

FACULTY BOARD ON ATHLETICS

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

Meeting of March 17, 2005
Room 331, Coleman/Morse Centers

Members Present: Prof. Fernand Dutille (Chair); Prof. Patricia Bellia; Prof. Eileen Botting; Mr. Bobby Brown; Prof. Umesh Garg; Mr. Patrick Holmes; (Rev.) Peter Jarret, C.S.C.; Prof. Donald Pope-Davis; Prof. F. Clark Power; Prof. John Weber.

Members Absent: Prof. Harvey Bender; Prof. Stephen Fallon; Prof. David Kirkner; (Rev.) Mark Poorman, C.S.C.; Dr. Kevin White.

Observers Present: Ms. Missy Conboy and Mr. Bernard Muir of the Department of Athletics; Ms. Kitty Hoye, recorder.

1. Call to order and prayer: The Chair called the group to order at 5:05 p.m. Father Jarret led the group in prayer.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting: Prof. Power seconded Prof. Weber's motion to approve the minutes of February 22, 2005. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Announcements: The Chair introduced to the Board Prof. Patricia Bellia, whom the Law School faculty has elected to fill the term of Prof. William Kelley. Prof. Kelley has taken a leave of absence from the University to serve as deputy counsel to the President of the United States.

The Chair announced that he has approved, on the Board's behalf, the fall 2005 schedule for women's soccer. The Chair noted that the schedule called for four missed-class days in the Monday-Wednesday-Friday sequence, a feature specifically and separately approved by the Board in its e-mail vote of February 8, 2005. That schedule does not call for any missed-class days in the Tuesday-Thursday sequence. The Chair has approved an amendment to the softball schedule for spring 2005: The April 14 game against the University of Illinois at Chicago will be played away, rather than at home; the April 27 away game against that university has been cancelled. The Chair has approved the spring 2005 schedule for volleyball. The Chair also has approved an additional class-miss day (March 13, 2005) for women's golf, made necessary when the team missed a connecting flight.

The Chair informed the Board that he has approved, again on its behalf, spring 2005 captains for women's lacrosse (Jess Mikula, Carol Dixon, and Lindsay Shaffer).

At this point, the Board ratified these decisions of the Chair.

The Chair announced to the Board that he had met with both Mr. Boo Corrigan, administrator for

baseball, and baseball head-coach Paul Mainieri to discuss a proposal wending its way through the Big East Conference. Currently, the typical Big East baseball weekend involves a doubleheader on Saturday and a single game on Sunday. The Conference requires that any rained-out game on Sunday be made up on Monday. Under the proposal, the typical weekend would involve single games on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. The rationale underlying this change: This would allow all games to be nine-inning events, which apparently garner more credit than seven-inning ones by tournament-selection committees. Also, the move would bring the Big East into conformity with other major conferences on this issue. At that meeting, the Chair indicated his strong negative reaction to the proposal. Implementation would bring serious, if not fatal, consequences to Notre Dame's class-miss policy for baseball and, inevitably, other sports as well. Without purporting to speak for the Board, the Chair did hazard the view that Board members would prove equally negative. Once told of the proposal, the Chair alerted other faculty athletics representatives of the Big East, none of whom had yet been informed of the impending change. That change was then discussed at a meeting of these "faculty reps" in New York City on March 9. At that meeting, a subcommittee was appointed to deal with this issue, a subcommittee on which the Chair of the Faculty Board serves.

The Chair announced that henceforth Big East university presidents will meet at least annually with faculty athletics representatives. The Chair voiced his hope that such meetings might help preclude the enactment of academically charged changes without the knowledge of faculty athletics representatives.

The Chair informed the Board that the faculty athletics representatives of NCAA Division I-A have now formally become a separate organization. In April, the executive committee of that group (on which the Chair of the Faculty Board sits) will meet in San Antonio with the executive committee of the Faculty Athletics Representatives Association (on which the Chair of the Faculty Board also sits). The two executive committees will explore how their parent organizations might work together.

4. Byron V. Kanaley Awards: Prof. Weber, on behalf of the subcommittee on academic integrity, brought to the Board the subcommittee's recommendations with regard to the Byron V. Kanaley Award. Named after a 1904 graduate of the University, the Award honors "senior monogram winners deemed most exemplary as student-athletes and as leaders." Each spring, the Faculty Board invites every head coach to nominate for the Award that member of the team who best qualifies. Multiple awards may be made in any year.

Prior to today's meeting, the subcommittee on academic integrity, along with the Chair of the Faculty Board and Prof. Garg, who chairs the subcommittee on student welfare, met to discuss the nominations submitted by head coaches. Of the ten nominees, the subcommittee agreed to recommend to the Board the following three student-athletes: Brent D'Amico (men's tennis); Alicja Kryczalo (women's fencing); and Emily Loomis (volleyball). Prof. Weber moved that these three be awarded the Byron V. Kanaley Award for 2005. Prof. Garg seconded that motion. Prof. Pope-Davis asked whether honoring more than one student-athlete created the risk of diluting the Award's prestige. Prof. Weber noted that the *FBA Manual* provides for "multiple awards" in any given year. The Chair added that no fewer than three such awards have been made in any of the last five years. [For privacy reasons and pursuant to the custom of the

Faculty Board on Athletics, the ensuing discussion of individual student-athletes has been excised from these public minutes.] The motion to approve Brent D'Amico, Alicja Kryczalo, and Emily Loomis as 2005 winners of the Byron V. Kanaley Award passed unanimously.

5. Applications for a Fifth Year of Eligibility: On behalf of the subcommittee for academic integrity, Prof. Weber brought to the Board the petitions for a fifth year of eligibility submitted by the following twelve student-athletes: Brian Beidatsch (football); Candace Chapman (women's soccer); Rebecca Chimahusky (women's fencing); D.J. Fitzpatrick (football); Brandon Hoyte (football); Mark LeVoir (football); Corey Mays (football); Sean O'Donnell (men's track); Rashon Powers-Neal (football); Randi Scheller (women's soccer); Matt Shelton (football); and Dan Stevenson (football). Prof. Weber reminded the Board of its continuing emphasis on "academic engagement" in passing on the appropriateness of such applications. Many of the problems raised by the fifth year of eligibility had been connected with the tenth semester for football players, most of whom during that semester focus on training for a professional career. Happily, the department of athletics has adopted a new program enabling football players in that situation to return as departmental interns (and therefore employees), rather than as students. Prof. Weber noted the outstanding work done by Mr. Holmes and his staff at the Office of Academic Services for Student-Athletes. During the past two years, student-athletes in their fifth year have maintained a grade-point average substantially the same as during their first four years. This certainly had not always been the case. Prof. Weber also credited Prof. Pope-Davis and his staff in working with student-athletes as they enter graduate programs. (In their fifth year, student-athletes fall into one of three categories: students completing their undergraduate degree; students in a graduate program; or unclassified graduate students). In assessing applications, Prof. Weber continued, the subcommittee looks not only at the student's seriousness in the past, but also at the reasonableness of assuming such seriousness in the future. Both Mr. Holmes and Prof. Pope-Davis monitor the academic progress of such students very closely. Prof. Weber called the current group of applicants the "best overall" the subcommittee has yet seen. None of them presents a prospective academic problem. Some of this seems due to the refinements introduced into the application form for a fifth year of eligibility. The information newly sought provides additional perspectives. He was, he noted, impressed and pleased with the tone, trend, and seriousness that both coaches and students brought to the application process. Mr. Holmes predicted that the Board would receive four more such applications, these from student-athletes participating in spring sports. Prof. Botting worried about those fifth-year petitioners carrying a grade-point average below 3.0. Nonetheless, she observed that a very thorough job is obviously being done with such student-athletes. The process reflects a lot of work, and Mr. Holmes, his staff, and Prof. Pope-Davis should indeed be applauded for it. Prof. Pope-Davis stressed that he meets with each student-athlete entering a graduate program to review course requirements. In such meetings, he also addresses expectations: to attend classes, to meet required deadlines, and the like. During the fall he reviews the records of "fifth years" to ensure that they maintain the approved schedule. He emphasized that "academic engagement" leaves much room for enrichment courses such as music. Prof. Weber added that the process forces student-athletes to take their fifth year more seriously. A few years ago, petitioners for a fifth year would simply have paged through a catalog to come up with some schedule, however optimal. The new seriousness also accounts for the improved performance. Prof. Bellia urged, in response to a request for suggestions regarding the application form, that the courses listed also carry the number of credits involved.

Prof. Pope-Davis seconded Prof. Weber's motion that the applications for a fifth year of eligibility filed on behalf of the students named above be approved. That motion passed unanimously.

6. Reports from Subcommittee Chairs: Prof. Garg, who chairs the subcommittee on student welfare, mentioned issues raised by student-athletes at a recent meeting of the Student Athlete Advisory Council. Currently, student-athletes receiving an athletics grant-in-aid may live off campus only during their senior year and only if they meet specified grade-point-average requirements. Student-athletes would like this privilege extended to juniors. Second, many student-athletes want the University to offer chiropractic/massage therapies as alternatives to traditional treatments. Ms. Conboy informed the Board that the department of athletics is conducting a study of physical-training operations at other universities. As it turns out, chiropractic care can be as effective as orthopedic care, and Dr. James Moriarity, chief of medicine at the Student Health Center, has now given his blessing to moving forward on this. So far, though, that plan does not include massage therapy. A third issue, Prof. Garg continued, relates to study space for student-athletes and limitations (for example, the prohibition of all beverages) related to the use of current facilities. Mr. Holmes said that the space problem has been addressed; we now have additional space for structured study and tutoring in DeBartolo Hall. With regard to beverages, however, we cannot allow them because of the risk presented to our computers. Prof. Garg mentioned a fourth issue, complaints from faculty regarding a picture appearing in *The Observer*. That picture depicted varsity soccer players dressed "in drag," and in what could be seen as an initiation rite. The Chair of the Faculty Board observed that he had met with both Mr. Muir and Ms. Conboy regarding this issue; both had assured the Chair that such rites will not recur. Ms. Conboy added that the department will include in its programming additional information concerning initiation rites or potential hazing. After all, even if student-athletes "consent" to such things, the presence of any pressure whatever makes the practice hazing. Moreover, such activities can turn into dangerous events. The Chair added that *duLac*, Notre Dame's student handbook, itself contains provisions addressing initiation-related behavior. Finally, Prof. Garg said, some student-athletes have raised concerns with regard to religious services for non-Catholics. More specifically, does Notre Dame provide sufficient access to non-Catholic worship services for student-athletes traveling with their teams? Another concern relates to pre-game Masses; is there undue pressure on non-Catholics to attend? Is that pressure a problem? Father Jarret stated that the entire issue warrants re-visiting. How are we serving our student-athletes? Should we offer a non-Catholic prayer service on campus? That is a very difficult and complex issue. Ms. Conboy noted that the pre-game Mass, at least for football, is a team event listed on the schedule; student-athletes must go. The Chair noted his understanding that in at least one instance a Muslim football player had been excused from the Mass. Even being excused, Prof. Garg added, implicates the desire not to be singled out. Ms. Conboy stressed that the sermons at such Masses resemble pep talks; often the priest will address things like "challenges" and "struggles"—things to which everyone can relate. At Communion time, even non-Catholics are invited to come forward to receive a special blessing. This represents an attempt to make the Mass more inclusive. When a chaplain has not been available to travel with a team, the focus has usually been on making sure that Mass remains available. The Chair: What sports, besides football, have pre-game Mass? Father Jarret: Basketball and sometimes swimming. Ms. Conboy informed the Board that former director of athletics Michael Wadsworth initiated the policy under which any team that wanted a pre-game Mass could have

it. Accordingly, the issue has been left up to the respective head coach. Prof. Garg emphasized that the pre-game Mass was not the issue raised at the meeting of the Student-Athlete Advisory Council. Nonetheless, Prof. Pope-Davis replied, student-athletes have brought such matters to the subcommittee on academic integrity. In light of the concern of the Board of Trustees with regard to the drop in our Catholic enrollment, Prof. Weber offered, this may not be a great time to discuss institutionalizing non-Catholic endeavors. The Chair suggested that the subcommittee on student welfare return to the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee with a request that its members poll their teammates on this issue and provide “feedback” to the Board. Ms. Conboy: We could also incorporate the issue into our exit interviews. Mr. Brown, a former member of the football team, stressed that he had never felt isolated by the pre-game Mass. He always thought of it as a “team concept”; although we are all different, we come together as a team and leave as one. When he came to Notre Dame, he continued, he understood that the University was a Catholic University with a “capital C;” he knew what he was “buying into.” He never felt a conflict; the team didn’t compete on Sundays and he was able to worship as he wished. Moreover, as far as the football team was involved, players were told that they did not have to attend the pre-game Mass if they had any objections. Although his attitude may have differed from those of others, he went to the pre-game Mass because of the fellowship involved. Nonetheless, allowing non-Catholics to come forward for a blessing might actually present a greater problem for some; not coming forward for the blessing could single one out even more. Student-athletes encouraged to come forward to get a blessing might feel more isolated. In reply to a question from Mr. Holmes, Mr. Brown conceded that perhaps his experience at a Catholic high school tempered his attitude. His mother, he added, represented a strong influence in his life, and he accordingly never questioned his faith. Mr. Holmes: The feedback I have received from student-athletes suggests that the issue relates more to the availability of alternative worship on Sundays, while student-athletes are at home, than to the pre-game Mass. Prof. Weber insisted that issue should be handled by Campus Ministry, not the Faculty Board on Athletics; it’s a University-wide issue. Ms. Conboy: Perhaps we should bring this issue up at the April coaches’ meeting as well, and get feedback from them. The discussion concluded with the Chair noting that both Prof. Garg and Ms. Conboy would pursue these important questions.

At this point, Board members discussed whether an untoward number of class misses occurred for students taking part in more than one sport. A related problem involves sports that straddle both semesters; such student-athletes may receive excused class misses for each semester. Finally, did the fact that track gets treated as three separate sports (cross-country, indoor track, and outdoor track) implicate this worry? On all of these points, the Chair agreed to monitor team schedules over the coming year to ascertain whether, in fact, a real problem manifests itself.

At this point, Prof. Power raised his concern with regard to student-athlete injury. Having noticed that some recommendations in connection with the Byron V. Kanaley Award stressed that the student-athlete had never missed a practice or a game because of injury, Prof. Power wondered whether student-athletes were pressured to practice despite injury. Should we have some provision regarding this? Should the team doctor or trainer have a role? Ms. Conboy: Indeed, the trainer has the last word. That said, we must understand that each student-athlete differs; each deals with pain differently. The Chair: Dr. Moriarity did address the Board some time ago regarding this issue; on that occasion he emphasized that coaches put no pressure whatever on the medical staff with regard to student-athletes’ fitness to play; that remains a

medical decision. Ms. Conboy: Nonetheless, we could include a question on this in the student-athlete's "exit interview." Prof. Botting: At the same time, we might also inquire into any possible physical or mental stress involved in the desire to meet demands. In my experience, these athletes, who are often stunning students, operate under great pressure.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.
