

**Faculty Board on Athletics  
Meeting of September 23, 2015  
3:30 pm-5:00 pm, 500 Main Building**

Members present: Patricia Bellia (Chair), Alexa Baltes, James Brockmole, John Gaski, Patrick Holmes, Dan Kelly, Sean Kelsey, Mary Ann McDowell, Robin Rhodes, Michael Stanistic, Erin Hoffmann Harding, Ann Tenbrunsel, Kevin Vaughan

Members excused: Ann Firth, Jack Swarbrick

Athletics Liaisons: Jill Bodensteiner, Missy Conboy

**1. Call to order and opening prayer**

Professor Bellia called the meeting to order and invited Professor Dan Kelly to offer the opening prayer.

**2. Minutes of May 7, 2015, meeting**

After technical changes, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the meeting of May 7, 2015.

**3. Chair's Announcements**

Professor Bellia welcomed all members to the 2015-2016 Faculty Board on Athletics. She noted the critical role of the Board in ensuring that our athletics programs operate in consonance with the University's educational mission. She provided an overview of the Board's work for the upcoming academic year. Beginning with today's meeting, the Board will hear a series of regular reports, including academic reports from the Director of Academic Services for Student-Athletes, a report from Jill Bodensteiner on Compliance issues, a report from Ann Firth as chair of the Drug Testing Oversight Committee, a report from the Office of Student Affairs on disciplinary issues, and a report from Professor Bellia on class misses in the last academic year. Professor Bellia also wishes to keep Board members informed of developments in the national landscape of intercollegiate athletics, particularly legal developments and NCAA legislative developments. She invited members to consider any other items that they wished to see on a future agenda and share them with her. She anticipates that each of the subcommittees will continue with projects begun during the last academic year. For the Academic Integrity subcommittee, that will include, for example, continued examination of the policy for a fifth year of athletics eligibility. For the Student Welfare subcommittee, Professor Bellia believes that some additional adjustments to the off-campus housing policy will be needed.

Professor Bellia noted that today's meeting is somewhat unusual, in that it was scheduled to coincide with the visit of the external consultants participating in the

Administrative Unit Review for the Office of Academic Services for Student-Athletes. Only the first portion of today's meeting will be on the record.

**(a) Summer 2015 Business**

Professor Bellia reported for the record on Summer 2015 business.

The Board held a meeting on August 17, 2015, for the purpose of reviewing football captaincy nominations. All members participated, thirteen in person and two by telephone. A major focus of the discussion was how to handle the nomination of student-athletes with past academic or disciplinary transgressions. Consistent with a discussion in May 2015 (outside the context of a specific case), members agreed that such matters should be addressed on a case-by-case basis. A consensus emerged, however, that the Academic Integrity subcommittee may wish to take up the question of whether there should be a waiting period (e.g., one year) after an incident, such that a student-athlete has the opportunity to demonstrate that he or she has overcome the problematic behavior.

Professor Bellia also noted that the Manual that she had distributed reflected as-yet unapproved changes at pages 19-20. In May, when the Board approved certain changes to the off-campus housing policy, it did not make corresponding changes to the associated appeal procedures (specifically, the replacement of Student Welfare and Development with the Compliance Office). Professor Bellia made the changes and now sought the Board's ratification of them, which was granted.

**(b) Schedule Approvals**

Professor Bellia reported that she had approved schedules for a number of teams since the May 2015 meeting: men's basketball, women's basketball, men's and women's cross-country, men's and women's fencing, football, women's golf (original and revised), men's golf, hockey, women's lacrosse, rowing, women's soccer, softball, men's swimming and diving, women's swimming, men's tennis, women's tennis, and volleyball. She noted the following:

- Certain schedules, including cross-country, fencing, and tennis, involve a number of meet or match dates that would exceed three class misses in the M/W/F sequence or three in the Tu/Th sequence. The teams will rotate their student-athletes so that no student misses more than 3/3. In tennis, it will sometimes happen that an individual student advances in a tournament, requiring an additional class miss. Those situations are handled through consultation between Professor Bellia and ASSA counselors.
- Each golf team must construct its own tournament schedule, and each tournament spans multiple days, typically including either a Friday or a Monday. As in past years, the golf teams require additional class misses to build competitive schedules.
- The volleyball schedule exceeds 3 misses in the M/W/F schedule. Because the entire coaching staff turned over, the program got a late start in constructing its non-conference schedule. Typically volleyball hosts two tournaments; this year it

will only host one. For one of its three away tournaments, it was able to request a Saturday/Sunday schedule. The other two tournaments, as well as three conference matches, require Friday class misses. It should be noted that the ACC has no conference tournament, which will actually make the total number of absences lower than was typical when Notre Dame participated in the Big East.

- In the case of football, the team will be on the road for six games this year, only one of which falls during a regularly scheduled University break. As a result, the team will be traveling on five Fridays during which classes are in session, and all five trips involve airline flights. Professor Bellia granted three full-day Friday absences for the team's travel to Virginia, Clemson, and Boston College. For travel for the Temple and Pittsburgh games, Professor Bellia followed earlier precedents involving partial class misses. Every effort will be made to keep student-athletes in class for as long as possible. It will be necessary to dismiss all student-athletes from the last afternoon class slot on both days. Some students will need to be dismissed from the penultimate class slot. Professor Bellia will work with Academic Services for Student-Athletes to determine, based on academic performance, which students will be dismissed from that class slot, and every effort will be made to have students attend alternative sections or to record missed classes.
- Basketball: Both men's and women's basketball requested permission to schedule a reading day game in December 2015. The requests were accompanied by the submissions required under the Board's study day policy. Professor Bellia approved the requests and will ensure that the both teams adhere to the relevant protocols. She will report back after the games occur, consistent with Board policy.

### **(c) Captain Approvals**

Professor Bellia approved captaincies for the following sports: cross-country football, men's golf, volleyball, women's tennis, women's golf, and hockey.

### **(d) Liaisons**

Professor Bellia noted that the binders she circulated contained new team liaison assignments. She shuffled some teams this year, so as to even out the total number of teams and student-athletes for each Board member. Professor Bellia asked members to reach out to sport administrators. She suggested arranging a lunch with the coach or attending a practice. Having a Board member who is knowledgeable about the team, the coach, and its season can sometimes help identify concerns that are relevant to the Board's work.

## **4. Academic Profile and Grade Reports**

### **(a) Academic Profile**

Mr. Holmes reviewed the 2014-2015 student-athlete academic profile. As of the end of the fall 2014 semester, there were 683 student-athletes, representing 8 percent of the student population. These numbers have been fairly constant. Notre Dame has 26 varsity sports.

424 student-athletes (62 percent of the student-athlete population) receive some form of grant-in-aid. Women represent 42 percent of the student-athletes receiving GIA and 42 percent of the student-athlete population. Women represent 47 percent of the undergraduate population.

Minorities represent 24 percent of the Notre Dame undergraduate population and 21 percent of the student-athlete population. African Americans represent 4 percent of the Notre Dame undergraduate population, but 10 percent of the student-athlete population. 82 percent Notre Dame undergraduates and 67 percent of Notre Dame student-athletes identify as Catholic.

Regarding the distribution of student-athletes among the colleges, Mr. Holmes reported that Notre Dame student-athletes are somewhat underrepresented in Science and Engineering; 28 percent of undergraduates and 14 percent of student-athletes are enrolled in either Science or Engineering. Mr. Holmes noted that these numbers are typical, and relate partly to the prevalence of late afternoon labs. Professor Brockmole asked how the numbers in the Mendoza College of Business might shift with new admissions policies in that college. Mr. Holmes stated that the removal of roughly 150 slots in Business will certainly shift the numbers somewhat. In response to a question, Mr. Holmes and Ms. Conboy discussed how the Office of Admissions handles recruits who may wish to matriculate in Business. That office works with coaches to give them a read on whether prospective student-athletes are admissible to Business.

Regarding the distribution of majors, the most popular majors for Notre Dame student-athletes are marketing; finance; science/pre-professional; management consulting; film, television and theatre; and management IT. In response to a question, Mr. Holmes stated that he had no concerns about the distribution of majors. He noted that Notre Dame student-athletes are perhaps somewhat overrepresented in film, television, and theatre, but the growth of Fighting Irish Media provides opportunities for valuable practical experience, making the major an attractive one for student-athletes with broadcast aspirations.

Mr. Holmes reviewed test score and GPA trends for the last four years. He noted that one quick way to assess post-enrollment performance of student-athletes is to compare two ratios. One ratio measures the average test score for student-athletes (or

GIA student-athletes) in relation to the average test score for all students. The second ratio measures the average cumulative GPA for student-athletes (or GIA student-athletes) in relation to the average cumulative GPA for all students. When comparing these two ratios, one would hope that the cumulative GPA ratio would be higher than the test score ratio, and that is indeed the case. Professor Kelly asked if the cumulative GPA ratios were distorted at all by the distribution of students in different colleges and majors; if the GPAs were adjusted for variances in different courses of study, would the ratios change? Mr. Holmes acknowledged that the ratios would change somewhat, but explained that such calculations would be quite complex. Through his consultations with staff in the Office of Strategic Planning and Institutional Research, Mr. Holmes has found that comparing these ratios is a quick and simple way to assess overall performance.

Mr. Holmes discussed concerns with at-risk student-athletes. He noted that, in connection with the Administrative Unit Review (AUR) of his office, he and his staff had prepared a self-study. One of the most interesting pieces is that over a 10-year period, there has been a major shift in the Notre Dame student body. The number of first-year students with an SAT score greater than 1400 has moved from 52 percent to almost 73 percent at the beginning of the fall 2014 semester. If student-athlete test scores remain constant as the overall test scores move upward, more student-athletes end up being in the lower portion of the test score distribution.

Regarding the self-study, Mr. Holmes noted that a core mission of his office is to assist student-athletes with their transition to Notre Dame. A critical piece is the “Transition” program, through which ASSA supports structured study in the Guglielmino Athletic Complex, DeBartolo Hall, and O’Shaughnessy Hall. He noted that the external review team for the AUR would be visiting structured study this evening. He suggested that at some later date in the semester, perhaps Board members would like to visit structured study as well, to better appreciate some of the elements of the Transition program. Professor Bellia concurred, and proposed having the Academic Integrity Subcommittee visit structured study one evening.

### **(b) Grade Reports**

Mr. Holmes distributed Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 grade reports and summarized them. The reports included semester and cumulative GPA for GIA student-athletes and all student-athletes for each team. For Fall 2014, Mr. Holmes offered a comparison to the overall student population, but the all-student data was unavailable for Spring 2015. The report included the number of student-athletes on the Dean’s List and on academic probation. Mr. Holmes also provided five-year trends for all student-athletes and GIA student-athletes for Fall 2010 through Spring 2015. The numbers are fairly consistent over time.

Mr. Holmes also highlighted for the Board some notable student-athlete academic achievements. These included the ACC Academic Honor Roll for annual GPAs over 3.0 (given to 73 percent of Notre Dame’s eligible student-athlete population); Capital One Academic All-Americans (8 recipients in 2014-2015); the NCAA Post-Graduate

Scholarship (3 recipients in 2014-2015), the ACC Post-Graduate Scholarship (4 designees in 2014-2015), and an Elite 89 Academic Recognition for the highest GPA among students competing at a championship site (awarded to Anna Kottkamp in Rowing, for the second year in a row).

Mr. Holmes concluded his report by calling attention to Graduation Success Rate and Academic Progress Rate highlights for the academic year. As time was short, Professor Bellia urged members to review the materials and to contact Mr. Holmes with additional questions, or bring those questions to the next meeting.

Professor Bellia concluded the on-the-record portion of the meeting, and invited the external advisors for the ASSA Administrative Unit Review to join the group for the remainder of the session.