

**Faculty Board on Athletics**  
**April 21, 2009**  
**Room 112-114, McKenna Hall**

**Members present:** Donald Pope-Davis (Chair), Patricia Bellia, Michael M. Burns (Student Rep.), Thomas Frecka, Patrick Holmes, William Kelley, Mary Ann McDowell, Richard Pierce, (Rev.) Mark Poorman, C.S.C, Robin Rhodes

**Members absent:** David Kirkner, Clark Power, Umesh Garg, Frances Shavers, Jack Swarbrick

**Board Liaisons present:** Missy Conboy and Bill Scholl of the Department of Athletics

**Observers and Guests:** Tony Alford, Running Backs Coach; Randy Hart, Defensive Line Coach; Kathryn Lam (Recorder); Mirella Riley, Executive Assistant to the President; Frank Verducci, Running Game Coordinator/Offensive Line Coach; Bryant Young, Defensive Graduate Assistant

**1. Call to order and opening prayer:** Prof. Pope-Davis called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and Mr. Burns offered the opening prayer.

**2. Approval of Minutes:** The Board unanimously approved the minutes of the December 17, 2008 meeting.

**3. Department of Athletics Football Staff Introductions:** Prof. Pope-Davis reminded members that the Board regularly meets with new coaches and staff affiliated with the Department of Athletics. Following brief introductory comments by Mr. Scholl in which he noted that nearly one-third of the football coaching staff is new, each of the following coaches shared thoughts on his background and his transition to Notre Dame: Tony Alford, Running Backs Coach, Randy Hart, Defensive Line Coach, Frank Verducci, Running Game Coordinator/Offensive Line Coach, and Bryant Young, Defensive Graduate Assistant. Prof. Pope-Davis thanked each of the coaches for meeting with the Board and wished them the best of luck in the coming season.

**4. Drug Testing Program Update:** Prof. Pope-Davis introduced Mirella Riley, Executive Assistant to the President, who currently serves as chair of the University Drug Testing Committee. Prof. Pope-Davis reminded the members that Frances Shavers, Chief of Staff and Special Assistant to the President, previously served as chair of the committee. Ms. Riley presented an annual report on drug testing for student-athletes. She noted that the University's drug testing operates independently from, but in conjunction with the drug testing program administered by the NCAA. The University conducts approximately 400 tests per year, with 40 student-athletes randomly selected each testing period.

Prof. Pierce asked about the "drugs of choice" and whether they varied by team. Prof. Pope-Davis said that the NCAA publishes the results of their drug testing program and that he will obtain the report and provide copies to the Board at a future date.

Ms. Riley explained that the University's program is viewed as an opportunity to educate students about being drug free. After a first positive test, a student-athlete must undergo a drug evaluation and may be prohibited from competing, practicing or participating in formal conditioning programs for a determined period of time. After a second positive test, a student-athlete is permanently banned from competing in varsity athletics at Notre Dame.

Following specific questions about the administration of the drug testing and the types of drugs tested, Prof. Pope-Davis suggested that Dr. James Moriarity, Athletics Medical Physician, be invited to a future Board meeting to provide an update on these matters.

**5. Women's Golf Schedule Request:** Prof. Pope-Davis reminded members about the men's and women's golf coaches' presentation to the Board last year, after which the Board agreed to give the chair the discretion to approve up to two additional class misses (beyond the three allowed) for a given semester before having to bring a specific request before the Board. [*See March 27, 2008 minutes.*] The current request exceeds that limit, and thus has been brought to the full Board for consideration.

Prof. Pierce, the Board's liaison to the Women's Golf Team, explained that the women's golf team was requesting five class misses in the Monday/Wednesday/Friday class sequence and four class misses in the Tuesday/Thursday class sequence for their Fall 2009 schedule. He explained how Head Coach Susan Holt must make the team's schedule each season since it is not dictated by the conference. He elaborated on specific issues faced when creating the team's Fall 2009 schedule and noted that Coach Holt even sought invitations to tournaments by sending letters to every coach in the country hosting a tournament. Prof. Pierce said the result of those letters and a "great faith effort to reduce class misses as much as possible" was the schedule currently presented to the Board. He added that there is a strong academic culture on the team and that it has traditionally performed well academically.

Through the ensuing discussion, the Board reaffirmed its desire to require a full Board review of any requests that exceed two additional class misses beyond the three allowed in the Monday/Wednesday/Friday class sequence and the three allowed in the Tuesday/Thursday class sequence. In response to a question from Prof. McDowell, Prof. Pope-Davis said that he would provide data on the frequency of requests received that exceed the normal class miss allowance. Ms. Conboy commented that as the team becomes increasingly competitive, and is consistently prominent nationally, it is expected that the team will receive more invitations to the top tournaments and thus ease current scheduling difficulties.

Following a motion to vote, the Board unanimously approved the request from the women's golf team for five class misses in the Monday/Wednesday/Friday class sequence and four class misses in the Tuesday/Thursday class sequence for their Fall 2009 schedule.

**6. Department of Athletics Annual Report:** In Jack Swarbrick's, Director of Athletics, absence, Ms. Conboy provided an annual report on the Department of Athletics. She first noted that the results are not yet complete as a number of teams are still competing and will continue to do so beyond the academic semester. She said the department is moving away from focusing on the Learfield Sports Directors' Cup rankings and instead is beginning to focus on winning

national championships with the hope that every three to four years each program is in position to vie for a championship. Ms. Conboy highlighted a number of significant accomplishments, including Big East championships, Big East Coaches of the Year, NCAA Post-Graduate Scholarships, NCAA Graduation Success Rates, Academic All-Americans, student-welfare and Monogram Club initiatives, and development and facilities progress.

**7. Academic Integrity Subcommittee Report:** Prof. Bellia said the subcommittee reviewed the fifth-year of eligibility applications, as charged by the Board, and approved seven of the ten applications submitted. She noted a recurring concern of the subcommittee which deals with the intellectual rigor of particular directed readings and special studies courses. In three cases this year, students submitted applications that included a special studies course involving limited intellectual merit and time commitments. In each case, the Board sought additional information from the instructor and the students on what the projects would entail. When the information provided was insufficient, the subcommittee sought even further clarification from the students concerning the objectives, requirements, and methods of evaluation associated with their special studies proposals. After this inquiry, the students dropped the courses in favor of more traditional classroom offerings. Their fifth-year applications were subsequently approved.

In light of these developments, the subcommittee proposed amending the language in the policy for fifth year of eligibility, by adding the underlined language as follows:

Absent extraordinary circumstances, a student-athlete may use no more than three credits of directed-readings, special-studies, or independent-study courses to meet the *minima* set out in this section, and any such courses must be fully described in the academic plan and approved by the relevant department chair or associate dean for undergraduate studies.

During a brief discussion of the amendment, Prof. Bellia noted that Academic Services for Student-Athletes is working to develop a template for faculty and students to use to explain the requirements of directed-readings, special-studies and independent study courses. With no further discussion, the Board unanimously approved that amendment which will go into effect beginning with the Fall 2009 semester.

Prof. Bellia then shared a draft letter to be sent to the dean of the college with the particular special studies courses under question. She explained that the intent of the letter is to share the concern of the Board regarding these special studies courses and recommend that a cap on the number of these courses offered by an individual faculty member be considered. Prof. Pope-Davis said that he supports the letter and agreed to send the letter to the dean.

**8. Adjournment:** Prof. Pope-Davis reminded members about the Outstanding Student-Athlete Celebrating Achievements and Recognition Showcase (O.S.C.A.R.S.) taking place on Wednesday, April 29, 2009 and urged them to attend. With no scheduled time remaining, Prof. Pope-Davis adjourned the meeting at 3:05 p.m.