

**Faculty Board on Athletics  
Meeting of November 15, 2019  
12:45-2:15 p.m.—500 Main Building**

**Members Present:** Patricia Bellia (Chair), Jaimie Bleck, Lauren Hanna, Erin Hoffmann Harding, Patrick Holmes, Sean Kelsey, Randy Kozel, Richard Pierce, Aaron Striegel, Jack Swarbrick, Kevin Vaughan

**Members Excused:** Corey Angst, Ann Firth, Susan Ohmer, F. Clark Power

**Athletics Liaisons:** Missy Conboy, Mike Harrity, Jody Sadler, Angie Torain

**Guests:** Brian Coughlin, Associate Vice President for Student Development; Heather Ryan, Director, Office of Community Standards; Claire VeNard, Associate Athletics Director; Dr. Niki Sims, Assistant Director for Clinical and Sport Psychology, University Counseling Center; Dr. Joey Ramaeker, Counseling and Sports Psychologist, University Counseling Center; Heidi Uebelhor, Associate Athletics Director; Ciara O'Halloran, Sport Operations and Olympic Facility Director, as recorder.

### **1. Opening Prayer**

Professor Patricia Bellia welcomed the group, calling the meeting to order at 12:51 p.m., and invited Professor Aaron Striegel to offer the opening prayer. Professor Bellia introduced Ms. Ciara O'Halloran, who attended the meeting as recorder on behalf of Ms. Claire Leatherwood Slebonick.

### **2. Minutes of Meeting of October 16, 2019**

The Board approved the minutes of the meeting of October 16, 2019, without changes.

### **3. Chair's Announcements**

*Schedules.* Professor Bellia announced that she approved the spring schedules for men's and women's tennis. She also approved a change to the fall rowing schedule.

In appreciation for the Board's service, the Athletics Department has extended an invitation to members of the Board and a guest to attend an upcoming hockey game.

### **4. Student-Athlete Disciplinary Report**

Professor Bellia invited Mr. Brian Coughlin, Associate Vice President for Student Development, and Ms. Heather Ryan, Director of the Office of Community Standards, to present the 2018-19 Disciplinary Report. Mr. Coughlin explained the metrics and layout of the disciplinary report. He stated that the statistics for student-athletes in this disciplinary report are similar to that of the general student body population, including the breakdown by gender. Mr. Coughlin pointed out statistics by sport roster, noting that 2018-19's numbers are consistent with

those from the previous five academic years. He noted that previous years' disciplinary reports included statistics on Title IX offenses but that these numbers were removed from the Disciplinary Report beginning in 2017-2018; Title IX incidents are now handled through a completely separate process managed by the Title IX coordinator rather than through the Office of Community Standards.

Mr. Coughlin described the nature of the cases in the report, again noting the consistency with past years' cases. Mr. Coughlin explained the University's categories of responses to these incidents—meetings, conferences, and hearings—and the severity of each. Hearings, as the most serious response for the most significant offenses, could call into question a student's ability to remain enrolled at the University; meetings serve as the University's response to what is colloquially described as a “typical college mistake.” Conferences are frequently used to address a second offense within the same category of cases. Mr. Coughlin offered that these numbers are reflective of those from the general student body and that alcohol is the number one issue for all students. Responding to a question from Mr. Jack Swarbrick, Ms. Erin Hoffmann Harding stated that her office has information that indicates there are higher rates of high-risk drinking behavior at Notre Dame compared to Notre Dame's peers.

In response to a question from Professor Bellia on drug use versus alcohol use, Mr. Coughlin remarked that the statistics have remained consistent over the last few years. Ms. Lauren Hanna shared relevant observations from her time at other schools to provide additional context to the discussion of high-risk drinking behavior. Professor Striegel inquired as to whether anyone had conducted risk assessments on this issue; Mr. Coughlin replied in the affirmative. In response to a question from Professor Bellia, Mr. Coughlin explained the trends his staff members see with off-days and the mentality of the general student body on scheduling activities. Replying to a question from Ms. Angie Torain, Mr. Coughlin indicated it is important to talk about these issues both in team settings and within the classroom. Receiving no other questions, Professor Bellia thanked Mr. Coughlin and Ms. Ryan for their report.

## **5. Notre Dame Student-Athlete Mental Wellness**

Professor Bellia invited Mr. Mike Harrity, Senior Associate Athletics Director, Student-Athlete Services, and members of his staff to present on student-athlete mental wellness. Professor Bellia also introduced Ms. Samira Payne to the Board. Professor Bellia asked Ms. Payne to attend the student-athlete mental wellness presentation due to her new role as Director of the Student-Athlete Transition Program.

Mr. Harrity introduced his staff and gave background on what Student-Athlete Services has done since 2017 in an effort to aid student-athlete mental wellness. Mr. Harrity turned the presentation over to Dr. Niki Sims, one of two clinical psychologists who, along with a post-doctoral fellow, are embedded within Athletics. Dr. Sims discussed the different initiatives that are being introduced around campus, as mental wellness is not just a student-athlete issue but also a campus one. Dr. Sims explained that the primary charge of the group is clinical work, and that is the most important work they do. Dr. Sims turned over the presentation Dr. Joey Ramaeker. Dr. Ramaeker discussed the trends the counseling staff sees on campus as well as nationally. They use data in order to be more efficient with their time and work. There is a

demand from student-athletes for this resource. Dr. Ramaeker offered that both referrals and increased discussion surrounding these resources are big reasons as to why the staff has seen a huge jump in use, especially between the second and third (current) year in which the services have been in place within Athletics. Mental wellness is being discussed more openly and frequently among student-athletes, athletic trainers, academic counselors, rectors, and care consultants.

Dr. Sims and Dr. Ramaeker both presented on performance work, clinical work, and mental skills training. Dr. Ramaeker, in response to a question from Professor Richard Pierce, stated that providing more specific demographic information can be challenging for certain statistics due to a limited sample size. Dr. Ramaeker mentioned that the demographics within athletics are similar to those on campus. He expects the numbers to increase in the coming years.

In response to a question from Ms. Missy Conboy, Dr. Sims answered that because clinical work is their primary charge, performance work with teams may be more limited if clinical demand becomes higher. This has resulted in teams, at times, hiring their own consultants because of the demand. Replying to a question from Professor Bellia, Dr. Ramaeker offered reasons as to why there is an increase in student-athletes taking advantage of counseling services. Dr. Sims and Dr. Ramaeker turned over the presentation to Ms. Claire VeNard, Associate Athletics Director, Student Welfare and Development.

Ms. VeNard explained other activities offered by the Student Welfare and Development office that support the work of Dr. Sims and Dr. Ramaeker. Student-athletes have been the driving force with some of these activities, including the Irish Strong initiative, a social media campaign to talk more about mental wellness. This campaign has included videos from current student-athletes, leaders on campus, former student-athletes, and alumni. Ms. VeNard re-emphasized that this is not just a student-athlete struggle at Notre Dame but rather a student body struggle.

Ms. Conboy queried Ms. VeNard about ways this initiative could be upsized within the dorm communities. Ms. VeNard replied that student-athletes wanted to start small with the project but in future want to expand to incorporating coaches, faculty members, and other members of the community.

Ms. VeNard also noted that a professional development series is on-going for coaches and administrators. The first session happened earlier in November with over 100 attendees. The organizers used the session to introduce various people who are resources on campus. Ms. VeNard is excited about the future of this series.

Professor Bellia thanked the group members for their presentation.

## **6. Gambling Impact Report**

Professor Bellia introduced Ms. Angie Torain, Senior Associate Athletics Director, Compliance. Ms. Torain explained to the Board what is now legal in the state of Indiana from a sports wagering perspective. As a result of prop betting being allowed, Ms. Torain explained

there will be more scrutiny on individual student-athletes. Although there is an NCAA policy barring gambling by student-athletes and institutional staff members, there is presently no University policy on gambling by faculty, staff, and students on Notre Dame athletics events. Rather, Notre Dame is attempting to educate the campus community about the rules and potential impact.

Professor Striegel inquired as to whether a University policy is currently planned, to which Ms. Torain responded not at this time, because of concerns about enforceability. Professor Pierce suggested that the University look at trends in cryptocurrency with regard to gambling. Hearing no further questions, Professor Bellia thanked Ms. Torain for her time.

## **7. Report of the Academic Integrity Subcommittee**

Professor Bellia introduced amendments to the Fifth Year Policy approved by the Academic Integrity Subcommittee. The changes are designed to close a possible loophole involving graduate transfers who technically might be outside the policy because they completed their degrees in fewer than eight semesters. The changes make all graduate transfers subject to the policy.

The Board unanimously adopted these changes to the Fifth Year Policy.

## **8. Adjournment**

Professor Bellia adjourned the meeting at 2:15pm.