

December 7, 2001
Faculty Athletics Committee
(Elected Committee)
Annual Report
Final Copy

Members: Stanley Mandel (chair), Carol Arnosti, Lissa Broome, Nicholas Didow, Jack Evans (ACC rep-ex officio), Henry T. Frierson, Garland Hershey, Celia Hooper, James Murphy, Terry Rhodes, Judy White, and Leo Zonn.

Meetings: January 2001-November 2001. The committee held monthly meetings during the 2000-2001 academic year. This report constitutes the activities for the months of January 2001 through November 2001 for a total of seven meetings.

Report Prepared by: Stanley Mandel (Chair, 2001-2002), based on minutes and approved by the committee.

Committee Charge:

"The Faculty Athletics Committee is concerned with informing the faculty and advising the chancellor on any aspect of athletics, including, but not limited to, the academic experience for varsity athletes, athletic opportunities for members of the University committee, and the general conduct and operation of the University's athletic program" (Faculty Code §4-7(a)).

Committee Charge and Functions:

In a brief discussion, the history and role of the committee were reviewed. The membership includes ten elected members of the faculty serving staggered five-year terms. In addition, the faculty athletics representative if not already an elective member, is an ex-officio member of the committee. The committee discussed issues that they felt would be important to its work which include academic integrity, sportsmanship, and title nine compliance. The committee felt it did not and should not have a role in the operational decisions within the Athletic Department. The major charge for the committee is to work in a way so as to protect the excellent reputation that our athletic program enjoys.

Subcommittees were established to take primary responsibility for issues as decided in the first meeting of the year. Committee members provided advice that was sought and used by the Chancellor and the Athletics Department. Chancellor Moeser attended meetings as his schedule permitted. Athletics Director Baddour and/or other members of the Athletics Department were also in attendance. Committee members served on various Athletics Department Committees, including the Advisory Board to the Academic Support Center and the committee, chaired by Professor Richard Edwards, which was responsible for conducting the interim certification study required by the NCAA.

Report of Discussions:

Academic Performance of Student-Athletes

Included as an Appendix to this report is a table for the cohort of students entering the University in 1996 which summarizes their academic status as of the Fall of 2001. The data are for men and women, athletes and non-athletes, and they include four categories of students: currently enrolled, graduated, suspended, or withdrawn from the University. These latter two categories have the following meanings: "suspended" means those individuals who left the university not eligible to continue, and "withdrawn" means individuals who left the university eligible to continue. In addition, these data are for all participating student-athletes, not just those receiving athletic scholarships. Generally, as in the past, women student-athletes have been graduating at higher rates than women non-athletes. It has been noted that the graduation percentage for the 1990 cohort now exceeds 70% level and that the percentage for the 1992 cohort is approaching that level. The levels of graduation achieved through the spring semester of 2001 for male athletes in the 1995 and 1996 cohorts are lower than the level that they are likely to reach ultimately. This is partly explained by the effect of the large size of the football squad and the related fact that football players usually take five to five and a half years to complete their academic work. However, transfers and other departures that have already occurred for these cohorts already exceed 30%. Thus, achieving a graduation percentage exceeding 70% will be dependent upon some re-enrollment in these cohorts. Meetings to include representatives from the Athletics Department, the Academic Support Center, and Academic Information Services have been scheduled to review the definitions and process that are now in use for the creation, monitoring, and reporting of these data.

Survey answers by, and exit interviews with, graduating senior student-athletes.

The Committee and the Athletics Department ask all graduating student-athletes to fill out a detailed questionnaire, prepared by the Committee, covering many aspects of their experience at UNC-CH. In addition, Committee members participate, along with personnel from the Athletics Department and the Academic Support Center, in exit interviews with groups of graduating student-athletes. Looking at these responses, the committee hopes to obtain an accurate portrayal of how student-athletes view their experience at UNC-CH. Overall, both surveys and the exit interviews reveal that student-athletes have very positive views of their experience at UNC-CH as both students and athletes.

The following are key points extracted from the exit interviews:

- strong emphasis on academics by student-athletes and the coaches
- generally favorable opinion of the Academic Support Center
- Steele Building services not as strong as those of the Academic Support Center
- some issues that exist with the ability to concentrate on studies during team travel
- rigors of practice will also affect ability to concentrate on studies
- fair treatment by faculty, not any special favors, no detrimental treatment
- racial relations among student-athletes are perceived to be better than they are in campus community as a whole
- the estimated GPA in response to the survey was between 2.5 and 3.5

- approximately 15% of respondents have clearly experienced difficulty with registration to an extent that it affected their choice of major
- approximately 38% of respondents reported having difficulty registering for as many as three or more courses
- a majority of the respondents (78%) do not expect to be professional athletes
- generally, respondents reported feeling well prepared to enter into their careers
- some views were expressed that advising occasionally seemed to emphasize maintaining eligibility over progress towards a degree
- pressures to participate in practices were expressed in the phrase "maximum becomes the minimum," meaning that the maximum allowed can easily become the minimum expected.
- concerns were expressed about fatigue from practice including difficulty concentrating on studies

Since interviewing seniors might have the effect of producing old information because student-athletes reported on experiences that are two years old, the committee will review the format of the exit interviews and the questionnaires to provide additional questions and possible revisions to the survey process.

Registration Issue

In this regard information reveals that within the Atlantic Coast Conference UNC-Chapel Hill is alone (with the possible exception of Georgia Tech, for which data were not available) in not providing priority registration for student-athletes. Interviews with graduating student-athletes have identified concerns of difficulty student-athletes have encountered in registering for courses. Many felt it would be desirable that student-athletes not be placed in a disadvantaged position in the registration process because of the fact that they have chosen to participate in athletics. Many felt it was possible that courses required for a particular major could involve so many conflicts with practice and competition that the student athlete might choose a different major. The faculty committee does not support blanket priority in registration for student-athletes. The consensus is that some form of compensatory relief should be found and implemented for individual situations. Simultaneously, the committee recognized that other groups of students that are not within the purview of the Faculty Athletics Committee may also deserve similar consideration. The sense of the committee was that it is desirable to explore two related sets of issues: 1) What are the groups of students that perform services for the University and who, as a result, are disadvantaged during registration. 2) What types of compensatory registration privileges might be considered for students whose service for the University prevents them from registering for classes on the same basis as do other students who are not performing these services. Although this topic has emerged from exit interviews with student-athletes, the committee feels it is desirable for the topic to be pursued from the more general perspective indicated above and by a group that has an appropriately broad perspective of academic issues. The committee has drafted a summary letter of these thoughts for review and discussion.

Knight Commission Report

President Emeritus Friday and Mr. Doug Dibbert, Executive Director of the General Alumni Association, were invited to present their views as outlined in the Knight Commission Report. The Knight Commission Report was distributed to all members of the committee who thoroughly reviewed its content. General discussion of the committee was supportive of the concepts in the report, but noted that competitive pressures make it difficult for individual institutions to decide to "disarm unilaterally". In the current environment, acts at the level of conferences were felt to be more likely to accomplish things rather than actions individual institutions. The resolution of the PAC-10 Conference was distributed for the information of the committee. It will be discussed at future meetings.

Sportsmanship

Mr. Steve Kirschner, Sports Information Director, has been invited to the December meeting. Issues of sportsmanship will be one of the topics that will be addressed by the committee in forthcoming months.

Subcommittees of the Faculty Committee on Athletics for major areas will be addressed in forthcoming months.

- Sportsmanship
- Exit interviews and improvement to the survey
- Academic support for student athletes
- Title IX issues

In conclusion:

The committee felt that the Athletic Department continues to do an excellent job of examining the issues related to the quality of life for the student athlete. Furthermore, there is clear evidence that there is a sincere commitment to continue an appropriate balance between the academic and athletic needs of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.