

Annual Report

2006-2007

**Senate Athletics Committee
Oakland University**

**Submitted by Robby Stewart, Chair
May 11, 2007**

Senate Athletics Committee

Executive Summary of Annual Report 2006-2007

Submitted by Robby Stewart, Chair

Membership

Faculty: William Cramer (Library), Caroline Jumel (French), David Kidger (Music), Karl Majeske (Business, QMM), Robby Stewart (Psychology, FAR)

Administration: Tamra Bays (Professional Advisors Committee), Omar Brown-El (Multicultural Initiatives), Tracy Huth (Athletics), Holly Kerstner (Athletics, ex officio)

External Community: Henry Mittelstaedt

Student Representative: Nicole Piggott, Kim Shultz

Meetings

The Senate Athletics Committee (SAC) met 6 times during the 2006-2007 academic year (two meetings were canceled due to insufficient agenda). Committee members corresponded via email regularly and were able to complete some of their business without face-to-face meetings.

Most Significant Committee Actions

- Reviewed of Gender Equity Plan implemented by Athletics Department
- Revised committee membership to include member of Professional Advisors Committee
- Petitioned Senate Steering Committee to take action to develop an excused absence policy at Oakland University
- Reviewed Title IX activities at Oakland University
- Approved addition of men's and women's Indoor Track & Field as the 17th and 18th intercollegiate sports at Oakland University
- Reviewed implementation of NCAA APR audit procedures at Oakland University
- Reviewed and discussed NCAA request for information concerning use of male practice players by female teams
- Reviewed and provided extensive comments on a draft of an excused absence policy to be presented to the Senate Steering Committee

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Summary of Senate Athletic Committee Activities for 2006-2007

September 11, 2006

- Review of re-organization in Athletics department
 - New plan appears to include a greater distribution of responsibilities with appropriate checks and balances. Simon Dover will now focus on internal affairs, Jim Noron on external affairs, and Holly Kerstner on student-athlete services. Holly will also be recognized as the senior woman administrator (SWA).
- Introduction of Holly Kerstner
- Review of Gender Equity Plan Update
 - The issues, measurable goals and timetable for completing the Gender Equity Plan required by the NCAA were reviewed. When this document was originally prepared specific due dates were included; the committee reviewed those items that should have been completed by this time in an effort to keep all involved on track.
- Requested Senate to revise committee membership to include a member of the Professional Advisors Committee (PAC)
 - It has become apparent that a number of members of the PAC committee face similar issues when advising student athletes. One in particular is how to deal with specific instructors who lower course grades when athletes miss classes, regardless of their performance on tests or other assignments. The committee strongly supported the suggestion that a member of PAC should always serve as a member of this committee in order to coordinate our efforts to serve the student athlete.

October 9, 2006

- Review of latest senior exit survey data

- Only 10 exiting seniors completed the survey and this small sample was not deemed representative of the entire group of student athletes at OU. The committee encouraged those responsible for the senior survey to explore means of collecting these data via the web to facilitate future data collection and analysis.
- Discussion of need for excused absence policy at university level
 - The discussion of the need for a PAC representative on this committee led to a discussion of excused absence policies. Tracy Huth indicated that he had discussed the issue with Provost Moudgil in the past. The members of the committee indicated that they thought OU should have an excused absence policy as the practice of lowering grades due to absences had a negative impact not only on student athletes, but also on music, theater and dance majors who needed to travel to performances and students of virtually any major who might be in a position to present products of their scholarship at regional or national conferences.
- Review of Title IX activities on campus

November 13, 2006

- Received confirmation from Senate that committee member would now automatically include a member of PAC
- Forwarded request for development of excused absence policy to Senate Academic Support Committee; that committee and this one would collaborate to initiate process
- Discussion of adding men's and women's Indoor Track & Field as 17th and 18th sports initiated
 - Tracy Huth indicated that Coach Paul Rice and approximately 90 athletes were ready to expand our involvement in Track and Field to include the indoor season. A detailed report of the fiscal plans for the addition of the two sports was promised.
- Discussion of Executive Summary from "Presidential Task Force on the Future of Division I Intercollegiate Athletics" initiated; subcommittee charged to review complete document
- Initiated "Professors at Practice" program
 - The athletes on a given team are asked to invite one of their faculty to attend/observe a practice session and meet briefly with the team and coaching staff. The FAR will attend these sessions as well to talk about the commitment to academics held by members of the Athletics Department.
- Life skills program on gambling reviewed
- Problems with Title IX survey were reviewed
 - Apparently the NCAA has detected that there are problems in the surveys being used to assess issues critical to Title IX. Holly Kerstner and Joi Cunningham will review these issues and report to the committee in the future.
- Update on NCAA APR audit reveals we are "doing fine"

December 11, 2006

- Discussion of Presidential Task Force document concludes after numerous issues are raised and resolved
 - Members of the committee asks Huth and Kerstner numerous questions concerning the Athletics Department standard practices of tracking student

athletes' progress toward degrees and concludes that there are no major points of concern.

- Committee agrees to support recommendation to add men's and women's Indoor Track & Field as 17th and 18th sports

January 8, 2007

- Committee meeting canceled due to insufficient agenda
- The chair met with Athletics Compliance officer to review status of all athletes with academic issues and to review findings of NCAA Academic Performance Program (APP) findings

February, 12, 2007

- Committee heard report of nationwide "webinar" presentation that misstated many NCAA policies.
 - The good news is that OU officials were well versed in NCAA guidelines and intervened immediately to correct the flow of misinformation. We were assured that members of the Athletics department would officially challenge those presenting the incorrect information and inform the NCAA of the event. The FAR reported that FARs from other institutions had contacted him after they received the incorrect information from the "webinar" and that a fruitful discussion followed.
- Discussion of NCAA request for information concerning use of male practice players by female teams conducted.
 - This practice appears to be rather wide-spread across the nation, though primarily focused on women's basketball rather than other teams such as soccer or softball. Variations in how the practice is actually conducted do exist and may thus have a variety of impacts on the team as a whole or on individual members of a team. The committee agreed that abuses could exist, but that a thoughtful coach could utilize male practice players in a way that could benefit all members of the team.
- Final report of the student/athlete exit interview result is reviewed.

March 12, 2007

- Committee meeting canceled due to insufficient agenda
- The chair met with Athletics Compliance officer to review status of all athletes with academic issues and to review findings of NCAA Academic Performance Program (APP) findings.

April 9, 2007

- Detailed review of draft of proposal for excused policy conducted
 - The chair was directed to reply to the chair of the Senate Student Academic Support Committee with a detailed summary of our suggestions for revisions to their draft dated 4/3/07. Overall, this committee was very pleased with the product provided by our colleagues.
- Discussion of what is needed for next academic year
 - Review of academic orientation practices as they relate to student/athletes
 - Interest in exploring means to increase faculty involvement with student/athletes