

## **FANS WEIGH IN WITH STRONG OPINIONS ON COLLEGE BASKETBALL**

### **Seton Hall Sports Poll Finds 76% Feel Colleges Break Recruiting Rules, But Once In, Colleges Place High Importance on Graduating the Athletes**

South Orange, NJ, April 13, 2006 – Sports fans have given strong support to existing college basketball programs in a variety of areas, according to the Seton Hall Sports Poll Conducted by The Sharkey Institute.

The poll, conducted between March 30-April 4, found that while 76% of respondents felt that colleges break rules in recruiting athletes, 74% felt school administrators placed importance on graduating players, and 66% thought coaches felt the same. 63% of the 620 respondents felt schools should not be punished if scholarship athletes flunk out, and a strong 59% believe that scholarship athletes should be required to stay in school for their full eligibility. 83% said “no” to paying college athletes salaries and 62% felt there should be a minimum age to be eligible to turn pro.

“On the one hand, respondents demonstrated suspicion over the manner in which students are recruited,” noted Rick Gentile, Director of the Seton Hall Sports Poll and a professor at the Stillman School of Business, Center for Sport Management. “But then once they are in, we saw a high perception by the public for a belief in graduating the students.” (*Rick Gentile is available for follow-up interview with media*).

On another matter, 19% of respondents said “yes” to the question of whether they thought college basketball players intentionally influence the outcome of games because of gambling interests.

“That one-in-five response is probably higher than the NCAA would like to hear,” said Gentile. “It is certainly fueled by the publication of odds. It’s a number that warrants attention.”

*These telephone interviews among 620 U.S. households were conducted by the Seton Hall Sports Poll between March 27-April 4, 2006. The sample was based on a US population random-digit-dialing probability design, giving all numbers – listed and unlisted – a known and equal probability of being selected. Results are cited at a sample tolerance of plus or minus 3 percent at the 95% confidence level.*

#### **About Seton Hall University**

For 150 years, Seton Hall University has been a catalyst for leadership, developing the whole student, mind, heart and spirit. Seton Hall combines the resources of a large university with the personal attention of a small liberal arts college. Its attractive suburban campus is only 14 miles from New York City, with the wealth of employment, internship, cultural and entertainment opportunities the city offers. Seton Hall is a Catholic university that embraces students of all races and religions, challenging each to better the world through integrity, compassion and a commitment to serving others. For more information, visit [www.shu.edu](http://www.shu.edu).

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