

FBA Meeting Minutes
February 27, 2007
Officers' Meeting Room, 500 Main Building

Members present: Prof. Donald Pope-Davis (Chair); Prof. Harvey Bender; Prof. Eileen Hunt Botting; Prof. Stephen Fallon; Mr. Patrick Holmes; Prof. David Kirkner; Ms. Kathryn Lam (Student Rep.); Prof. Daniel Lapsley; Prof. Richard Pierce; (Rev.) Mark Poorman, CSC; Dr. Frances Shavers; Prof. Vince Rougeau; Prof. John Weber

Members absent: Prof. Francis Castellino, Dr. Kevin White

Board Liaisons: Ms. Missy Conboy, Mr. Michael Karwoski, and Mr. Stan Wilcox of the Department of Athletics

Observers and Guests: Ms. Jill Bodensteiner, associate vice president and counsel; Mr. Corwin Brown, defensive coordinator, Football; Mr. Ron Powlus, assistant coach, Football; Ms. Debbie Brown, head coach, Volleyball; Nina Stephan, Director Rules Education, Athletic Compliance; Ms. Mary Hendriksen, executive assistant to Prof. Pope-Davis; Ms. Kitty Cooney Hoyer, recorder.

- 1. Call to Order and prayer:** The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m. Prof. Lapsley offered the opening prayer.
- 2. Minutes of previous meeting:** Prof. Bender moved for approval of the minutes from the meeting of December 14, 2006. Prof. Botting seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- 3. Introduction of new football coaches: Corwin Brown and Ron Powlus**

In keeping with the FBA policy to meet with new members of the coaching staff, Prof. Pope-Davis invited Mr. Corwin Brown and Mr. Ron Powlus to today's meeting.

Mr. Powlus said that although he is one of the newest members of the coaching staff, he is not "new" to Notre Dame. He was Notre Dame's starting quarterback from 1994-97 and went on to spend three years playing professional football in the NFL as well as overseas. For the past three years, Mr. Powlus has been working in the healthcare and home mortgage industries. He returned to Notre Dame in 2004 to serve as director of personnel development for the football team. After making some recent changes in his coaching staff, Coach Weis hired Mr. Powlus as the team's quarterback coach. Mr. Powlus added that he believes his experiences both on and off the field will make him an effective coach. He not only knows the game, but he is "very familiar with the demands of being a student-athlete at Notre Dame."

Mr. Brown echoed Mr. Powlus' remarks and briefly summarized his background for the Board. After a successful career playing for the University of Michigan, Mr. Brown was drafted in the fourth round of the 1993 NFL Draft. He played eight years in the NFL with the New England Patriots (1993-96), N.Y. Jets (1997-98) and Detroit Lions (1999-2000). After a successful NFL career, Mr. Brown returned to the field as special teams coach at the University of Virginia (2001-03). He has spent the last three years coaching the defensive backs of the New York Jets. When Coach Weis called, Mr. Brown said, he "jumped at the chance" to be at Notre Dame. "It is a tremendous opportunity—a real privilege and an honor

to be here. It is more than coaching football. We can better the kids' lives so they become tomorrow's leaders."

When asked by Prof. Fallon why he left the NFL to coach at the college level, Mr. Brown replied that he particularly enjoys the recruiting process—meeting the families and talking with prospective students. "I've been through it myself so I can talk to the student-athletes about some of the pitfalls and help them through the process."

In response to Prof. Botting's question on the coach's role in encouraging student-athletes to perform academically, Mr. Powlus responded that a decision to attend a certain college "is a decision for forty years and not just four. Although some players may go on in the NFL, most will retire by the time they are thirty years old." Thus, "academics are key."

- 4. Volleyball request regarding scheduling competition during Orientation: Debbie Brown, head volleyball coach:** Volleyball Coach Debbie Brown submitted a proposal to the Board seeking a one-time exception to the policy that prohibits athletic competition during orientation weekend. The situation arises because various changes to the Notre Dame academic calendar give the 2007 Fall semester a particularly late start—thus making the first weekend of NCAA-scheduled volleyball competition, August 24-26, coincide with orientation for Notre Dame's first-year students. In her sixteen years of coaching at Notre Dame, Coach Brown said, she has never been faced with a situation such as this. She does not see it happening again until at least 2012. Ms. Brown told the Board that the most important factor in the Volleyball team's record of 15 consecutive NCAA tournament appearances has been the strength of the team's non-conference schedule. Thus, the opportunity to host two Top-20 teams during the weekend of August 24-26 is one that is difficult to lose. The first-year members of the team, Coach Brown emphasized, will not participate in the competition and will attend all orientation activities. They will not be penalized for missing these matches.

Responding to a question from Prof. Bender, Coach Brown acknowledged that additional "misses" may occur during post-season play, but she emphasized that this situation is unique because of the late start to the academic year. Prof. Bender asked if Dr. Hugh Page from First Year of Studies "signed off" on the request. Ms. Conboy explained that although they did not speak with Dr. Page personally, the proposal was reviewed and approved by the department. Prof. Botting noted that this proposal does not affect classes but, rather, an event. Fr. Poorman asked that the record reflect that Coach Brown's proposal is a great proposal—a model of cooperation with the expectations and standards of the Board.

With no further discussion, the Board unanimously granted the requested exception.

Responding to concerns of Prof. Bender regarding teams' post-season class misses, Prof. Pope-Davis suggested that the topic be added to a future Board agenda.

- 5. Report on NCAA legislative items presented for advisory votes at the December 2006 meeting: Mike Karwoski and Nina Stephan**

Ms. Stephan updated the board on the NCAA legislative items discussed at the December meeting. The NCAA met in January and made the following decisions:

#2005-54 (p.1) Eligibility – Graduate Student or Post-Baccalaureate Participation – Transfer Eligibility. The vote before the NCAA was to override the proposed legislation. (Override passed)

#2006-16 (p. 6) Institutional Control – Campus Athletics Boards. The vote before the NCAA was to approve. **(Approval defeated.)**

2006-40 (p. 49) Recruiting – Recruiting Materials – Electronic Transmissions. *This proposal is still in the legislative cycle and awaiting comments. It will be considered and brought to a vote at the April 2007 meeting.*

2006-41 (p. 51) Recruiting – Recruiting Materials – Computer Mediated Communication – Time Periods. This proposal aimed to limit text messaging. **(Defeated)**

#2006-64 (p.92) Eligibility – Seasons of Competition – Hardship Waiver – Maximum Number of Contests or Dates of Competition. *This proposal is still in the legislative cycle and awaiting comments. It will be considered and brought to a vote at the April 2007 meeting.*

2006-68 (p. 101) Eligibility – Four-Year College Transfers – Discontinued / Non-sponsored Sport Exception – Cancelled or Suspended Sport. This proposal allowed for an exception to the one-time transfer rule. **(Defeated)**

In all, the NCAA voted on 37 proposals. An additional 37 are “out for comment” and will be addressed at the April meeting.

A discussion on Notre Dame’s response to proposed legislation # **2006-41** regarding limits on text messaging followed. Noting the past discussion on this issue, Prof. Fallon asked if there was a need for a “Notre Dame response” not limited exclusively to the coaches. Ms. Conboy noted that the national SAAC was opposed to the proposal. “It is the conference’s position, explained Mr. Wilcox, that such opposition will be the determining factor in this case.” Ms. Stephan informed the board of the the Big East vote: 4 to 12 to eliminate the limits.

Given the change in circumstances (opposition by student-athletes) and concerns expressed by the FBA, Prof. Botting asked whether the Board should issue some kind of formal comment or advisory memo to Fr. Jenkins on the matter. A brief discussion on the Board’s role in such matters followed. March 9, 2007 is the deadline for comments on the proposed legislation. With very little time in which to work, Mr. Wilcox suggested that the Big East conference call prior to the vote might be a more appropriate venue in which to express the Board’s view. Several members of the athletic department, as well as FBA chair Prof. Pope-Davis will be included in the conference call. Mr. Wilcox believes “the most impact” will be made at the conference level.

Prof. Pope-Davis suggested the subcommittee on communications review the matter further and report back to the full Board at a later date.

6. Subcommittee Reports

(a) Eileen Hunt Botting - Student Welfare: Housing policy revisions

The subcommittee on Student Welfare has been reviewing the current housing policy for student-athletes. Prof. Botting provided a brief summary of the subcommittee’s discussion to date. A more detailed review will take place at a later meeting.

(b) Harvey Bender - Academic Integrity: Review of credit-hour requirement for unclassified graduate students

Because of time limitations, the discussion was deferred until the March meeting.

(c) Steve Fallon - Communications: report

Because of time limitations, the subcommittee's report was deferred until the March meeting.

7. *Ex officio* and Liaison reports

Also deferred because of time limitations

8-9. New / Old Business

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Prof. Lapsley and seconded by Ms. Lam. The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.