The Southern Conference was among the top performing Division I conferences in data released by the NCAA Graduation Success Rate scores announced Thursday (Oct. 25). Twelve of 15

conference sports met or exceeded the Division I average. Additionally, the SoCon exceeded the national average among FCS conferences in 13 of 15 sports. The scores released Thursday include data from the 2002-05 cohorts, which allowed student-athletes six years to graduate. “Our members take great pride in running competitive athletic programs within the academic missions of their institutions,” said Southern Conference Commissioner John Iamarino.

“These GSR figures are evidence of their efforts.” A total of 47 men’s teams and 48 women’s teams topped their respective Division I average, while more than 25 percent (43 of 155) of the SoCon’s teams posted a perfect score, including 27 women’s programs.

Eleven of the SoCon’s 12 schools had multiple squads meet or exceed the Division I average in their sport, while eight Southern Conference institutions had multiple teams post perfect scores of 100. Developed by the NCAA as part of its academic reform initiative, the GSR is used to assess the academic success of student-athletes.

The GSR measures graduation rates at Division I institutions and includes students transferring into the institutions. The GSR also allows schools to subtract student-athletes who leave their institutions prior to graduation as long as they would have been academically eligible to compete had they remained.

Southern Conference Sports Exceeding Division I National Average

Men: Baseball, Basketball, Cross Country & Track, Football, Golf, Soccer and Tennis

Women: Basketball, Cross Country & Track, Soccer, Tennis and Volleyball. SoCon Teams Posting Perfect Scores

Men's Basketball: DavidsonCross Country & Track: Davidson, Furman and Wofford

Golf: Appalachian State, Davidson, Elon, Furman and Western Carolina

Soccer: Davidson and WoffordTennis: **Appalachian State,** Davidson, Elon, Samford and Wofford

Women's Basketball: Davidson, Furman and Western Carolina

Cross Country & Track: Davidson, Elon, Furman and WoffordGolf: **Appalachian State,** Elon, UNCG and Western Carolina

Soccer: College of Charleston, Davidson, Furman and Wofford

Softball: Appalachian State

Tennis: Davidson, Furman, Georgia Southern, UNCG, Western Carolina and Wofford

Volleyball: Davidson, Elon, Furman, Georgia Southern and Western Carolina

ABOUT THE GSR

The Graduation Success Rate was developed by the NCAA as part of its academic reform initiative to more accurately measure the success of Division I student-athletes.
The GSR takes into account the many different academic paths followed by today's college students.
Unlike the federal graduation rate, the GSR holds institutions accountable for transfer students.
The GSR also accounts for midyear enrollees and is calculated for every sport.
By counting incoming transfer students and midyear enrollees, the GSR increases the total number of student-athletes tracked for graduation by approximately 37 percent.
Under the GSR calculation, institutions are not penalized for outgoing transfer students who leave in good academic standing.
These outgoing transfers are essentially passed to the receiving institution's GSR cohort.
The NCAA also calculates the federal graduation rate for student-athletes, because it is the only rate to compare student-athletes to the general student body.
The most recent Graduation Success Rates are based on the four entering freshmen classes in Division I from 2002-2003 through 2005-06.
There are nearly 110,000 student-athletes included in the most recent four classes using the GSR methodology, as compared to more than 79,000 in the federal rate.
This year marks the 11th year of GSR data that have been collected. The NCAA began collecting GSR data with the entering freshman class of 1995. The latest entering class for which data are available is 2005.