

Annual Report from the Chair of the Athletic Council to the Academic Council May 2, 2008

The Athletic Council met in full session three times during the 2007-2008 academic year. In our first meeting on November 3, 2007, we met with Coach Cutcliffe and Coach McCallie to hear their plans for Duke Football and Women's Basketball. We also discussed the new mission statement for Duke Athletics, and the process for developing a new strategic plan for Duke Athletics. The clearest recommendation coming out of this meeting was the need for the plan to focus not merely on intercollegiate athletics but also on HPER (including club sports, intramurals, recreation, and health for the general student body and university community). Our second meeting held on January 26, 2008, was devoted to a lengthy discussion of the proposed draft of the strategic plan. We heard first from AD Joe Alleva, associate AD for basketball Mike Cragg, and baseball coach Sean McNally about some of the facilities proposed in the plan, then met in breakout groups to discuss the plan, and finally reconvened for a general discussion and suggestions for revision to the committee writing the plan. While there was general satisfaction with progress on the plan, there was concern about nailing down financing and a fuller investigation of the HPER aspects of the plan. The committee was pleased to hear that a consulting firm had been hired to determine our HPER needs. Our third meeting of April 26, 2008, first heard from President Brodhead about the search for an Athletic Director, then discussed and unanimously approved the strategic plan, and concluded with the annual report on the athletic department budget, and a review of the academic progress rate (APR) of Duke student athletes. Some members of the committee gave their opinions about what we might look for in a new athletic director and the Chair urged members to contact committee members Jim Coleman or Cookie Kohn if they had any further suggestions. There was a general consensus that the strategic plan would positively impact Duke athletics and the Duke community as a whole, although it was generally clear that it was not and could not be as specific in its financial projections on a year by year basis as the committee might have hoped. There was a clear sense though that decision principles were built into the plan that would give guidance to the new athletic director and the department in the years ahead as they worked to realize the goals of the program. The committee was generally pleased that the current department deficit would be dealt with systematically under the new plan.

The Executive Committee of the Athletic Council met with the President on September 20, 2007 to discuss and vote on the proposed mission statement for Duke Athletics. It was confirmed unanimously. The committee then discussed the yearly agenda for athletics, which was to focus on the proposed strategic plan for the department and university.

The Academic Committee met twice during the year, in the fall with acting director of admissions Leonard Satterwhite on November 16, 2007 to discuss the admissions of student-athletes and on April 28, 2008 with Dean Robert Thompson, and Brad Berndt to discuss the academic performance of student athletes. The acting Director of Admissions assured the committee that there were no plans in place to change the standards of admission of student athletes. Indeed, in conjunction with Christoph Guttentag (Director

of Admissions, on leave) and provost Lange, he had helped to develop a plan to give more personal interviews to student-athletes applying for admission because of the recognition that such interviews were much more effective in judging the likely academic success of the student athletes at Duke than relying merely on objective factors. The Spring meeting on academic performance was highlighted by the presentation of data on Duke student athletes outstanding graduation rates. The committee also spent some time discussing the gap between student-athletes and the general student body. While there was a general recognition on all sides that our students had done well and that our academic support programs spearheaded by Dean Thompson and Brad Berndt had done a great job, there were mixed opinions about where we should go from here. There was hope that with increasing success football would be able to attract more of the academically most competitive student athletes, but there was also skepticism that even under these circumstances we would see a return to a time when considerable numbers of football players were in engineering or majoring in one of the sciences. We did determine to delegate a subcommittee of members from the committee to work systematically with the academic data on athletes during the coming academic year as a way to get a fuller sense of different cuts on academic performance.

The Compliance Committee under the leadership of Martha Putallaz met twice during the term to review all of our compliance issues as required by the NCAA.

Martha Putallaz in conjunction with Jacklyn Silar also developed a new exit interview procedure that we tested in the Spring and will use next year in interviews at the end of the fall and the spring semesters. The new procedure brings many more faculty members into the interview process, giving the faculty a much better overview of the experience of student athletes at Duke.

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