

# McAdon't

By Reg P. Wydeven  
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My sister is an amazing teacher. She teaches high school English and is her District's literacy coordinator. She's lectured thousands of teachers across the country about literacy coaching and has even written a textbook.

I always knew she was going to be a great educator and mentor, even way before she got her teaching license. One perfect example was during my orientation at UW-Eau Claire. My buddies and I had to sign up for classes for the fall semester. One of my friends needed to take a foreign language, so his student advisor signed him up for Japanese.

He came back from sign-ups with a dazed look in his eyes. He just kept muttering, "I have to take Japanese." My sister, who was graduating that spring, asked him if he wanted to take Japanese. He quickly responded that he did not – he wanted to take Spanish because he had two years of it in high school.

My sister grabbed him by the arm and led him back into the sign up room. She informed his advisor that he was not taking Japanese because he wanted to take Spanish instead. Thanks to her, he got his schedule straightened out and graduated on time four years later.

Like my buddy, many college students don't get the best tutelage from their academic advisors. Most of them don't sue their schools, however.

Former University of North Carolina football player Mike McAdoo did, though. He filed suit against UNC, claiming the school failed to provide him with an education in exchange for his playing ball.

McAdoo had his football eligibility revoked in 2011 after he was accused of getting too much help on a class paper. The incident revealed that McAdoo, the first of many UNC student-athletes, was taking "paper classes" that did not meet and only required the completion of a single paper.

McAdoo, who never graduated, alleges in his class action lawsuit that UNC reneged on its promise to provide him with a good education, which is why he elected to attend the school. "From selection of a major to selection of courses, the UNC football program controlled football student-athletes' academic track, with the sole purpose of ensuring that football student-athletes were eligible to participate in athletics, rather than actually educating them," reads his lawsuit.

McAdoo's attorney, Jeremi Duru, is a professor at the Washington College of Law. Echoing the claims of many former student-athletes, Duru argues that "UNC has reaped substantial profits from football student-athletes' performance for the school, but it has not provided them a legitimate education in return."

Like my friend who took Japanese, McAdoo says he wanted to study criminal justice, but was told on scheduling day that he had to pick from three majors that fit his football schedule: Exercise and Sport Science, Communications, or African-American Studies.

McAdoo's lawsuit comes on the heels of a report released by former federal prosecutor Ken Wainstein that revealed that many UNC athletes did not meet the academic standards set for non-athletes. Wainstein's 8-month investigation uncovered that nearly 30 staffers and administrators, including then-football coach Butch Davis and McAdoo's academic advisor, knew about the paper classes.

McAdoo's suit is seeking to change UNC's scheduling policy for athletes and to compensate them for not getting the education they were promised.

While most college football teams have tons of coordinators and assistants, maybe they should add a literacy coach.

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