarding patterns of crime and disorder on campuses across the nation. The campus police chief survey was essentially the

same as the athletic director survey, containing the same questions organized into four topic areas: general patterns of criminal and disruptive activities among student athletes at campus chief's university, general perceptions of gangs in collegiate sports, general knowledge that campus police chiefs and their officers have on gangs, and direct experience with gang-involved athletes at the chief's university. However, the campus police chief survey did not include questions regarding the recruiting and screening of student-athletes. The survey provided the same generic definition of gangs found in the athletic directors survey, and similarly did not provide reference to a time period in relation to reporting on the activity in question. Appendix B contains a copy of the athletic director survey with aggregate responses.

The surveys were administered by mail, and, as noted above, contained letters of support for the research from two current campus police chiefs. The administration of the survey followed the standard Dillman (2007) protocol that focuses on multiple contacts between researchers and targeted participants in order to enhance survey response. Each of the selected agencies was first mailed a survey, a letter explaining the survey, and a stamped and self-addressed return envelope. Non-responding agencies to this initial survey wave received a follow-up letter asking for their participation. Following the reminder letter was a second mailing of the survey, letter, and return envelope. Finally, the remaining non-responding agencies were contacted by phone to encourage their participation. These efforts resulted in 87 of the 130 campus police chiefs providing a completed survey, a 66.9% response rate.

Student-Athlete Interviews

Student-athletes represent the ideal population to survey or interview in order to gain insight on the presence of gang-involved college athletes. Athletes can obviously report on their own involvement in gang activity. Moreover, whether or not a given athlete is gang-involved, he

(or she) is more likely to have personal relationships with teammates, relative to coaches, athletic directors, or campus law enforcement. Clearly, the student-athlete is more likely than others to have knowledge concerning the lifestyles and behaviors of these teammates, including involvement in gangs. However, creating a national sample of athletes, as was conducted with the athletic directors and campus chiefs is impractical because there are several thousand athletes across the 130 BCS affiliated athletic programs. Negotiating access to a sample of athletes across these athletic departments and subsequently traveling to each location to conduct interviews was beyond the scope and resources of the present study. As an alternative, researchers in the present study negotiated with athletic directors of two universities to gain access to athletes for interviews. As noted above, these interviews are intended to be an exploratory effort to gain insight into on the presence of gang-involved college athletes from a population that was most likely to have knowledge on the subject, recognizing the responses may not be nationally representative. Nonetheless, this information provides an alternative perspective from that of the athletic directors and campus police chiefs.

The interviews were conducted in-person by three undergraduate students under the oversight of the principal investigator. The students were trained by the principal investigator on how to conduct the interviews. The use of undergraduate students to conduct the interviews was intended to reduce the reluctance among athletes to discuss topics, which may have been observed if the principal investigator and other research faculty members conducted the interviews. As fellow university students, the interviewers and athletes were peers to some degree. Moreover, as noted above, one student interviewer was also an athlete at one of the two universities. The interviews were conducted during daily study hall sessions for student-athletes or after classes. Each student-athlete was advised that their participation was voluntary and that

their responses were confidential. Each agreed to be part of the study. In total, there were 47 athletes from University A and 23 athletes from University B who agreed to participate. The interviewed athletes were all males who played football, basketball, or track and field.

The interviews consisted of both closed- and open-ended questions. Generally, the athletes were asked closed-ended questions on different issues related to gangs. When they provided an affirmative response to a closed-ended question, such as when an athlete acknowledged that there were gang-involved athletes on his team, the interviewer would follow-up with an open-ended question soliciting more details on their response. The interview questions covered four topic areas: presence of gangs in the athletes' hometowns and high schools, general perspectives on the presence of gang-involved athletes in college sports, levels of personal knowledge about gangs, and personal involvement with gangs.

RESULTS²

Police Chiefs & Athletic Directors

The responding police chiefs had an average of 26.1 years experience as law enforcement officers' including 13.7 years at their current institutions and 6.9 years in their current leadership positions. The athletic directors had slightly less experience with an average of 20.9 years in college athletics as athletes, coaches, staff, or athletic directors. These individuals had directed athletic departments for an average of 9.5 years, including 7 at their current institutions. The following sections provide these respondent's perceptions of student-athletes' involvement with crime and gangs in their schools as well as in college athletic programs generally.

² Members of the research team presented findings to NCAA president Mark Emmert and his leadership staff prior to submitting this report.

Student-athletes & crime.

Comparable proportions of campus police chiefs and athletic directors reported that student-athletes enrolled at their universities had been arrested for or involved in some criminal activities, 88.5% and 84.5%, respectively. It is important to note that these figures did not reflect the percentage of student-athletes involved in these acts, only the proportion of school officials who reported that they believed student-athletes at their schools had ever been involved in or arrested for certain criminal activities³. As show in Table 1, the law enforcement and athletic directors largely agreed that student-athletes at their universities had been arrested for or involved in burglaries (32.2% and 32.4%), drug sales (23.0% and 23.9%), drug use (60.9% and 59.2%), possession of firearms (33.3% and 29.6%), and retail theft (32.2% and 29.6%). In other cases, the specific crimes those student-athletes were reported as committing varied greatly based upon the respondents' roles at the institutions sampled. For example, 79.3% of law enforcement executives reported that student athletes at their schools had been involved in assaults compared with just 57.7% of athletic department directors. Considerable discrepancies were also found between respondents from the police and athletic departments regarding their student-athletes' criminal involvement with the crimes of property theft (55.2% versus 35.2%), vandalism (27.6% versus 16.9%), and gambling (16.1% versus 8.5%). One athletic administrator reported that student-athletes were involved in 'other' criminal acts but did not specify the type; 13.8 % of chiefs reported that student athletes had been committed or been arrested for 'other' criminal acts and 10 out of those 12 responses included some form of sex crime. Overall, a larger

³ The survey included the following 12 incident types: Assault, Burglary, Car theft, Drug sales, Drug use, Property theft, Possession of firearms, Retail theft, Graffiti, Vandalism, Gambling, and Other (please specify).

proportion of the campus chiefs' reported the involvement of student-athletes at their schools for 10 out of the 12 crime categories surveyed, as compared with the athletic directors⁴.

Table 1. Percent of Athletic Directors and Campus Chiefs who Report the Commission of Specific Crime Types Committed by Their Student-Athletes

	Athletic Directors (N=71)	Campus Chiefs (N=87)
Assault	57.7%	79.3%
Burglary	32.4%	32.2%
Car Theft	8.5%	9.2%
Drug Sales	23.9%	23.0%
Drug Use	59.2%	60.9%
Property Theft	35.2%	55.2%
Possession of Firearm	29.6%	33.3%
Retail Theft	29.6%	32.2%
Graffiti	0.0%	3.4%
Vandalism	16.9%	27.6%
Gambling	8.5%	16.1%
Other	1.4%	13.8%

The campus officials who reported that student-athletes at their institutions had been criminally involved also implicated the specific sports programs they were involved with. Table 2 illustrates the law enforcement and athletic department executives' indicated that football programs were most common among the men's sports programs at their schools to have criminally-involved team members (87.0% and 70.0%), followed by basketball (85.7% and 51.7%), baseball (28.9% and 28.3%), and track and field (18.2% and 20.0%). Regarding female student-athletes, Table 3 illustrates that campus law enforcement executives' and athletic administrators' identified the basketball (31.2% and 30.0%) and track and field (6.5% and 13.3%) programs as having at least one player arrested or involved with crimes during their tenure.

⁴ The sole exceptions to this trend were slight differences of 0.2% between the two groups of respondents for the crime of burglary and 0.9% for drug sales.

Table 2. Percent of Athletic Directors and Campus Chiefs who Report Crimes Committed by Male Student-Athletes by Sport*

	Athletic Directors (N=60)	Campus Chiefs (N=77)
Baseball	28.3%	28.9%
Basketball	51.7%	85.7%
Field Hockey	0.0%	2.6%
Football	70.0%	87.0%
Golf	8.3%	3.9%
Gymnastics	1.7%	0.0%
Ice Hockey	5.0%	9.1%
Lacrosse	0.0%	5.2%
Rowing/Crew	1.7%	3.9%
Soccer	10.0%	13.0%
Swimming/Diving	3.3%	5.2%
Tennis	6.7%	2.6%
Track and Field	20.0%	18.2%
Volleyball	0.0%	2.6%
Wrestling	18.3%	16.9%
Other: Rugby	0.0%	1.3%

* Table contains only sports where either an athletic director or campus chief identified athlete involvement (See Appendices A and B for complete results).

Table 3. Percent of Athletic Directors and Campus Chiefs who Report Crimes Committed by Female Student-Athletes by Sport *

	Athletic Directors (N=60)	Campus Chiefs (N=77)
Basketball	30.0%	31.2%
Fencing	1.7%	0.0%
Field Hockey	3.3%	2.6%
Golf	3.3%	0.0%
Gymnastics	1.7%	5.2%
Lacrosse	3.3%	1.3%
Rifle	0.0%	1.3%
Rowing/Crew	3.3%	0.0%
Soccer	6.7%	5.2%
Softball	8.3%	3.9%
Swimming/Diving	6.7%	2.6%
Tennis	6.7%	0.0%
Track and Field	13.3%	6.5%
Volleyball	8.3%	2.6%
Other: Equestrian	0.0%	1.3%

* Table contains only sports where either an athletic director or campus chief identified athlete involvement (See Appendices A and B for complete results).

The athletic directors were also asked about methods they use to screen recruit athletes for criminal or other problem behavior. The responses presented in Table 4 show the majority of college athletic department executives reported that they routinely screened recruits before making scholarship offers. Most common were background checks for recruits' previous criminal histories and for being on probation or some other form of court supervision, 69.0% and 50.7%, respectively. These officials also frequently screened potential scholarship' recipients for histories of school suspensions (46.5%), difficulties getting along with adults at school (35.2%), and histories of gang involvement (22.5%). The previous section has evidenced that these safeguards failed to prevent the enrollments of criminal individuals in many college sports programs at scores of institutions. The findings presented next demonstrate that these procedures have not thwarted gang members in particular from participating in collegiate athletic programs.

Table 4. Percent of Athletic Directors Reporting Screening Efforts (N=71)

Screening Method	%
Examined whether a recruit had a history of school suspensions	46.5%
Examined whether a recruit had difficulties getting along with adults at school	35.2%
Examined whether a recruit had a criminal history	69.0%
Examined whether a recruit was on probation or some other form of court supervision	50.7%
Examined whether a recruit had any history of gang involvement	22.5%

Student-athletes & gangs.

Almost identical proportions of campus law enforcement (67.8%) and athletic departments executives (69.0%) believed that gang members were participating in collegiate sports either at their university or another institution. More campus law enforcement executives as compared with athletic administrators who thought that gang-members were currently participating in collegiate athletics also believed that these gang-involved student-athletes posed potential problems for colleges and universities, 86.4% and 77.6%, respectively. Those school officials who believed that gang-involved athletes could be creating issues for schools were asked to identify the specific criminal activities about which they were concerned. Table 5 shows for 15 out of the 16 types of problematic behaviors included on the survey, the law enforcement executives reported that more problems are posed by gang members relative to the responses of athletic administrators (see Table 4). A considerable percentage of campus police chiefs and athletic department officials reported that gang members could be engaged in violent crimes (88.2% and 71.1%), property crimes (94.1% and 60.5%), drug activity (94.1% and 71.1%), gambling (47.1% and 42.1%), and possessing firearms (82.4% and 65.8%) in addition to numerous disruptive behaviors.

Table 5. Percent of Athletic Directors and Campus Chiefs who Report Specific Problems Caused by Gang-Involved Student-Athletes

	Athletic Directors (N=38)	Campus Chiefs (N=51)
Engaged in violent crimes	71.1%	88.2%
Engaged in property crimes	60.5%	94.1%
Possessed firearms	65.8%	82.4%
Engaged in drug activity	71.1%	94.1%
Gambling	42.1%	47.1%
Fighting on campus	73.7%	84.3%
Fighting off campus	81.6%	92.2%
Intimidation of other students	57.9%	74.5%
Intimidation of others off campus	60.5%	74.5%
Recruitment of individuals into gangs	47.4%	60.8%
School disruption	57.9%	52.9%
Disrupting team unity	65.8%	66.7%
Creating negative learning environment	68.4%	64.7%
Being a negative influence by creating an association between team members and gang members	76.3%	76.5%
Creating a negative image for the university or sport	78.9%	82.4%
Other	5.3%	14.3%

Tables 6 and 7 presents the of criminal activity male and female gang-involved student-athletes in certain collegiate sports. Gang-involved male student-athletes were thought by campus chiefs and athletic directors to have had the largest impact on the following men's collegiate athletic programs: football (94.9% and 85.7%), basketball (81.4% and 81.6%), track and field (23.7% and 32.7%), and baseball (11.9% and 12.2%). Gang-involved female student-athletes were reported by law enforcement and athletics' officials most often for women's basketball (25.4% and 40.8%) and women's track and field (16.9% and 24.5%) programs. Thus, this sample of college officials' believed that football and men's basketball were the most criminally-involved programs on their campuses specifically, and the sport's most heavily impacted by the presence of gang members in athletics overall.

Table 6. Percent of Athletic Directors and Campus Chiefs who Report Crimes Caused by Collegiate Gang-Involved Males Student-Athletes by Sport *

	Athletic Directors (N=49)	Campus Chiefs (N=59)
Baseball	12.2%	11.9%
Basketball	81.6%	81.4%
Football	85.7%	94.9%
Golf	2.0%	1.7%
Ice Hockey	0.0%	1.7%
Lacrosse	0.0%	3.4%
Rifle	0.0%	1.7%
Soccer	4.1%	5.1%
Track and Field	32.7%	23.7%
Wrestling	2.0%	10.2%
Other	4.1%	0.0%

* Table contains only sports where either an athletic director or campus chief identified athlete involvement (See Appendices A and B for complete results).

Table 7. Percent of Athletic Directors and Campus Chiefs who Report Crimes Caused by Collegiate Gang-Involved Females Student-Athletes by Sport *

	Athletic Directors (N=49)	Campus Chiefs (N=59)
Basketball	40.8%	25.4%
Soccer	2.0%	3.4%
Softball	4.1%	1.7%
Track and Field	24.5%	16.9%
Volleyball	4.1%	1.7%
Other	4.1%	0.0%

* Table contains only sports where either an athletic director or campus chief identified athlete involvement (See Appendices A and B for complete results).

The university officials also discussed their own direct experiences with gang-involved student-athletes at their institutions. A much larger proportion of campus chiefs, 19.5%, reported direct knowledge of a student-athlete who retained gang membership while at their university compared with athletic directors (4.2%). It should be noted that almost one-tenth (9.9%) of the athletic directors reported that there were student-athletes at their university who were gang

members prior to attending the university. This finding suggests that most athletic directors believe that gang-involved high school student-athletes ceased membership before arrival at their programs.

Among the sample of university officials who report that gang-involved student-athletes participate in athletic programs at their universities, many remarked that these individuals often create issues resulting in disciplinary actions or arrests. Problematic behavior by college athletes who were involved with gangs during college or had been previously involved with gangs prior to attending college were reported by 44.5% of athletic directors and 76.5% of campus chiefs. The specific issues created by these gang members are listed in Table 8. All four athletic directors who reported that gang-involved student-athletes had caused problems stated that these student-athletes had been involved in assaults. Assaults were also the most frequently mentioned problematic behaviors noted by the campus law enforcement executives, mentioned by 10 out of 13 or 76.9% of these officials. One-half of the athletic directors reported that gang members on their athletic teams were involved in selling drugs and possessing firearms. Thirteen campus chiefs reported such problems and added that gang members on sports teams at their universities had possessed firearms (46.2%), sold drugs (38.5%), and committed burglaries (38.5%).

Table 8. Percent of Athletic Directors and Campus Chiefs who Report Crimes Committed by Their Gang-Involved Student-Athletes*

	Athletic Directors (N=4)	Campus Chiefs (N=13)
Assault	100.0%	76.9%
Burglary	0.0%	38.5%
Car Theft	0.0%	0.0%
Drug Sales	50.0%	38.5%
Drug Use	25.0%	30.8%
Property Theft	25.0%	30.8%
Possession of Firearm	50.0%	46.2%
Retail Theft	25.0%	7.7%
Graffiti	0.0%	7.7%
Vandalism	25.0%	30.8%
Gambling	0.0%	0.0%
Other: Robbery, Sexual Assault	0.0%	15.4%

* Table contains only sports where either an athletic director or campus chief identified athlete involvement (See Appendices A and B for complete results).

Knowledge of gangs.

The law enforcement agency and athletic department executives were asked to indicate the extent of their own knowledge as well as their staff's knowledge regarding gang signs and other indicators that an individual is a gang member on a continuum from "no knowledge" (1) to "a lot of knowledge" (9). The campus police chiefs reported a mean of 5.6 on their own knowledge of gang membership indicators and 5.8 for their officers. The athletic administrators reported a lower level of knowledge about indicators and signs of gang membership than leaders from campus law enforcement communities, reporting an average of 3.5. The athletic administrators report that the staffs of the most problematic sports on their campuses had more relevant knowledge than they, with a mean of 4.6 on the scale. The extent of knowledge regarding gangs among members of the law enforcement and athletic departments may be related to the training provided to these individuals. Over four-fifths of campus chiefs (84.9%) reported that their officers had received training on gang activities but only 5.6% of athletic directors

responded that their coaches and staff had undergone such training. On the one hand, the law enforcement executives stated that their primary means of learning about gangs had been training courses (89.7%), job or school experiences (58.6%), television, radio, or newspapers (33.3%), first-hand experiences (32.2%), neighborhoods, (12.6%), and friends (6.9%). On the other hand, athletic department officials reported that their knowledge about gangs came from television, radio, or newspapers (87.3%), job or school experiences (14.1%), friends (9.9%), neighborhoods (8.5%), and first-hand experiences (7.0%).

Student-Athletes

The third source of data regarding crime- and gang-involved members of athletic programs was provided by student-athletes at two universities. Table 9 presents the athlete responses to questions on the criminality of fellow players on their collegiate athletic teams. The student-athletes at Universities A and B most frequently stated that teammates had been involved with assaults (82.6% and 26.1%) and drug use (86.7% and 17.4%), respectively. Drastic differences between University A and University B were found for the offenses of possession of firearms (71.7% versus 0.0%) and gambling (65.2% versus 0.0%) in particular. While we are not sure why these differences between universities exist, plausible explanations include the type of institution and/or the assistance we had from a student-athlete at university A. It is also possible that different minimum academic standards or different screen mechanisms for athletes (i.e. criminal history checks) between the two universities creates a population of athletes at each institution that collectively have different backgrounds. In any case, it is clear that more research needs to be conducted on this issue.

Table 9. Percent of Student-Athletes who Report Specific Crime Types Committed by Their Teammates

	University A (N=47)	University B (N=23)
Assault	82.6%	26.1%
Burglary	26.1%	4.3%
Car Theft	8.7%	0.0%
Drug Sales	47.8%	8.7%
Drug Use	86.7%	17.4%
Property Theft	37.0%	0.0%
Possession of Firearm	71.7%	0.0%
Retail Theft	8.7%	0.0%
Graffiti	13.0%	0.0%
Vandalism	47.8%	0.0%
Gambling	65.2%	0.0%
Other:	4.4%	4.3%

Nearly three-quarters (74.5%) of the athletes from University A and over one-half (52.2%) from University B report that gangs were prevalent in their hometowns. In addition, many respondents from Universities A and B reported that players on their high school teams had been gang-involved, 61.7% and 43.5%, respectively. Many of those athletes were able to name the specific gangs in which high school teammates had been members and a couple reported intra-team conflicts between rival gang members, especially at the beginning of school each year. Twenty-nine out of forty-two or 69.0% of student-athletes from University A believed that high-school athletes involved with gangs continued to affiliate with those gangs after becoming college athletes. The percentage of athletes at University B who felt that high school gang affiliations persisted during college athletics was considerably lower at 30.4%. Still, these findings suggest the belief that many college student-athletes maintain dual-roles and are simultaneously gang and team members. The interviewees provided numerous explanations for why gang-affiliated high school athletes may continue to associate with gangs after becoming college athletes, including strong ties to friends, family, and communities as well as established

patterns of behaviors in their hometowns. In addition to considerable contextual differences between home and college, several respondents' suggested that expectations were different for them compared to non-athletes and that gang leaders had allowed their members who were athletes to cease gang activities while present on college campuses.

The majority of student-athletes believe that there were gang members participating in collegiate athletic programs, 87.2% and 59.1%, respectively. One student-athlete remarked, "There are plenty [of] athletes that are gang-affiliated but they are professional about it so others wouldn't know." At University A, 55.6% of student-athletes reported that at least one of their current college teammates had been involved with gangs during high school compared to 26.1% at University B. Only one student-athlete at University B or 4.3% of the sample from that school reported the presence of gang members on their collegiate team. However, 9 out of the 42 (21.4%) interviewees who discussed the statuses of current teammates at University A believed that at least one was involved with gangs at that time. The student-athletes were also asked to indicate the extent of coaches knowledge of the signs and indicators of gang membership or that an activity was gang-related on a continuum from "no knowledge" (1) to "a lot of knowledge" (9). The interviewees' from University A reported a mean of 4.7 for their coaches' knowledge of indicators of gang membership or activities, coaches at University B received a mean score of 3.0 on the continuum.

Lastly, the student-athletes from both institutions reported on their own involvement with gangs. Three student-athletes from University A or 6.4% of that's schools interviewees stated that they had previously been involved with a gang and two out of three (4.3%) reported that they were still involved with a gang. None of those individuals were willing to elaborate on the extent of their gang involvement in college. One student-athlete at University A reflected that he

had been allowed to leave the gang during high school due to his high athletic talent level and potential. A student-athlete from University B reported that he had previously been involved in a gang. No student-athletes from University B reported current gang involvement.

DISCUSSION

This study examined the prevalence and extent of gang-involved student-athletes in college sports. There are several noteworthy findings regarding criminal offending by student-athletes in general and gang-involvement specifically. The vast majority of athletic directors and campus police chiefs reported that student-athletes at their respective institutions had been arrested or involved in various criminal offenses, and the most frequently mentioned offenses were assault and drug use. Student-athletes at both universities also stated that these were the crimes most often committed by their teammates. Overall, males dominated the athletic department and campus law enforcement concerns about the criminal involvement of student-athletes, especially those on the football and basketball teams. However, the campus law enforcement and athletic department executives also stated that female student-athletes from several sports at their schools had been arrested or were involved with crimes.

In response to the study published by *Sports Illustrated* that found 7.2% of football players on programs in the preseason Top 25 list had criminal records, the NCAA president Mark Emmert was quoted as follows: “Seven percent, that’s way too high. I think two percent is too high. You certainly don’t want a large number of people with criminal backgrounds involved in activities that represent the NCAA” (Dohrmann & Benedict, 2011, p. 34). Measuring the exact percentage of student-athletes involved in criminal activity was beyond the scope of the current study. However, we were able to show that student-athletes have been arrested for or are

involved in serious crimes while attending college. This research also provides the first systematic examination of the prevalence and impact of gangs in collegiate athletic programs.

The anecdotal evidence regarding gang members in college athletics reported by the media received overwhelming support from the information collected from the athletic directors, campus chiefs, and student-athletes. Slightly fewer than 7 out of 10 athletic directors and campus chiefs believe that gang members are participating in collegiate athletic programs and most also felt that these individuals were creating criminal and/or disruptive problems for their schools. The majority of student-athletes at both universities believed that there were gang members on collegiate athletic teams, although there is a notable difference in the percent of athletes who express this position (87.2% University A and 59.1% University B). The presence of gang-involved individuals on athletic teams was not surprising considering that 61.7% of University A and 43.5% of University B athletes reported that they had high-school teammates who were gang members. In addition, 69.0% University A and 30.4% of University B athletes also believed that gang-involved high-school athletes continued to affiliate with their gangs while participating in collegiate athletic programs.

This study also asked information from the three groups of respondents concerning firsthand knowledge of gang members at their own universities. Over one-half of the student-athletes at University A and over one-quarter at University B believe that at least one of their current teammates has been involved with gangs during high school, fewer members of both schools (21.4% and 4.3%) also reported that they had at least one current gang-involved college teammate. Three student-athletes at University A and one at University B reported that they had previously been involved with gangs. In fact, two students at University A indicated that they were currently involved with gangs but declined to discuss the extent of their activities. It is

important to note that these athletes admitted their gang involvement considering the possible negative repercussions of such a status.⁵ Almost 20% of the campus chiefs reported direct knowledge of a gang-involved student-athlete at their school compared to just over 4% of athletic directors. In sum, the current study triangulated three sources of data all three groups reported direct knowledge of at least one gang-member participating in the athletic programs at their schools.

The differences among survey responses concerning perceptions of gang members in college athletics overall and at specific schools suggest possible denial by campus police chiefs and athletic department administrators. In other words, many respondents report that there is a gang problem in college athletics generally, but not at “my” university. Still, this study found evidence that many of these law enforcement and athletic department executives were proactive with respect to crime- and gang-involved student-athletes at their schools. For example, the majority of athletic directors reported that they routinely conducted background checks to determine if recruits had criminal histories or were under some form of court supervision. This was in stark contrast to the recent *Sports Illustrated/CBS News* investigation that found only 8% of schools in their sample of top football programs had conducted criminal background checks of their players (Dohrmann & Benedict, 2011). However, much less attention was devoted by the athletic directors in this study to identifying recruits with histories of gang involvement as less than one-quarter of the sample in this study reported such efforts. The differences could reflect different methodologies or the different definitions of “background checks” by universities, but certainly merits more detailed research.

⁵ As noted, it is believed that the student-athletes likely underreported their involvement in gangs and criminal activities. During the interviews at both universities student-athletes were overheard talking with each other about not providing complete information.

The recent article in *Sports Illustrated* identified three reasons that universities are hesitant to conduct criminal background checks of potential student-athletes. First, school officials in the admissions and athletic departments may prevent certain students from attending college and becoming an athlete based on the results of the background checks. Second, the identification of a criminal background means that any future misbehavior would be viewed in a more punitive manner by others and it would likewise become harder for coaches to justify additional strikes and opportunities for the offenders to play. The final reason that colleges may be reluctant to conduct background checks is that other schools without the checks would use that policy against them when recruiting student-athletes (Dohrmann & Benedict, 2011). These possible explanations suggest that ignorance of problematic recruits may indeed be a logical tactic taken by athletic department officials, including coaches, for establishing and maintaining the eligibility of players including those posing issues off the field.

Even knowledge of at-risk recruits' troublesome backgrounds may not prevent their admission to universities and their participation on collegiate athletic teams. The *Sports Illustrated* article declared that "many [coaches] feel they must take talented, at-risk players because taking less talented players could cost them their jobs" (Staples, 2011). Cullen et al. (1990) also found that coaches were willing to accept potentially problematic football recruits due to intense pressures for their programs to succeed athletically but not necessarily academically or behaviorally. Those coaches and athletic directors who have cleaned-up programs and were successful academically also had to maintain winning records at a level consistent with donor's expectations or risk the loss of exceptionally competitive and financially rewarding careers. There is reason to believe that the incentive structure will only increase problems regarding crime- and gang-involved recruits and college student-athletes in coming

years. For example, *USA Today* reported that the number of college football coaches earning over \$1 million was 42 in 2006 but increased to 50 the following year and 56 in 2009 (Wieberg, Upton, Perez, & Berkowitz, 2009). The *USA Today* study similarly found that the number of coaches earning over \$3 million increased from just one in 2006 to nine in 2009 (Wieberg et al., 2009). As the trend of increased coaches' salaries continues, so will internal and external pressures on coaches to demonstrate results in a timely fashion. It is the remarkable coach who is willing to risk his job or career by not offering scholarships to talented athletes who have problematic backgrounds that include serious criminal activity, possession of firearms or continued gang affiliation. It shows the shortsightedness and misplaced priorities of a university that chooses a higher priority of winning games with severely troubled youth over a good record with student-athletes who can compete in the classroom and well as on the field, and who represent the university well with proper behavior and a good graduation rate. A serious question that needs to be addressed is the balance between the cost of winning and the safety of students and other members of the community in which the university is located.

The current study demonstrates that gangs have impacted many universities in a negative manner as gang-involved student-athletes have committed numerous serious crimes on college campuses and also have been made victims of crimes. After being presented with these findings, the NCAA leadership staff issued a statement that properly viewed this study "as identifying an issue that may deserve further inquiry but does not identify or quantify specific problems or issues" (personal communication, May 12, 2011). Their response continued: "The NCAA acknowledges that this issue may be a concern for some institutions, but more research is needed to determine how pervasive this issue is among NCAA member institutions" (personal communication, May 18, 2011). Proactive stakeholders may wish to view this study as a

compelling warning and the required justification for reviewing policies regarding the recruitment and acceptance of student-athletes, especially those considered to be at-risk. Schools may decide to revise such policies in order to prevent gang activities that reach the local or national media and cast a negative light on their institutions. Also, at least five colleges have been sued by victims of crimes committed by scholarship student-athletes (Dohrmann & Benedict, 2011).

It appears that any policy changes will most likely occur at the university or athletic department level due to the previously mentioned incentives for individual coaches to overlook student-athletes potential off-field problems in exchange for a higher percentage of wins. The present study provides several policy implications. Generally, athletic departments should institute systematic reviews of recruits. Gang membership specifically may be identified by criminal background checks that show arrests of individuals for gang statutes or gang-related crimes.⁶ Most importantly, gang members may be recognized by citizens with direct knowledge of the individuals in question. Asking school employees and community members about student-athletes may provide the recruiters with critical information. For example, a recruiter requesting information on the character of a high-school student athlete from his or her coach, guidance counselor or principal may be told one account of the individual's character. If the recruiter were to take the time and ask high-school staff, including School Resource Officers, cafeteria workers or custodians who view these young adults in different situations, they may get another account of the character. Similarly, taking the time to talk with other students and community members who live and work close to the athlete may be worth the effort to determine the person's true character. This study found that some schools have conducted criminal

⁶ While gang-involved athletes may also be found in the law enforcement tracking system GangNet, this information is limited to law enforcement personnel.

background checks and have spoken with people close to the athlete but that these efforts have not been conducted in a systematic manner.

Questions remain regarding the proper way to address potential recruits who have been identified as criminally involved or members of gangs but would otherwise pass admissions criteria. Certain findings of background checks should be of heightened concern to athletic department officials including previous domestic violence, weapons possession, serious drug problems, and gang affiliation. A university may want to create behavioral standards for their recruits that mirror those for academic admissions. In other words, some behaviors should preclude a scholarship offer just as some low levels of academic performance or proficiency preclude admission to the university. Those student-athletes with problematic backgrounds who have been awarded scholarships or allowed the opportunity to participate in collegiate athletics should be provided support to reduce the likelihood of future incidents by severing ties to negative influences from their pasts. Just as the athletic departments provide academic assistance, perhaps they should provide “character assistance.” For instance, some interviewees stated that gangs have allowed student-athlete members to cease activities while at school and these individuals therefore need to have opportunities to remain on campus during summers and holidays. Many of these athletes may require counseling and other mental-health services to lessen the effects of previous offenses and victimizations. Colleges and universities must address the presence and impact of gang-involved student-athletes in order to improve the safety of their campuses and communities or risk negative consequences from stakeholders including faculty, students, community members, and the national media.

As noted by the responses to these findings by the NCAA leadership staff, this study raises serious questions that need further investigation. Hopefully, other researchers will use our

findings as a springboard to investigate more thoroughly the specific problems of gang membership and violence in collegiate sports. Additionally, and immediately, there should be programs developed at the national and local level that educate athletic administrators, coaches and student-athletes to the potential problems raised by our study. An important part of this education includes information on the culture of communities where student-athletes grow up. An integral part of the programs should include a discussion of the similarities between the “no-fear” attitudes of gang members who have similar personality traits. Finally, ways to acclimate new student-athletes into the university community is critical.

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APPENDIX A

<p>RETURN TO: Professor Geoff Alpert Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice 1305 Greene Street University of South Carolina Columbia, SC 29208 PHONE: 803-777-6424 FAX: 803-777-9600 EMAIL: geoffa@mailbox.sc.edu</p>	<p>SURVEY OF NCAA ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATORS</p> <p>University of South Carolina Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice</p>
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We are conducting a study of knowledge about and perceptions of gangs and gang members. You were selected based on a random selection process that did not have anything to do with your university or athletic program. We would like to know your ideas but please feel free to send this survey or specific questions to members of your staff who may be more knowledgeable about the topic or who interact with student-athletes on a daily basis. All of the results will be added together and no individual program or AD will be able to be identified. The survey will cover the following general topics including:

- Knowledge about gang or violence issues in the Athletic Department;
- Perceptions of gangs and youth violence;
- Problems with recruiting athletes with possible gang affiliations?
- Problems in the broader community caused by student-athletes with possible gang affiliations?
- Suggestions to resolve any of these potential problems with student-athletes who have possible gang affiliations?

For the purposes of this survey, we are using a generic definition of gangs taken from law enforcement and research definitions. For the purposes of this survey **A STREET GANG IS ANY DURABLE, STREET-ORIENTED YOUTH GROUP WHOSE OWN IDENTITY INCLUDES INVOLVEMENT IN ILLEGAL ACTIVITY.**

Instructions

Please complete both sides of each page, the survey concludes on page 15.
The survey can be returned in the enclosed prepaid envelope.
If you have any question, please feel free to contact Geoff Alpert (contact information above).
Thank you for taking time to participate in this survey

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR BACKGROUND

1. How long have you been involved in college athletics, whether as an athlete, coach, staff or athletic director?⁷⁸
Mean = 20.9 years, Median = 20.0 years, Minimum = 2.0 years, Maximum = 48.0 years
2. How long have you been an athletic director?⁹
Mean = 9.5 years, Median = 7.0 years, Minimum = 1.0 years, Maximum = 35.0 years
3. How long have you been the athletic director at your current university?¹⁰
Mean = 7.0 years, Median = 5.0 years, Minimum = 1.0 years, Maximum = 35.0 years

⁷ The number of respondents varied and are provided in footnotes after each individual question

⁸ N=71 (a total of 130 schools were contacted resulting in a 54.6% response rate)

⁹ N=71

¹⁰ N=71

GENERAL DISCIPLINE AND ISSUES WITH STUDENT ATHLETES

We are interested in this section about your general knowledge of criminal and disruptive behavior by student athletes, whether committed on campus or in the jurisdictions that surround your campus

4. Have any of the student athletes in the sports programs under your department been arrested or involved in the following criminal activities during the time they were enrolled in your university, including summers?¹¹

Check all that apply:

Criminal Activity					
a. Assault	41	57.7%	g. Possession of Firearms	21	29.6%
b. Burglary	23	32.4%	h. Retail Theft	21	29.6%
c. Car Theft	6	8.5%	i. Graffiti	0	0.0%
d. Drug Sales	17	23.9%	j. Vandalism	12	16.9%
e. Drug Use	42	59.2%	k. Gambling	6	8.5%
f. Property Theft	25	35.2%	l. Other: Not Specified	1	1.4%

4a. If you have athletes who engaged in any of the above **criminal activities**, which of the following sports programs did they participate in?¹²

Check all that apply:

Men's Sports					
a. Baseball	17	28.3%	m. Skiing	0	0.0%
b. Basketball	31	51.7%	n. Soccer	6	10.0%
c. Bowling	0	0.0%	o. Swimming/Diving	2	3.3%
d. Fencing	0	0.0%	p. Tennis	4	6.7%
e. Field Hockey	0	0.0%	q. Track and Field	12	20.0%
f. Football	42	70.0%	r. Volleyball	0	0.0%
g. Golf	5	8.3%	s. Water Polo	0	0.0%
h. Gymnastics	1	1.7%	t. Wrestling	11	18.3%
i. Ice Hockey	3	5.0%	u. Other	0	0.0%
j. Lacrosse	0	0.0%			
k. Rifle	0	0.0%			
l. Rowing/Crew	1	1.7%			

¹¹ N=71

¹² N=60

Women's Sports					
a. Basketball	18	30.0%	k. Skiing	0	0.0%
b. Bowling	0	0.0%	l. Soccer	4	6.7%
c. Fencing	1	1.7%	m. Softball	5	8.3%
d. Field Hockey	2	3.3%	n. Swimming/Diving	4	6.7%
e. Golf	2	3.3%	o. Tennis	4	6.7%
f. Gymnastics	1	1.7%	p. Track and Field	8	13.3%
g. Ice Hockey	0	0.0%	q. Volleyball	5	8.3%
h. Lacrosse	2	3.3%	r. Water Polo	0	0.0%
i. Rifle	0	0.0%	s. Other	0	0.0%
j. Rowing/Crew	2	3.3%			

5. Have any of the student athletes in the sports programs under your department been involved in the following activities?¹³

Check all that apply:

Disruptive Activity					
a. Community disturbance	20	28.2%	f. Intimidation of Other Students	10	14.1%
b. Fighting on Campus	32	45.1%	g. Intimidation of Others off Campus	11	15.5%
c. Fighting off Campus	33	46.5%	h. School Disruption	2	2.8%
d. Public Drunkenness	34	47.9%	i. Other	0	0.0%
e. Underage drinking	43	60.6%			

5a. If you have athletes who engaged in the above **disruptive** activity, which of the following sports programs did they participate in?¹⁴

Check all that apply:

Men's Sports					
a. Baseball	23	41.8%	m. Skiing	2	3.6%
b. Basketball	23	41.8%	n. Soccer	8	14.5%
c. Bowling	0	0.0%	o. Swimming/Diving	5	9.1%
d. Fencing	0	0.0%	p. Tennis	3	5.5%
e. Field Hockey	0	0.0%	q. Track and Field	9	16.4%
f. Football	37	67.3%	r. Volleyball	1	1.8%
g. Golf	8	14.5%	s. Water Polo	0	0.0%
h. Gymnastics	1	1.8%	t. Wrestling	7	12.7%
i. Ice Hockey	4	7.3%	u. Other	0	0.0%
j. Lacrosse	1	1.8%			
k. Rifle	0	0.0%			
l. Rowing/Crew	1	1.8%			

¹³ N=71

¹⁴ N=55

Women's Sports					
a. Basketball	11	20.0%	k. Skiing	0	0.0%
b. Bowling	0	0.0%	l. Soccer	11	20.0%
c. Fencing	1	1.8%	m. Softball	7	12.7%
d. Field Hockey	4	7.3%	n. Swimming/Diving	5	9.1%
e. Golf	1	1.8%	o. Tennis	3	5.5%
f. Gymnastics	1	1.8%	p. Track and Field	4	7.3%
g. Ice Hockey	0	0.0%	q. Volleyball	6	10.9%
h. Lacrosse	6	10.9%	r. Water Polo	0	0.0%
i. Rifle	0	0.0%	s. Other	0	0.0%
j. Rowing/Crew	1	1.8%			

6. Does your athletic department or university routinely screen recruits for the following issues before making scholarship offers?¹⁵

Check all that apply:

a. Examine whether a recruit has a history of school suspensions	33	46.5%
b. Examine whether a recruit had difficulties getting along with adults at school	25	35.2%
c. Examine whether a recruit has a criminal history	49	69.0%
d. Examine whether a recruit is on probation or some other form of court supervision	36	50.7%
e. Examine whether a recruit has any history of gang involvement	16	22.5%

7. How are these screening efforts done?^{16 17}

- **We routinely screen for all these issues by a senior member of our staff**
- **Communicating with those who know the recruit, school administrators, and coaches**
- **Informally by coaches that are recruiting them and sometimes through our compliance office efforts and with the police in certain circumstances**
- **Police background checks**
- **Through admissions, recruiting coaches on campuses**
- **Index review use o have admission application - eliminated it from application now considering it again**
- **Mainly informal communication with high school coaches, principals, teachers, counselors, etc. And others in the community who may know about a recruits past behaviors**
- **Recruiting coach communicates with school counselor**
- **High school guidance and administration**
- **Don't know (3 responses)**
- **Upon admission to the university**
- **Recruiting coach in conversation with school officials, parents, guardians, etc.**
- **The recruiting process and admissions process**
- **High school guidance and administration**
- **Coaches talk to high school coaches etc.**
- **Through admissions**
- **Background checks through high school authorities**

¹⁵ N=71

¹⁶ Answers provided in respondents' own words

¹⁷ N=71, N=49 provided responses

- **Conversations with coaches, counselors, family members, etc.**
- **Discussions with guidance counselor, coaches**
- **There is no strict policy for screening efforts. Screening effort consists of background checks as a department on transfer students, not everyone**
- **Coaches use their own discretion**
- **Before recruits are signed there are home visits**
- **Self disclosure**
- **Through interviews with school personnel**
- **Coaches screen at their own discretion**
- **Compliance**
- **Coaches ask parents, teacher, counselors, and coaches**
- **Various coaches get to know the player**
- **Coaches research**
- **Coaches, compliance and background check**
- **By coaches speaking with HS administration**
- **Talking with people close to the PSA and others that have come in to contact with PSA**
- **Coaches carry out the background checks**
- **Don't have any specific screening efforts**
- **No formal process**
- **During recruiting process coaches make inquiries**
- **Through an application: questions are asked about recruits history**
- **It depends on the sport (3 responses)**
- **Each sport coach examines the character of perspective student athletes**
- **Outside agency**
- **Run a report at the state level**
- **Through admissions process**
- **These efforts are completed during the recruiting process. Any concerns involving a prospects background is reported to the head coach. This information is then reported to the athletic administration**
- **N/A**
- **Background check**

8. Who is responsible for conducting these screening efforts?^{18 19}

- **Coaches (21 responses)**
- **Senior Associate Athletic Director**
- **Police**
- **Associate Athletic Director for Academic support services (4 responses)**
- **Under review**
- **Coaches primarily and admissions office**
- **Don't know**
- **Admissions**
- **One of over 1,800 schools liaison people around the country (2 responses)**
- **Recruiting coaches (4 responses)**
- **Coaches' admissions personnel**
- **Dean of admissions**
- **Coaches. Information is passed on to athletic director if a student is flagged as "high risk"**
- **Admissions and recruiting coaches**

¹⁸ Answers provided in respondents' own words

¹⁹ N=71, N=58 provided responses

- **Corporate Counsel**
- **University**
- **Coaches, unless administration is requested to be involved**
- **Compliance Office/Department (3 responses)**
- **Coaches at first, circumstances or criminal record then athletic administration gets involved**
- **Coaches and administration**
- **Coaches, compliance, student affairs**
- **It depends on the sport (2 responses)**
- **Outside agency**
- **Usually the coaches but it depends on the sport**
- **Guidance counselors at high schools admissions office**
- **Coaches and sometimes athletic department**
- **Head coach and/or assistant coach**
- **Athletic department and coaches**

8a. Are you directly involved in the screening or is information passed along to you?²⁰

Yes	15	21.1%	No	56	78.9%
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PERCEPTION OF GANGS IN NCAA SPORTS

In this section we are interested in your general perception of student athletes who are involved in gangs, whether at your university or knowledge you have of other universities.

9. Do you believe there are individuals who are gang members currently participating in NCAA sports, whether at your university or another university?²¹

Yes	49	69.0%	No	22	31.0%
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9a. If you answered yes to question 9, please indicate which sports you believe are impacted by the presence of gang members?²²
 Check all that apply:

Men's Sports					
a. Baseball	6	12.2%	m. Skiing	0	0.0%
b. Basketball	40	81.6%	n. Soccer	2	4.1%
c. Bowling	0	0.0%	o. Swimming/Diving	0	0.0%
d. Fencing	0	0.0%	p. Tennis	0	0.0%
e. Field Hockey	0	0.0%	q. Track and Field	16	32.7%
f. Football	42	85.7%	r. Volleyball	0	0.0%
g. Golf	1	2.0%	s. Water Polo	0	0.0%
h. Gymnastics	0	0.0%	t. Wrestling	1	2.0%
i. Ice Hockey	0	0.0%	u. Other: Could be all sports (1 response), Could be any sports (1 response)	2	4.1%
j. Lacrosse	0	0.0%			
k. Rifle	0	0.0%			
l. Rowing/Crew	0	0.0%			

²⁰ N=71

²¹ N=71

²² N=49

Women's Sports					
a. Basketball	20	40.8%	k. Skiing	0	0.0%
b. Bowling	0	0.0%	l. Soccer	1	2.0%
c. Fencing	0	0.0%	m. Softball	2	4.1%
d. Field Hockey	0	0.0%	n. Swimming/Diving	0	0.0%
e. Golf	0	0.0%	o. Tennis	0	0.0%
f. Gymnastics	0	0.0%	p. Track and Field	12	24.5%
g. Ice Hockey	0	0.0%	q. Volleyball	2	4.1%
h. Lacrosse	0	0.0%	r. Water Polo	0	0.0%
i. Rifle	0	0.0%	s. Other: Could be all sports (1 response), Could be any sports (1 response)	2	4.1%
j. Rowing/Crew	0	0.0%			

9b. If you answered yes to question 9, do you believe gang members pose potential problems for athletic departments or sport programs?²³

Yes	38	77.6%	No	11	22.4%
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9c. If you answered yes to question 9b, please check the types of problems you think student/athlete gang members can pose?²⁴

Check all that apply:

Criminal Activity		
a. Engaging in violent crimes	27	71.1%
b. Engaging in property crimes	23	60.5%
c. Possessing firearms	25	65.8%
d. Engaging in drug activity	27	71.1%
d. Gambling	16	42.1%
Disruptive Activity		
e. Fighting on campus	28	73.7%
f. Fighting off campus	31	81.6%
g. Intimidation of other students	22	57.9%
h. Intimidation of others off campus	23	60.5%
i. Recruitment of individuals into gangs	18	47.4%
j. School disruption	22	57.9%
k. Disrupting team unity	25	65.8%
l. Creating negative learning environment	26	68.4%
n. Being a negative influence by creating an association between team members and gang members	29	76.3%
o. Creating a negative image for the university or sport	30	78.9%
p. Other: Any violent/criminal activity in general (1 response), Not Specified (1 response)	2	5.3%

²³ N=49

²⁴ N=38

10. Are you aware of any specific examples where a gang member caused a problem for an athletic department or specific sports program, whether at your university or another university? Please explain the nature of the problem and circumstances.^{25 26}

- **Crips and Bloods fighting at [Unnamed University]**
- **We are aware that some of student athletes have been involved in gang activity. They have been disruptive and have caused numerous problems for the team and school**
- **Individually didn't manifest above listed activity, but brought "friends" close to campus and team that created problems**
- **Yes - football team members had conflict with gang members at a party off campus. Several weeks later the disagreement surfaced on campus via a fight in the student union**
- **Yes - former institution gang member involved in off campus shooting**
- **No, I don't believe gang members make it known publicly that they are a member of a gang**
- **No. Even though I announced yes to the above questions, we do not and have not seen any evidence on our campus. I have heard about issues elsewhere**
- **Our wrestling team was in/at [Unnamed City] and two student-athletes went to a 7-Eleven. A gang member cut one of the wrestlers ears off (gang initiation)**
- **Shooting at [Unnamed University], fights at [Unnamed University], gang recruitment at [Unnamed University]**

11. Does your Athletic Department currently address issues related to gang involvement among student athletes?²⁷

Yes	17	23.9%	No	54	76.1%
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11a. If you answered NO to question 11, why not?^{28 29}

- **We believe we have had no gang related incidents where any of our student athletes are members**
- **This has not been an issue on this campus or within the department or region or institution**
- **Don't know (2 responses)**
- **Doesn't exist here because of the unique status of this school**
- **We have not been aware of any athletes having gang connections therefore; have not felt the need to address the issue**
- **Military environment**
- **Has not been an issue at this school (9 responses)**
- **There have not been any specific gang action on our campus to warrant such attention (2 responses)**
- **We do not specifically address gangs, but coaches have the discretion to take action if they become aware that a member of their team is involved in gang activity**
- **Doesn't exist here because of the unique status of this school**
- **We are just beginning our student services department and have not begun to address the topic, yet**
- **Gang issues are not addressed "per-say". A lot of time during orientation is devoted to public misconduct and private misconduct - don't talk about gang activity specifically, but talk about criminal activities**
- **Don't get the need to as we recruit/sign a different type of student-athlete. We are more selective due to our higher academic standards, thus the type of student-athlete that would be involved in gang-related activities does not fit our profile - nor would they feel comfortable in our environment/atmosphere.**
- **Has not been raised as an issue yet by coaches or student advisory board**
- **Not an issue at this time**

²⁵ Answers provided in respondents' own words

²⁶ N=71; N=9 provided responses

²⁷ N=71

²⁸ Answers provided in respondents' own words

²⁹ N=54; N= provided responses

- If you are signing recruits that are in the same city of their gangs it could be an issue
- We have a general discussion about criminal behavior, but gangs are not specifically discussed
- While gang involvement is not specifically addressed, there are codes of conduct that are discussed in great detail as well as representing the University
- During orientation we talk about appropriate behavior but do not specifically mention gangs
- Because we don't have gangs in [city where university was located]
- Never been a problem. Coaches may address it with individual teams
- We have never addressed the issue

11b. If you answered YES to question 11, what specifically do you do to address gang involved student athletes?^{30 31}

- Part of our education program for all sports
- Currently we have started an education program for our coaches and have our psychologist working with the student athletes in question
- In the champs life skills program
- Address importance of code of conduct (appropriate behavior) i.e., staying out of gangs
- General Education of athletes
- Part of life skills initiative
- Discuss in student life activities
- General Education about how to avoid violent/criminal activities etc.
- Discuss the student-athlete code of conduct policy
- Speakers will come talk to student athletes about issues of gangs, violence, etc.
- We address but don't think it's a big issue with our players. We talk about it because gangs are in our community and we let the players know not to associate with them
- General talk during orientation
- Every year twice a year - talk to them about behavior and hanging in the right/wrong crowds
- It is discussed in "life skills" orientation

KNOWLEDGE OF GANGS

12. How much knowledge do you have of gang signs or other indicators that an individual is a gang member?³²
 Check box on continuum that best reflects your level of knowledge:

No Knowledge	Some Knowledge							A lot of Knowledge	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	11	16	9	12	10	5	4	1	1
	15.9%	23.2%	13.0%	17.4%	14.5%	7.2%	5.8%	1.4%	1.4%

Mean = 3.5, Median = 3.0, Minimum = 1.0, Maximum = 9.0

13. How much knowledge do you have of gang signs or other indicators that suggest an activity is gang related?³³
 Check box on continuum that best reflects your level of knowledge:

No Knowledge	Some Knowledge							A lot of Knowledge	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	14	18	9	8	8	5	3	2	1
	20.6%	26.5%	13.2%	11.8%	11.8%	7.4%	4.4%	2.9%	1.5%

Mean = 3.3, Median = 3.0, Minimum = 1.0, Maximum = 9.0

³⁰ Answers provided in respondents' own words
³¹ N=17; N=15 provided responses
³² N=69
³³ N=68

14. What is the main way you know about gangs?³⁴

Check all that apply:

a. Television, radio, or newspaper	62	87.3%
b. Friends	7	9.9%
c. Neighborhood	6	8.5%
d. Job or school experiences	10	14.1%
e. First-hand experience	5	7.0%
f. Other: Faculty member who specializes in gangs (1 response), Police inform us of gang activity (1 response), Worked with juvenile delinquents previously (1 response)	3	4.2%

15. Which sports are most likely to experience the problems of gang membership or gang activity? Why?^{35 36}

- **Football and basketball - We have significant numbers of athletes who live in gang environments**
- **Football and basketball - environment they grew up in**
- **Football, track and basketball: Numbers of them - all walks of life**
- **Basketball and football (3 responses)**
- **Basketball, Football - More risk of gang-involvement among recruits**
- **Football and Men's basketball**
- **Football, basketball, track & field: low income families**
- **Basketball, Football - heard stories about gang involvement within these sports teams in the 1990s.**
- **Football and basketball: nature/background of those who participate - very competitive young people from difficult backgrounds**
- **Don't Know (7 responses)**
- **Football, basketball, track - # of athletes that you are dealing with**
- **Football and basketball - stereotype**
- **Football, Men's Basketball, Track and Field - Based on demographics and hometown locations of these sport populations**
- **M&W Basketball, Football, M&W Track and Field - experiences with gang involvement in these sports**
- **Football, basketball and baseball: Most the other are "country club" sports: golf? Tennis? Water polo? Bowling? - I don't think so!?!?!?**
- **Football**
- **Not sure, probably depends mainly on where the recruits lived or were raised prior to attending college. The perception is probably that more football and / or men's basketball players are more likely to experience gang-related problems**
- **Basketball and football - based on demographics and stories in the news**
- **Football and men's basketball: most minority inner city youth getting college scholarships**
- **Sports that recruit out of major metro areas because of the prevalence in gangs**
- **probably football - gender, # of student-athletes**
- **Football, basketball and track. These sports have the highest concentration of minority athletes from urban areas (2 responses)**
- **Sports with players of lower socio-economic status**
- **Baseball, Football, Men's Basketball, Women's Basketball, Soccer: Statistics would say that those student athletes participating in those sports represent segments of the population that are more likely to be involved in gang activity**
- **Men's Basketball and Football - from what I have heard in the news**

³⁴ N=71

³⁵ Answers provided in respondents' own words

³⁶ N=71; N= provided responses

- **Not sure about specific sports but based on recruiting activities any team that recruits in a metropolitan area may encounter gang activity**
- **Men's Basketball and Football - high number of individuals recruited from inner cities (2 responses)**
- **Football - hearing about other campuses recruiting from areas like Compton and then recruits cause issues**
- **Football and basketball: the cultural background of those sports**
- **Football, Men's Basketball - more aggressive sports = more aggressive personality = more aggressive behavior**
- **Football and Basketball - student-athletes participating in these sports are sometimes from areas and neighborhoods where gangs are present**
- **Don't think athletes participate in gangs - there is no time to do so (2 responses)**
- **Any**
- **It could be any sport because gang members play all sports**
- **Football, men's basketball: Gangs are usually represented in minorities. These sports have the highest representation of minorities**
- **Don't think there are gang members**
- **Men's basketball, football, track - members tend to come from urban areas where gangs are prevalent**
- **Men's and Women's Basketball, Football, Track and Field. Football: had an incident of possession of firearms - his relative was a member of a gang, so may have been gang-related. Other sports: athletes associate with individuals who are suspected of being in gangs**
- **Football - large squad size (2 responses)**
- **If there were gang members in the NCAA, I would say they would be on the football teams. There are more players in football teams and recruits tend to come from urban cities**
- **Football / Men's Basketball. We have several student athletes from Detroit and LA where they are exposed to gangs**
- **Men's and Women's Basketball, Football - a lot of athletes come from the inner-city in these sports**
- **Football - most violent sport**
- **Football**

16. Do you think the coaches of these most problematic sports at your university are generally knowledgeable of the signs and indicators that suggest someone is in a gang or an activity that is gang related?³⁷

Check box on continuum that best reflects the level of knowledge for coaches and staff of these sports:

No Knowledge			Some Knowledge				A lot of Knowledge		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
6	5	11	11	14	6	12	4	0	
8.7%	7.2%	15.9%	15.9%	20.3%	8.7%	17.4%	5.8%	0.0%	

Mean = 4.6, Median = 5.0, Minimum = 1.0, Maximum = 8.0

17. Has your athletic department provided training on gangs to your coaches and staff about identifying gang related behavior?³⁸

Yes	4	5.6%	No	67	94.4%
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³⁷ N=69

³⁸ N=71

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT DIRECT EXPERIENCE WITH GANGS
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Recruiting

18. To your knowledge has any varsity sport in your athletic department recruited an athlete that was in a gang at time of recruitment?³⁹

Yes	4	5.6%	No	67	94.4%
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19. To your knowledge has any varsity sport in your athletic department recruited an athlete that was suspected of being associated with a gang at time of recruitment?⁴⁰

Yes	6	8.5%	No	65	91.5%
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When did you learn they were involved with a gang, BEFORE their recruitment or AFTER their recruitment?⁴¹

Before	0	0.0%
After	6	85.7%
Have experienced both situations	1	14.3%

19a If yes to questions 18 or 19, how did you know or what made you suspect this involvement or associations?^{42 43}

- **Communication with the student athlete**
- **We had a signed recruit in football get shot and he died. We also had a football player who was in a large group where a kid died**
- **Behaviors that were exhibited during their time on our campus**
- **We learned more about the individuals the more time we spent around them and the closer we got in our relationship**
- **Football: had an incident of possession of firearms - his relative was a member of a gang, so may have been gang-related**
- **The media was aware of an issue that happen to the recruit in his home town**

19b. If yes to questions 18 or 19, please provide a list of varsity sports related to these recruiting efforts.⁴⁴

- **Football and Basketball (2 responses)**
- **Football**
- **Football, Men's Basketball, Track/Field**

19c. If yes to questions 18 or 19, please identify any problems this gang involvement created during the recruiting process?^{45 46}

- **Our coaches were not aware that their recruits were a part of a gang**

³⁹ N=71

⁴⁰ N=71

⁴¹ N=7

⁴² Answers provided in respondents' own words

⁴³ N=7; N=6 provided responses

⁴⁴ N=7; N=4 provided responses

⁴⁵ Answers provided in respondents' own words

⁴⁶ N=7; N=1 provided a response

20. Has any program in your department decided to end a recruiting effort because the potential recruit was involved in gang activity or suspected of being in a gang?⁴⁷

Yes	7	9.9%	No	64	90.1%
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Athletes at the University

21. Are you aware if any of the athletic programs under your department that ever had an athlete that was a gang member while at the university?⁴⁸

Yes	3	4.2%	No	68	95.8%
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22. Are you aware if any of the athletic programs under your department ever had an athlete that was a gang member prior to attending the university?⁴⁹

Yes	7	9.9%	No	64	90.1%
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22a. If your answer to question 21 or 22 is YES, did any of these gang involved or formerly gang involved individuals have any problems resulting in disciplinary action or arrest while at the university?⁵⁰

Yes	4	44.5%	No	5	55.5%
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⁴⁷ N=71

⁴⁸ N=71

⁴⁹ N=71

⁵⁰ N=9

22b. If your answer to question 22a is YES, what types of problematic behavior were these individuals involved in?⁵¹

Check all that apply:

Criminal Activity					
a. Assault	4	100.0%	g. Possession of Firearms	2	50.0%
b. Burglary	0	0.0%	h. Retail Theft	1	25.0%
c. Car Theft	0	0.0%	i. Graffiti	0	0.0%
d. Drug Sales	2	50.0%	j. Vandalism	1	25.0%
e. Drug Use	1	25.0%	k. Gambling	0	0.0%
f. Property Theft	1	25.0%	l. Other	0	0.0%
Disruptive Activity					
m. Community Annoyance	1	25.0%	u. Disrupting Team Unity	2	50.0%
n. Fighting on Campus	2	50.0%	v. Creating Negative Learning Environment	0	0.0%
o. Fighting off Campus	3	75.0%	w. Being a negative influence by creating an association between team members gang members	0	0.0%
p. Intimidation of Other Students	1	25.0%	x. Recruitment of individuals into gangs	0	0.0%
q. Intimidation of Others off Campus	1	25.0%	y. Using Sign/Symbols that Identify Gang Membership	1	25.0%
r. School Disruption	2	50.0%	z. Wearing Clothes that Identify Gang Membership	1	25.0%
s. Public Drunkenness	1	25.0%	aa. Creating a Negative Image for the University or Sport	4	100.0%
t. Underage drinking	2	50.0%	bb. Other	0	0.0%

23. Do the student athletes at your university with a history of gang involvement have a greater likelihood of involvement in the above criminal and disruptive activity than other non-gang involved student athletes?⁵²

Yes	1	No	0	Don't Know	3	Not Applicable	0
	25.0%		0.0%		75.0%		0.0%

SUGGESTIONS FOR ATHLETIC DEPARTMENTS TO ADDRESS GANG ISSUES IN THE FUTURE

Please provide us with any suggestions you have to address the fears concerning student athlete gang involvement, such as the possibility of a mentoring program or providing gang awareness programs to student athletes with the option to speak in private with a counselor.^{53 54}

- **Create a video like the once on NCAA gambling: used real life situation and ex-athletes that had gambling problems, etc.**
- **Would check with the NFL in their current or planned practices regarding gangs**
- **General gang education, bring speakers in that have had experience with gangs and could have an impact on student athletes**

⁵¹ N=4

⁵² N=4

⁵³ Answers provided in respondents' own words

⁵⁴ N=71; N=25 provided responses

- Any type of education for staff, student athletes, administration
- Our athletes are not gang members but there are usually altercations outside of campus. Gangs specifically target university athletes
- Boundaries must be set and made clear from the beginning. They must also be enforced no matter how difficult. Also, positive reinforcement and one-on-one talks are a must. This allows the staff to keep themselves informed on what's going on in the athletes' private lives
- Going to have a training program that will address gangs (for all student athletes). Dr. Harry Edwards actually spoke at length about this topic a couple of years ago at an NCAA Convention. I remember being quite shocked about this honestly. However, Dr. Edwards seemed to be very well versed about this topic. I suggest reaching out to him immediately regarding this to request that he address the entire D1A Athletic Directors group at our national convention and/or making himself available for individual institutions
- Have former gang members that athletes could relate to come and speak to them about the dangers of gang involvement. I think this would send a powerful, effective message
- Good speakers to talk to both administration and students - get them "in the know"
- Establishment of educational programs and resources for college coaches and administrative staffs - collaboration with law enforcement officials
- It would be helpful to know if there is a national concern about this issue and what effective programs are out there to make coaches and student-athletes aware of potential gang activity and how to avoid it
- Yes, mentoring programs, seminars, speaking to students about gang-related activities, making administration and coaches aware through seminars and related activities
- Individuals who get in trouble (which is rare) are not with the university any longer. Tough school to get into
- More should be done during screening process. Have police talk to coaches/players
- Recruits come and go off the lists. Here in this program we work hard to create a climate that discourages any kind of criminal activity. The amount of time the members of a team put in would make it very tough to also participate in a gang
- Would check with the NFL in their current or planned practices regarding gangs
- Student athletes are so busy with school and athletics it would be very hard to have to time also be involved in a gang
- I believe a mentor program would be helpful in transition out of gangs and gang related activities
- Not very aware on the subject of gangs
- Gang awareness programs, especially in larger city-oriented institutions
- Would check with the NFL in their current or planned practices regarding gangs
- Gangs have not been an issue at our university. We have a pretty rural campus. Campuses in urban cities where gangs are prevalent may want to talk to police about where gangs hang out etc.
- CHAMPS/Life Skills Program. General education about gangs/gang-involvement, workshops, speakers. Education coaches on looking for/identifying gang-related activity during recruitment. Anti-gang efforts are most effective when implemented when students are still in HIGH SCHOOL - avoid gang-involvement before they ever even enter college
- I believe there could be gang members in the NCAA, but there hasn't been any issues at our university
- Our campus is slightly unique because we are a big town in the middle of nowhere, very rural. Too "fish bowl" type of campus. I believe that the type of campus has to do with the behavior of the athletes. More urban campuses may have more issues

APPENDIX B

RETURN TO: Professor Geoff Alpert Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice 1305 Greene Street University of South Carolina Columbia, SC 29208 PHONE: 803-777-6424 FAX: 803-777-9600 EMAIL: geoffa@mailbox.sc.edu	SURVEY OF CAMPUS LAW ENFORCEMENT EXECUTIVES University of South Carolina Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice
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We are conducting a study of knowledge about and perceptions of gangs and gang members on college campuses involving student athletes. We are surveying all campus law enforcement agencies for the major athletic conferences in the United States. We would like to know your ideas but please feel free to send this survey or specific questions to members of your staff who may be more knowledgeable about the topic. All of the results will be added together and no individual university or law enforcement agency will be identified. The survey will cover the following general topics:

- Knowledge about criminal activity, disruptive activity, and gang related issues involving student athletes;
- Perceptions of gang activity among student athletes;
- Problems in the broader community caused by student-athletes with possible gang affiliations?

For the purposes of this survey, we are using a generic definition of gangs taken from law enforcement and research definitions. For the purposes of this survey **A STREET GANG IS ANY DURABLE, STREET-ORIENTED YOUTH GROUP WHOSE OWN IDENTITY INCLUDES INVOLVEMENT IN ILLEGAL ACTIVITY.**

Instructions

- Please complete both sides of each page, the survey concludes with question 14 on page 9.
- The survey can be returned in the enclosed prepaid envelope.
- If you have any question, please feel free to contact Geoff Alpert (contact information above).

Thank you for taking time to participate in this survey

LAW ENFORCEMENT BACKGROUND

1. How long have you been a law enforcement officer?^{55,56}
Mean = 26.1 years, Median = 28.0 years, Minimum = 1.0 year, Maximum = 46.0 years
2. How long have you worked for your current department?⁵⁷
Mean = 13.7 years, Median = 10.0 years, Minimum = 0.4 years, Maximum = 37.0 years
3. How long have you been the chief/director of your current department?⁵⁸
Mean = 6.9 years, Median = 5.0 years, Minimum = 0.0 years, Maximum = 28.0 years

⁵⁵ The number of respondents varied and are provided in footnotes after each individual question

⁵⁶ N=87 (A total of 130 schools were contacted for a 69.9% response rate)

⁵⁷ N=87

⁵⁸ N=86

GENERAL DISCIPLINE AND ISSUES WITH STUDENT ATHLETES

We are interested in this section about your general knowledge of criminal and disruptive behavior by student athletes, whether committed on campus or in the jurisdictions that surround your campus

4. To your knowledge, have any of the student athletes in the sports programs at your university been arrested or involved in the following criminal activities during the time they were enrolled in your university, including summers?⁵⁹

Check all that apply:

Criminal Activity					
a. Assault	69	79.3%	g. Possession of Firearms	29	33.3%
b. Burglary	28	32.2%	h. Retail Theft	28	32.2%
c. Car Theft	8	9.2%	i. Graffiti	3	3.4%
d. Drug Sales	20	23.0%	j. Vandalism	24	27.6%
e. Drug Use	53	60.9%	k. Gambling	14	16.1%
f. Property Theft	48	55.2%	l. Other: Criminal Sexual Conduct, Menacing/Stalking, Murder, Rape (2 responses), Rape/Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault (4 responses), Sexual Assault/Date Rape/Armed Robbery, Sexual Assault/DUI/FTA Warrants	12	13.8%

4a. If you have athletes who engaged in any of the above **criminal activities**, which of the following sports programs did they participate in?⁶⁰

Check all that apply:

Men's Sports					
a. Baseball ⁶¹	22	28.9%	m. Skiing	0	0.0%
b. Basketball	66	85.7%	n. Soccer	10	13.0%
c. Bowling	0	0.0%	o. Swimming/Diving	4	5.2%
d. Fencing	0	0.0%	p. Tennis	2	2.6%
e. Field Hockey	2	2.6%	q. Track and Field	14	18.2%
f. Football	67	87.0%	r. Volleyball	2	2.6%
g. Golf	3	3.9%	s. Water Polo	0	0.0%
h. Gymnastics	0	0.0%	t. Wrestling	13	16.9%
i. Ice Hockey	7	9.1%	u. Other: Rugby	1	1.3%
j. Lacrosse	4	5.2%			
k. Rifle	0	0.0%			
l. Rowing/Crew	3	3.9%			

⁵⁹ N=87

⁶⁰ N=77

⁶¹ N=76

Women's Sports					
a. Basketball	24	31.2%	k. Skiing	0	0.0%
b. Bowling	0	0.0%	l. Soccer	4	5.2%
c. Fencing	0	0.0%	m. Softball	3	3.9%
d. Field Hockey	2	2.6%	n. Swimming/Diving	2	2.6%
e. Golf	0	0.0%	o. Tennis	0	0.0%
f. Gymnastics	4	5.2%	p. Track and Field	5	6.5%
g. Ice Hockey	0	0.0%	q. Volleyball	2	2.6%
h. Lacrosse	1	1.3%	r. Water Polo	0	0.0%
i. Rifle	1	1.3%	s. Other: Equestrian	1	1.3%
j. Rowing/Crew	0	0.0%			

5. Have any of the student athletes in the sports programs at your university been involved in the following activities?⁶²

Check all that apply:

Disruptive Activity					
a. Community disturbance	42	48.3%	f. Intimidation of Other Students	29	33.3%
b. Fighting on Campus	57	65.5%	g. Intimidation of Others off Campus	20	23.0%
c. Fighting off Campus	64	73.6%	h. School Disruption	11	12.6%
d. Public Drunkenness	50	57.5%	i. Other ⁶³	0	0.0%
e. Underage drinking	56	64.4%			

⁶² N=87

⁶³ N=86

5a. If you have athletes who engaged in the above **disruptive** activity, which of the following sports programs did they participate in?⁶⁴

Check all that apply:

Men's Sports					
a. Baseball ⁶⁵	13	16.3%	m. Skiing	0	0.0%
b. Basketball	55	67.9%	n. Soccer	13	16.0%
c. Bowling	1	1.2%	o. Swimming/Diving	4	4.9%
d. Fencing	0	0.0%	p. Tennis	0	0.0%
e. Field Hockey	0	0.0%	q. Track and Field	8	9.9%
f. Football	70	86.4%	r. Volleyball	1	1.2%
g. Golf	4	4.9%	s. Water Polo	1	1.2%
h. Gymnastics	2	2.5%	t. Wrestling	11	13.6%
i. Ice Hockey	7	8.6%	u. Other: Rugby	1	1.2%
j. Lacrosse	4	4.9%			
k. Rifle	0	0.0%			
l. Rowing/Crew	1	1.2%			
Women's Sports					
a. Basketball	19	23.5%	k. Skiing	0	0.0%
b. Bowling	0	0.0%	l. Soccer	13	16.0%
c. Fencing	0	0.0%	m. Softball	5	6.2%
d. Field Hockey	0	0.0%	n. Swimming/Diving	7	8.6%
e. Golf	0	0.0%	o. Tennis	1	1.2%
f. Gymnastics	4	4.9%	p. Track and Field	9	11.1%
g. Ice Hockey	0	0.0%	q. Volleyball	4	4.9%
h. Lacrosse	1	1.2%	r. Water Polo	0	0.0%
i. Rifle	0	0.0%	s. Other	0	0.0%
j. Rowing/Crew	0	0.0%			

PERCEPTION OF GANGS IN NCAA SPORTS

In this section we are interested in your general perception of student athletes who are involved in gangs, whether at your university or knowledge you have of other universities.

6. Do you believe there are individuals who are gang members currently participating in NCAA sports, whether at your university or another university?⁶⁶

Yes 59 67.8% No 28 32.2%

⁶⁴ N=81

⁶⁵ N=80

⁶⁶ N=87

6c. If you answered yes to question 6b, please check the types of problems you think student/athlete gang members can pose?⁷⁰

Check all that apply:

Criminal Activity		
a. Engaging in violent crimes	45	88.2%
b. Engaging in property crimes	48	94.1%
c. Possessing firearms	42	82.4%
d. Engaging in drug activity	48	94.1%
e. Gambling	24	47.1%
Disruptive Activity		
f. Fighting on campus	43	84.3%
g. Fighting off campus	47	92.2%
h. Intimidation of other students	38	74.5%
i. Intimidation of others off campus	38	74.5%
j. Recruitment of individuals into gangs	31	60.8%
k. School disruption	27	52.9%
l. Disrupting team unity	34	66.7%
m. Creating negative learning environment	33	64.7%
n. Being a negative influence by creating an association between team members and gang members	39	76.5%
o. Creating a negative image for the university or sport	42	82.4%
p. Other ⁷¹ : Not Specified (7 responses)	7	14.3%

7. Are you aware of any specific examples where a gang member caused a problem for an university and athletic department, whether at your university or another university? Please explain the nature of the problem and circumstances.^{72 73}

- **My institution, arrested for possession of firearms**
- **Case is still active (assault)**
- **Gang members have been present at campus parties and have been involved in fights/alcohol violations/disturbances**
- **Gang members off campus attempted to recruit university athletes to perform various tasks for the gang including drug sales. In our experience, it is student athletes that have been kicked off the team or expelled from the university that join gangs afterwards. Known gang members have also tried to "crash" or infiltrate parties where mostly athletes or fraternity members are present**
- **Past problem - football players involved in firearms violations and burglary (1995)**
- **The [Unnamed University] had several issues**
- **In the late 80's the university recruited several students from inner cities with gang connections. As a result there were several instances that led to disruptive incidents involving weapons**
- **No examples just see them using signs. Displaying markings through dress and tattoos**
- **One basketball player remains charged with felony assault in another state. One football player shot in other state went on to assault a bouncer and police officer at downtown bar**

⁷⁰ N=51

⁷¹ N=49

⁷² Answers provided in respondents' own words

⁷³ N=87; N=12 provided responses

- **Known gang member - released from football team for robbery and wore colors to school. Possible gang member - older football player and 2 freshman involved in robbery. Possible gang member football - shot at on campus**
- **Student athletes who are frequently arrested, even for minor crimes, hurt the reputation of the program and the university**
- **No, but reality is that if young people are exposed to this activity in their communities then it will surely not simply go away when they attend college. As anything else it is a question of possibility versus probability and to date it seems more of a possibility on our campus**

KNOWLEDGE OF GANGS

8. How much knowledge do you have of gang signs or other indicators that an individual is a gang member?⁷⁴

Check box on continuum that best reflects your level of knowledge:

No Knowledge			Some Knowledge				A lot of Knowledge	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
4	0	6	13	12	26	16	8	2
4.6%	0.0%	6.9%	14.9%	13.8%	29.9%	18.4%	9.2%	2.3%

Mean = 5.56, Median = 6.0, Minimum = 1, Maximum = 9

9. How much knowledge do you have of gang signs or other indicators that suggest an activity is gang related?⁷⁵

Check box on continuum that best reflects your level of knowledge:

No Knowledge			Some Knowledge				A lot of Knowledge	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
3	0	8	12	14	22	18	9	1
3.4%	0.0%	9.2%	13.8%	16.1%	25.3%	20.7%	10.3%	1.1%

Mean = 5.56, Median = 6.0, Minimum = 1, Maximum = 9

10. What is the main way you know about gangs?⁷⁶

Check all that apply:

a. Television, radio, or newspaper	29	33.3%
b. Friends	6	6.9%
c. Neighborhood	11	12.6%
d. Job or school experiences	51	58.6%
e. First-hand experience	28	32.2%
f. Training course	78	89.7%
g. Other: County police (1 response), Metro gang task force/local law enforcement updates & bulletins/chief briefings(1 response), Training course/law enforcement list serve (1 response), Training course/supervised a gang unit (1 response), Training course/law enforcement agencies (1 response)	5	5.5%

⁷⁴ N=87

⁷⁵ N=87

⁷⁶ N=87

11. Do you think your officers are generally knowledgeable of the signs and indicators that suggest someone is in a gang or an activity that is gang related?⁷⁷

Check box on continuum that best reflects the level of knowledge for your officers:

No Knowledge	Some Knowledge						A lot of Knowledge	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	3	3	11	24	13	19	8	6
0.0%	3.4%	3.4%	12.6%	27.6%	14.9%	21.8%	9.2%	6.9%

Mean = 5.84, Median = 6.0, Minimum = 2, Maximum = 9

12. Have your officers attended training related to gang activity?⁷⁸

Yes	73	84.9%	No	13	15.1%
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UNIVERSITY DIRECT EXPERIENCE WITH GANGS

Athletes at the University

13. Are you aware of any student athlete that was a gang member while at your university?⁷⁹

Yes	17	19.5%	No	70	80.5%
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13a. If your answer to question 13 is YES, did any of these gang involved individuals have any problems resulting in disciplinary action or arrest while at the university?⁸⁰

Yes	13	76.5%	No	4	23.5%
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13b. If your answer to question 13a is YES, what types of problematic behavior were these individuals involved in?⁸¹

Check all that apply:

		Criminal Activity			
a. Assault	10	76.9%	g. Possession of Firearms	6	46.2%
b. Burglary	5	38.5%	h. Retail Theft	1	7.7%
c. Car Theft	0	0.0%	i. Graffiti	1	7.7%
d. Drug Sales	5	38.5%	j. Vandalism	4	30.8%
e. Drug Use	4	30.8%	k. Gambling	0	0.0%
f. Property Theft	4	30.8%	l. Other: Robbery (1 response), Sexual Assault (1 response)	2	15.4%

⁷⁷ N=87

⁷⁸ N=86

⁷⁹ N=87

⁸⁰ N=17

⁸¹ N=13

Disruptive Activity					
m. Community Annoyance	3	23.1%	u. Disrupting Team Unity	2	15.4%
n. Fighting on Campus	7	53.8%	v. Creating Negative Learning Environment	1	7.7%
o. Fighting off Campus	9	69.2%	w. Being a negative influence by creating an association between team members and gang members	2	15.4%
p. Intimidation of Other Students	4	30.8%	x. Recruitment of individuals into gangs	1	7.7%
q. Intimidation of Others off Campus	5	38.5%	y. Using Sign/Symbols that Identify Gang Membership	4	30.8%
r. School Disruption	1	7.7%	z. Wearing Clothes that Identify Gang Membership	6	46.2%
s. Public Drunkenness	5	38.5%	aa. Creating a Negative Image for the University or Sport	5	38.5%
t. Underage drinking	6	46.2%	bb. Other: Not Specified	1	7.7%

14. Do the student athletes at your university with a history of gang involvement have a greater likelihood of involvement in the above criminal and disruptive activity than other non-gang involved student athletes?⁸²

Yes	6	No	2	Don't know	5	Not Applicable	0
	46.2%		15.4%		38.5%		0.0%

Thank you very much for your time and participation. The results of this survey will be made available to you.

⁸² N=13