

Report to the Chair of the Faculty Senate by the  
Advisory Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics  
For the Academic Year 2009-10  
September 1, 2010

Dear JW,

On behalf of the Advisory Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics (ACIA), I am pleased to submit this report of our activities during the 2009-2010 academic year.

In my report to Faculty Senate Chair Bruce Balick, dated September 15, 2009, I anticipated the following agenda items for the 2009-10 academic year:

*In October, we will conduct our annual review of the academic records of all special and priority admits as well as our biannual review of the distribution of majors chosen by student athletes. We will also discuss the Code of Student Conduct for student athletes that is currently being drafted within ICA. And we will hear the SAAS response to the detailed recommendations of the 2008-9 review committee. Later on in the year, we will need to review the extent of our compliance with Title IX requirements. This will be a mandatory part of our next NCAA accreditation review in 2013, but the issue has not been addressed since 2005 and so we want to take an interim "reading" on this issue while there is still time to correct the situation if we should find that we are not in compliance with Title IX requirements. We also anticipate a number of PAC-10 and NCAA policy issues coming before us during the year. At the PAC-10 level, a new television contract will be under negotiation by the Conference, with the prospect that member institutions may be asked to schedule mid-week football and men's basketball games. We will be advising President Emmert on this issue, should it arise. We also expect to be discussing NCAA policy proposals on the academic records of recruited junior-college transfer students, a group of students who are failing to graduate in significant numbers from the four-year institutions that recruit them. We will be examining whether UW is an exception to this national trend, or whether we too have problems in this regard that need to be addressed.*

This list conforms closely with our actual agenda items for the year.

In October 2009, ACIA performed its annual review of the academic progress data for all student athletes admitted to the University of Washington in either the "special" or the "priority" admission category. These admissions categories were defined, and the numbers of students enrolled within them strictly limited, in October 2008 by the Faculty Council on Academic Standards, which adopted a resolution sent to FCAS by the ACIA to this purpose. A copy of this admissions policy is posted on the ACIA website (<http://www.washington.edu/faculty/facsen/adhoc.html>)

Summary results of this review are also posted on the website. It was particularly gratifying to the Committee to learn that of the 118 specially admitted student athletes in the classes of 2005-6 through 2008-9, only two were currently academically ineligible or had GPA's lower than 2.0, and only 4 had been dismissed from UW for any reason, including but not limited to academic deficiencies. The academic success of these "at risk" students is due to a variety of factors, not least the hard work of the students themselves; but the Student Athlete Academic Services (SAAS) office, headed by Kim Durand, also deserves much credit for these results. So too does the UW's award-winning summer college preparatory program (LEAP). This course, developed jointly by the Department of English and by SAAS, is now required of all entering special admits, and taken by many other entering student athletes also.

In 2010 it received the National Association of Academic Advisors for Athletics "Model Practice Award" for excellence as a national model in preparing student athletes to succeed in the college classroom.

ACIA also reviewed NCAA data on the graduation success rates (GSR) of all intercollegiate athletes at the University of Washington. UW's overall GSR of 83% is second in the PAC-10 to Stanford, which registers at 95%, and exceeds that of UCLA (79%) and Berkeley (76%). The average GSR across all NCAA Division 1 schools is 78%.

ACIA also reviewed data on the distribution of majors across the entire population of intercollegiate student athletes, paying special attention to football and basketball (men's and women's), sports where the "clustering" of athletes into particular majors is often most pronounced. The Committee was pleased to see that (as USA Today noted) UW is one of only a few schools with NO significant clustering of athletes within particular majors.

ACIA will continue to monitor all these matters closely, and to post relevant data on its website.

At its December 2 meeting, ACIA reviewed the final responses from SAAS to the detailed evaluative report completed by a specially-appointed review committee in January 2009. The text of this report is posted on the website. Some of the most important recommendations from this highly positive report have already been enacted, including a change in the reporting structures for SAAS itself. This change I described in last year's report to Faculty Senate Chair Balick; a copy of our recommendation, accepted by Provost Phyllis Wise, is posted on the website.

In January 2010, ACIA reviewed data from the 2009 Student Athlete Exit Survey. The full survey results, and an executive summary of them, are posted on our website. The 2009 survey achieved much higher response rates than in previous years, but results were by and large in keeping with those of previous years. On the whole, student athletes were quite positive about their overall experience at UW (rating the quality of their overall experience between 4.2 and 4.6 on a 5.0 scale). But they were somewhat less positive about the quality of their academic experience, rating that between 3.8 and 4.2. 85% of responding student athletes reported that their athletic obligations did not impede their capacity to meet their academic obligations. Of somewhat more concern, a relatively small but nonetheless significant number of students expressed the view that as freshmen and sophomores they had not been encouraged to take the academically rigorous courses that would have qualified them to enter highly selective and competitive major tracks as juniors and seniors.

Our March 31, 2010 meeting was taken up by two sets of issues: first, discussions of a series of media reports involving UW athletics; and second, of the recommendations from the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA), which were forwarded to us for advice by Faculty Senate Chair Balick. The conclusions of our discussion on the COIA report were forwarded to Chair Balick in a letter dated May 12, 2010, a copy of which is attached to this report. Media reports involved, first, a suggestion from Secretary of Education Arne Duncan that teams with low graduation rates should be prohibited from competing in the NCAA basketball tournament (Secretary Duncan cited the UW men's team specifically in this regard for its 29% graduation rate between 1999 and 2002). There were also media reports derived from NCAA data showing the financial subsidies that flow from most universities' general funds into their athletics programs, and indicating that only a handful of schools had athletics programs that were not in deficit. Finally, there was a good deal of local media attention to a case involving an assault charge against a UW freshman football player.

Secretary Duncan's remarks were the most damaging and the most misleading, and prompted a response (posted to the AAUP discussion list) by ACIA Chair Robert Stacey. That response, subsequently endorsed by ACIA, was as follows:

*A 29 percent graduation success rate is terrible, and reflects badly on the men's basketball program prior to 2003 and on the University of Washington. There can be no excuse for such a performance, and I have no intention of offering one.*

*Please note, however, that the results are far, far better under Coach Romar, who was hired here in the spring of 2003. Here are the numbers:*

*2002-3: Romar brought in 1 new recruit in the GSR cohort, late in the recruiting year. That recruit graduated.*

*2003-4: Romar brought in 3 new recruits in the GSR cohort. 2 graduated.*

*2004-5: Romar brought in 3 new recruits in the GSR cohort. All 3 graduated.*

*Men's basketball under Coach Romar thus has an 83% graduation success rate (5 out of 6) since 2003; if the one recruit from 2002-3 is included, the graduation rate rises to 86%. None of the other entering classes under Coach Romar (i.e., classes that entered after 2004) has yet reached the 6 year limit upon which graduation rates are calculated. However, the Advisory Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics (a faculty committee that answers to both the UW President and the UW Faculty Senate), has been tracking graduation rates and academic success rates closely for all our student athletes since the Committee was reorganized 6 years ago. We have a high degree of confidence that the graduation rates Coach Romar and his team have achieved for the entering classes of 2003 and 2004 will continue for the entering classes of 2005 and beyond. We have no intention of returning to the days before 2003; and it is most unfortunate that the student athletes who are now here, and who are succeeding not only in the classroom but also on the basketball court, are having their achievements misrepresented by the institutional failures of a previous era.*

*Faculty who wish further information on the academic records of intercollegiate student athletes, including graduation success rates for all UW teams, should consult the web page of the ACIA, where further data may be found: <http://www.washington.edu/faculty/facsen/adhoc.html>*

National media attention was also focused on financial subsidies to intercollegiate athletics and on the "profit/loss" statements of public universities' athletic programs. Because UW receives some directed funds from the state in the form of scholarships for students under Title IX, the UW athletics department is sometimes listed in such reports as receiving a financial subsidy from the state rather than being entirely self-supporting. We believe this to be a misrepresentation. More accurate, in our view, is the NCAA profit/loss statement, that showed that of the 8 PAC-10 institutions reporting (Stanford and USC, as private schools, did not report their results), UW was the only athletics program that in 2008 ran "in the black", with a modest profit to report. All other reporting PAC-10 athletics programs ran financial deficits.

Finally, with respect to local media coverage of the assault charge, we can note that the careful systems established in recent years to ensure that such cases are dealt with promptly and correctly by the appropriate UW authorities (in this case, the Office of Student Life) functioned as they were designed to do. There was no repeat of the patterns that led, ten years ago, to the abuses described by Nick Perry and Ken Armstrong in the Seattle Times, and now published in book form (Scoreboard, Baby!).

Finally, in our May 12, 2010 meeting, ACIA discussed and approved a proposed "Student Athlete Code of Conduct" prepared and presented by ICA. The Committee also debated at length whether the priority enrollment policy created at ACIA's suggestion several years ago (by which student athletes are able to register for classes earlier than most other students) should be modified so as to prevent large clusters of student athletes enrolling in particular classes, thus effectively "shutting out" other students from enrolling in those classes. This remains a controversial issue, and the Committee members were

split on whether a change in this policy was needed. In the end, however, the majority of the Committee voted to continue the existing policy of priority registration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob".

Robert C. Stacey, Chair  
Advisory Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics  
Professor of History  
Divisional Dean of Arts and Humanities