BACK THE PAC: SUSTAINABILITY VIEWS AMONG STUDENT ATHLETES AND NON-ATHLETES

Session: In-Person

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College generations and universities are being considered target populations who can make a sustainable change in mitigating climate change. This studies' aim was to better understand what knowledge and motivation Pac-12 college student and student athletes' have towards climate change and sustainability. To accomplish this task, I interned for the UW Athletics Sustainability department and created a 20-question survey that asked topics on sustainable habits, best outreaches in understanding climate change, and eco-anxiety. It was sent to Pac-12 Team Green reps who passed it along to all their student and student athletes on each campus. In addition to data collecting, I researched journals and literature on how colleges should brace for climate change, eco-anxiety, and how climate change affects athletes. I wrote two proposals from my results that suggest and encourage feasible changes across the Pac-12 and UW. Findings showed that students best learn about climate change and sustainability from a class/lecture setting or through group discussion with peers or friends. Majority of Pac-12 student and student athletes understand climate change and sustainability, but many feel they do not have the proper setting to have a voice or take action. Athletes were also noticed in taking less action and not voicing change in comparison to non-student athletes. The more student groups and action items there are on campuses to reduce our carbon footprints, the more opportunity there is for support and discussion on our climate crisis. In order to keep our planet cleaner and greener we need continuing sustainable action.