



Apr 18th, 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Predicting Major League Talent Through the First-Year Player Draft

Kevin Slattery, '09
Illinois Wesleyan University

Robert Leekley, Faculty Advisor
Illinois Wesleyan University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/jwprc>

Slattery, '09, Kevin and Leekley, Faculty Advisor, Robert, "Predicting Major League Talent Through the First-Year Player Draft" (2009). *John Wesley Powell Student Research Conference*. 3.

<https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/jwprc/2009/oralpres/3>

This Event is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Commons @ IWU with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this material in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/ or on the work itself. This material has been accepted for inclusion by faculty at Illinois Wesleyan University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@iwu.edu.

©Copyright is owned by the author of this document.

Oral Presentation O1.3

**PREDICTING MAJOR LEAGUE TALENT THROUGH THE
FIRST-YEAR PLAYER DRAFT**

Kevin Slattery and Robert Leekley*
Economics Department, Illinois Wesleyan University

The Major League Baseball first-year player draft is a relatively unexplored topic. Until two years ago it was not even televised, even though other major sports drafts like basketball and football are major television events. I predict the probability of reaching the major leagues and the probability of a player “making it big” in the major leagues for a player drafted based on a series of variables, like draft position, whether a player is left-handed, and the schooling the amateur has received. This should help a team determine which players are most risky, and which players are most likely to make it to and succeed in the major leagues. The conceptual framework underlying my work is human capital theory. A multivariate regression model is used to predict the probability that a drafted player will make it to the major leagues. The major results of the study are that draft rank is the most important variable; scouts are effective at identifying and ranking talent. The other important finding is that college players are significantly more likely to make the major leagues, but high school players are more likely to make it big and become superstars in the major leagues.