

# FACULTY BOARD ON ATHLETICS

## UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

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Meeting of February 18, 2003

5<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room, Main Building

**Members Present:** Prof. Fernand Dutile (chair); Prof. Matthew Barrett; Prof. Harvey Bender; Prof. William Berry; Ms. Emily Bienko; Dr. Matthew Cullinan; Mr. Patrick Holmes; Prof. Stephen Fallon; Prof. Umesh Garg; (Rev.) Mark Poorman, C.S.C.; Prof. Donald Pope-Davis; Prof. Katherine Spiess; Prof. John Weber; Dr. Kevin White.

**Member Absent:** Prof. John Borkowski.

**Guests Present:** Mr. Joseph A. Russo, director of financial aid; and Mr. Jeremy M. Mayernik, senior financial aid administrator.

**Observers Present:** Ms. Sandy Barbour, Ms. Missy Conboy, and Mr. Bernard Muir, all of the Department of Athletics; Ms. Mary Hendriksen, recorder.

**1. Call to order and prayer:** The chair called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. Ms. Bienko led the group in prayer.

**2. Minutes of previous meeting:** A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of January 28, 2003, duly made and seconded, carried unanimously.

**3. Announcements:** The chair announced that, on behalf of the Board, he had approved the following team schedules, both of which met all University requirements: men's soccer (spring 2003) and women's soccer (fall 2003).

The following team captains, all of whom met University requirements, have been approved: Andria Bledsoe, Andrea Loman, and Alexis Madrid (softball, spring 2003).

The chair announced for the record that, through its e-mail vote, the Board had approved, for compelling reasons, two appeals relating to off-campus residency. The academic credentials of the two student-athletes involved fell short, though barely, of those generally required of senior grant-in-aid student-athletes to live off-campus.

At its meeting on January 28, the Board had expressed its sense that contract extensions for both the

director of athletics and for all head coaches should take place only after consultation with the chair of the Faculty Board on Athletics. Since that meeting, the chair has met with Father Malloy, concerning contract extensions for directors of athletics, and with Dr. White, concerning contract extensions for head coaches. Each committed to consultation with the chair on these contract extensions. The chair emphasized that such consultation does not include matters of compensation and does not imply that any such contract extension requires the approval of the chair.

At this point, Prof. Barrett congratulated the chair on his reappointment by Father Malloy to a second term as chair of the Faculty Board and as NCAA faculty athletics representative. Through their applause, other members of the Board joined in the congratulations. The chair thanked the Board, noted that he looked forward to working with the Board during the next three years, and added that, since the *Academic Articles* limit such service to two terms, his service will then come to an end.

**4. Report on financial aid for student-athletes:** As part of a series of presentations to the Board by campus officials dealing with athletics, Mr. Joseph Russo, director of the Office of Student Financial Services (OSFS), and Mr. Jeremy Mayernik, the OSFS administrator whose responsibilities include athletics liaison, discussed with the Board the various ways in which the OSFS works with the athletics program. The athletics liaison provides support and services to the coaches, student-athletes, and their parents. Head coaches work with the athletics liaison to ensure that the combination of grants-in-aid and other institutional scholarships do not exceed the team limit. The athletics liaison maintains contact with the assistant athletics director for NCAA compliance, currently Mr. Mike Karwoski. The athletics liaison also maintains regular contact with coaches and assistant coaches, whose most common concern relates to a prospective student-athlete's estimated financial-aid eligibility. Such contacts occur most frequently from August through February. The athletics liaison completes so-called "early reads" for prospective student-athletes. Aid to athletes emanating from the department of athletics is designated a "grant-in-aid," not a "scholarship." The NCAA categorizes sports as either head-count sports or equivalency sports. In a head-count sport, a student-athlete awarded a grant-in-aid receives a full grant-in-aid, which comprises support for tuition, fees, room and board, and books. Notre Dame's head-count sports: football, men's and women's basketball, women's tennis and volleyball. Student-athletes in head-count sports may apply for financial aid and may receive a Pell Grant or a Stafford Loan. In equivalency sports, a student-athlete may receive a partial athletics grant-in-aid. Notre Dame's equivalency sports: baseball, hockey, track, men's tennis, golf, swimming, softball, fencing, rowing, lacrosse and soccer. The NCAA limits the total amount of aid that an equivalency sport can give. For example, baseball can award the equivalent of only 11.7 full grants-in-aid. Although not all sports are yet fully funded at Notre Dame, plans for full funding have been made. In equivalency sports, students receiving a partial athletics grant-in-aid may apply for regular financial aid. Any institutional scholarship or grant aid given to the student, however, counts against the team's NCAA limit. The NCAA views such institutional aid, including aid provided by Notre Dame clubs, as countable institutional aid. With regard to the administration of financial-aid policy and procedures, the fact that the student is an athlete presents neither a plus nor a minus. In sports whose total financial aid attains or approaches the NCAA limit, the student-athlete may not be eligible to receive both the University scholarship and the athletics grant-in-aid. In such a case, the student-athlete must choose between the athletics aid or the need-based institutional scholarship or grant. In some cases, the aid package can still be supplemented with

Stafford Loan, Perkins Loan, or Work Study/Campus Employment. The NCAA Special Assistance Fund helps student-athletes who are eligible for a Federal Pell Grant. The Fund can aid students with financial hardship and provide them a limited clothing allowance. Student-athletes who do not receive an athletics grant-in-aid and were not recruited by their team are deemed "non-counters" by the NCAA. For each such student-athlete, the Compliance Office initiates a "non-counter" form. Once the athletics liaison ensures that the student is not receiving an athletics grant-in-aid, the director of financial aid signs the form and forwards it to the NCAA faculty athletics representative for his signature. The Department of Athletics mails a grant-in-aid certificate to each student-athlete receiving athletics financial aid. Under NCAA rules, a grant-in-aid can be committed for only one year at a time. At Notre Dame, when a coach withdraws a grant-in-aid, which may happen a few times per year, the student may demand a hearing. Ms. Barbour explained that such a withdrawal might take place when a student-athlete quits the team or seeks to transfer to a different institution. If the coach dismisses the student-athlete from the team, our policy is to continue the athletic grant-in-aid. Prof. Garg asked whether there are tax consequences to financial aid. Mr. Russo responded that if the aid exceeds the value of tuition, fees and books, the student-athlete must treat the excess value as income for federal income-tax purposes. The University sends a notice to those whose aid exceeds that amount. The chair asked what an NCAA investigator would look at to check whether an institution does things right from a financial-aid perspective. Mr. Russo: A random check of the files would be best, in order to determine if the student-athlete met Pell Grant criteria and the like. Mr. Mayernik: The inspection would also include a look at outside aid, in order to certify that it is not athletics-based. The relationship and communications between OSFS and the Department of Athletics as well as the appeals process might also be examined, Mr. Russo added. The chair thanked both Mr. Russo and Mr. Mayernik for meeting with the Board.

**5. Petitions for a fifth year of eligibility:** Mr. Holmes then led the group in a discussion of petitions for eligibility, all involving football players. The petitions of the following student-athletes were approved: Darrell Campbell, Glenn Earl, Gary Godsey, Sean Milligan, James Molinaro and Nicholas Setta. During the discussion of these petitions, Board members made several points. Father Poorman emphasized the requirement that student-athletes during their fifth year be academically "engaged," which, under University guidelines, requires a minimum of nine credit hours in the semester of competition. The chair noted the need for monitoring the implementation of academic plans, to ensure that student-athletes do not drop courses, bringing them below the nine-credit requirement, or make other amendments detrimental to the "engagement." Mr. Holmes stressed the need for fifth-year petitioners to spend time with their advisor. Prof. Weber observed that maintaining a record of how fifth-year athletes perform academically might both create an incentive for such student-athletes to do well academically and might inform our decisions regarding future applicants. Father Poorman underscored that competing during a fifth year is a privilege, not a right; a fifth year should be seen as a reward, not an entitlement. Prof. Bender and Prof. Pope-Davis urged that in future cases the Board secure more information about each petitioner; the application process should tell us more about these individuals. Mr. Muir suggested that the appropriate Board subcommittee interview some of the student-athletes and then make a recommendation to the Board regarding the petitions. Prof. Bender proposed that a subcommittee assess the application process and propose suggestions for its improvement.

**6. Faculty as "honorary coaches":** Prof. Pope-Davis complimented the department of athletics for

developing the concept of “honorary coach” in connection with each men’s home basketball game. Under that program, a faculty member serves as “honorary coach,” joining the team on game day during its preparations and sitting on the bench during the game. Prof. Pope-Davis stressed the benefits of this arrangement for both student-athletes and the faculty members involved. The program helps to bridge the gap between academics and athletics, between faculty members and coaches. He urged that the concept be extended to other sports, as well. In response, Dr. White agreed that the program has worked well. He promised to bring to a coaches’ meeting the possibility of expanding the program.

**7. Orientation weekend:** Prof. Barrett, for the subcommittee on student welfare, reported on meetings that the subcommittee had with representatives of the First Year of Studies, the Office of Student Affairs, including two rectors, and the Department of Athletics on February 3 and with representatives from the Student-Athlete Advisory Council from football, men’s and women’s soccer, and volleyball on February 14. As a result of the first meeting, the subcommittee’s original proposal would have banned competition or travel related to competition during the entire Orientation weekend, restricted practice times for all student-athletes during that weekend, and discouraged competition during the seven days following the last day of orientation. Subsequently, the subcommittee learned that significant problems, including the possible loss of practice sessions for sophomores, juniors and seniors under NCAA rules, made the restrictions on practice during the entire Orientation weekend very difficult. In addition, the response of the student-athletes attending the February 14th meeting was uniformly negative to those proposals. The student-athletes expressed concerns that fell into three categories: 1) adverse effects on team competitiveness, 2) unintended consequences making their lives more difficult later in the semester, and 3) unlikelihood that changes would develop stronger bonds between student-athletes and their dorm-mates and classmates. Prof. Barrett added that the subcommittee had scheduled a meeting for the following day, February 19, with the coaches or their representatives from football, men’s and women’s soccer, and volleyball to discuss the subcommittee’s proposal, and that the subcommittee planned to make a final recommendation to the Board at its next meeting.

**8. Adjournment:** The chair adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.