

## **Life Skills for Junior/Senior Student-Athletes: Making the Transition To Life After Competitive Sports**

The primary goal of The Life Skills for Junior/Senior Student-Athletes Course at the University of Connecticut is to provide information, techniques, and strategies that will help students feel confident while making decisions about their future, post-collegiate lives. The focus of the class will be to help students make a successful transition from college to the working world. Because students' personal identities have been partially defined as being athletes for most of their lives, the course will introduce students to other aspects of life that they need to develop in order to be successful adults. Students will explore and identify the skills and abilities they have acquired through their athletic participation and learn ways to transfer those skills into future careers. Students will be encouraged to become more independent; self-advocacy and self sufficiency skills will be a main focus. While the course will help guide students into the next phase of their lives, students will also have the opportunity to invent ways to retain their identities as athletes and participate in sports as part of a healthy lifestyle.

The course may incorporate former student-athletes who will share their experiences about their transitions and provide guidance and suggestions about helping students make appropriate decisions about their future choices. Students will confront the aspirations they had as incoming freshmen versus their current career and educational goals and examine and compare the constants and changes. Students will discuss if their changing personal goals and views of themselves have affected their personal growth and visions or whether their personal growth has promoted these changes.

Students will have an opportunity to discuss their collegiate experience with academic and athletic administrators and provide information concerning how to make the freshmen experience better for future students. Students will be asked to critically analyze their experiences in order to improve the UCONN experience for athletes.

Students will have the opportunity to receive pragmatic advice about job searches, resume writing, internship possibilities, and the interview process. Students will also explore the mysterious world of personal finance and discover ways to simultaneously enhance their personal, physical and mental health while contributing to the community at large.

Students will be required to re-explore the notion of the university as a polishing ground where they can (regardless of their background) become engaged in the academic challenges of higher education and consider continuing their graduate education. Students will be challenged to pursue the life-long activity of learning for learning sake, for personal enrichment, to become comfortable with the life long process of intellectual exploration.

Students will revisit the conflicting aspects of their lives and taught ways to make those seemingly disparate parts blend in a way that makes them unique and ultimately satisfied with their lives.