

Paying college athletes argumentative essay



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Over decades, Division I athletes have been pouring their heart and soul into their sport they worked so hard for day after day, week after week. For years, athletes' love of the game has got them to a university where they can showcase their ability and talent. When you are at the Division I level it is more or less a business, and your job is to bring in a profit for the university. A true athlete plays the game that their heart desires. In recent years, there has been a controversial question that lingers in every athlete's mind: should students who play a sport get an extra benefit by being paid because they are a college athlete?

All of us have had some kind of emotion after winning a big game. Nothing can ruin the joy and excitement; you are on top of the world. In these moments nothing matters but the win, no thought of money or revenue runs through your mind. "About two percent of high school athletes are awarded athletic scholarships to compete in college" (NCAA, 2011). It is a privilege to get the opportunity to play at the collegiate level, let alone be awarded an athletic scholarship. This opportunity should not be taken for granted. To play at the collegiate level is something all athletes dream of and for most, it is the highest level of competition.

College athletics is based on heart, drive, and passion to succeed in the sport and in life. I, being a student-athlete myself, think that student-athletes should not be paid. After doing some research, I noticed that when asked if student-athletes should be paid, the results were split between yes, not sure, and no. Through research, I will address some of the major issues that athletes believe are reasons why they should be paid. Student-athletes being

paid would only create more of a problem for other athletes, students, and universities.

Before looking at the problems that would occur for athletes being, paid there are benefits athletes are already receiving. Student-athletes are already being paid from the scholarship and other benefits from the university. The scholarship includes tuition, books, food, and housing. An article published online at ncaa.org states that scholarships on average are over \$100, 000 a year (The Sport Digest, 2002-2010). On top of a scholarship, student-athletes are given other benefits such as free tutors, scheduling benefits, trainers, strength and conditioning coaches, free facilities, clothes, and equipment.

At some universities all the extra benefits that athletes receive can total \$200, 000 over all four years (The Sport Digest, 2002-2010). If the athletic scholarship and all the benefits were to be added together, student athletes are making over \$150, 000 a year. When athletes sign their National Letter of Intent, they are signing a contract that says that they are going to play for a university or a school in exchange for a scholarship. Before signing, student-athletes are aware that they cannot receive extra benefits from other organizations. Athletes are committing to represent the university, not their individual name.

While representing the university, they also will represent the companies that sponsor the universities and the team. Universities can be sponsored by three types of brand names: Adidas, Nike, and Under Armour. Although the companies are sponsoring the university, they are also sponsoring the

individual athlete as well. A student-athlete can/will receive shirts, socks, shoes, etc. just for being a part of the athletic team at the university.

According to research, more than half of student-athletes said they spend seven or more hours a week outside of scheduled practices, on their sport (The Sport Digest 2002-2010).

There is a possibility that some sports would get a cut from universities in order to pay some of the athletic teams. Not all universities can afford to pay athletes, and that would result in other sports teams getting cut so the university could get the money. All student-athletes devote the same amount of time, how could it be fair to determine who gets paid and who gets cut? If teams get cut it will leave athletes with no sport to play and all their hard work will be wasted. These athletes would be punished just to be able to pay one sport team that is already making \$150, 000 a year.

Student-athletes are focusing on getting an education as well as their sport; whereas professionals are just focusing on their sport. Student-athletes have more passion for their sport because they are fighting to play, along with getting an education. People fall in love with college athletics because the athlete is playing for the school and not for the money. The innocence of college athletics would be stripped away. Being an athlete, you are already isolated from the university and paying them would only increase the gap. Money to go towards academics would be slim due to the fact that athletes were being paid.

It would create a tension between students and athletes. These are major issues the university will face that will lead to the athletic departments of

universities becoming businesses instead of helping athletes receive an education. “ Scholarships are not a way to facilitate the education of those who would not otherwise have the means to attend. Scholarships were not intended to be a way to attract top athletes to a school who have no interest in gaining an education. But, in many cases that is what they have become” (Bleacher Report Nov. 20, 2011).

Now that full-ride scholarships are being given to the most talented athlete rather the ones who need the most financial support to receive a college education, colleges appeal to the top athletes and the other students through the athletic program, the harder it becomes for anyone to get a scholarship because of the demand. As soon as athletes start being paid, the universities will become popular to athletes because of how much they are paying the athlete instead of who can offer the best education. Athletic departments will start talking to athletes about business deals and negotiating money.

A negotiation between a potential college athlete and coach could be the coach offering the athlete a full ride plus an extra \$3, 000 a month. The negotiations are no longer just about scholarships but other benefits the school can offer. Before negotiations are made for more than just a scholarship, all student-athletes should be given a full-ride. As I mentioned earlier in my paper, all athletes put in the same time and effort into their sport. Each athlete should be awarded for that with a full scholarship before other athletes are given money.

Paying college athletes to play would not only harm the university, but also other athletes. It is not worth risking other athlete's sports to pay other athletes. An anonymous person once told me, " We do not play for the scholarship possibilities. We do not just play for the exercise. We play because every moment that we are on the field is a minute where all of our problems disappear. We play for that one game when all the hours of practicing come together and our play is flawless. We play because we were born to play. We play because we love the game. "