**We negate.**

**Our first contention is emphasizing the athlete.**

Val Ackerman of CNN writes that the overwhelming majority of student athletes are well aware of the slim probability of playing professionally and recognize that college is ultimately about getting a degree and preparing for more realistic jobs. Consequentially, the current pay-free nature of collegiate sports allows for a productive environment where student athletes are encouraged to focus more on academics than on sports. Leslie Miles of Rowan University confirms, quantifying that, on average, student athletes have point-one-seven higher GPAs, take point-two-eight more credits and have up to eight percent higher graduation rates when compared to non-athletes. However, paying athletes flips the script and discourages student athletes from taking their classes as seriously as they currently do. Malcolm Lemmons of the Huffington Post explains that treating student athletes as employees removes any incentive for them to attend class, as they would pour all of their focus into sports. Indeed, Victor Lipman of Forbes writes “further distancing student-athletes from ‘student’ status” dissuades them from prioritizing education and introduces a major obstacle on their chase for a degree. Trading away reality for fantasy takes its toll as Shannon Watkins of the Martin Center concludes that professionalizing sports would cause a narrower focus on only athletics, worsening both grades and graduations rates. Indeed, she furthers that the commercialization of D1 programs at UNC resulted in poor transcripts and graduations rates forty percent below the average.

**The impact is a worse future.**

Ahmed Taha of Wake Forest University finds that a one-point increase in college GPA leads to a fifteen percent increase in future job earnings. Furthermore, Philip Trostel of the University of Maine concludes empirically that workers with a four-year college degree earn one hundred and thirty-four percent more compared to those with just a high school degree. Sacrificing academics is especially problematic because Tony Manfred of Business Insider finds that less than two percent of college athletes actually go pro, meaning that they must be prepared for holding a real job. Turning student athletes into athlete students shortchanges both their academic and future careers.

**Our second contention is de-emphasizing the student.**

Andrew Zimbalist of the Huffington Post finds that fewer than 10 out of the 350 Division I universities generate profit from their athletic programs. Accordingly, this means that the large majority of colleges use other streams of revenue in order to finance athletics. Unfortunately, this holds true with paying student athletes. Matthew Krupnick of Time Magazine explains that, at most schools, there is massive opposition to rolling back athletic programs because many alumni and donors look at it as a source of school pride. Moreover, Zimbalist furthers that there are huge expectations to retain successful, top-dollar coaches; meaning schools cannot reallocate the coaches’ salaries to pay athletes. Thus, Krupnick concludes that schools, stuck with nowhere else to turn, would raise the tuition of ordinary students, even those who have never attended a game in their life, to find the necessary funds for paying the athletes. In fact, he finds that some schools already charge their students up to one thousand dollars a year in athletic fees. This leads Philip Yeagle of Cambridge University to conclude that increased spending in the athletic departments inevitably leads to an increase in student tuition. Indeed, the facts back up the theory as the University of Alabama released a plan to increase student fees by an aggregate total of twelve percent over the next four years to fund stipends for student athletes. Will Hobson of the Washington Post confirms, finding that several colleges, including Texas A&M and Clemson, have historically raised tuition in order to accommodate higher athletic costs.

**The impact is lower graduation rates.**

Edward John of the American Educational Research Association quantifies that a one thousand dollar increase in the cost of tuition decreases the amount of students who return to college the next year by four-point-nine percent. This is catastrophic as, once again, Trostel finds that a four-year college degree increases earnings by one hundred and thirty-four percent and decreases the probability of falling into poverty by three hundred fifty percent. With student athletes only comprising three-point-two percent of the total collegiate student body, hurting the overarching majority at the behest of a small minority would be irrational.

**Because we prioritize the student in student athlete, we negate.**