



UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE FACULTY SENATE

David Lovell, Chair

TO: Group Representatives

FROM: David Lovell 

DATE: November 21, 2008

RE: Background Information on Athletic Program

The new athletic director, Scott Woodward, is scheduled to speak to the Faculty Senate at its next meeting, December 4th. We expect an active discussion; to that end, please convey to your Senators a few points of information about the athletic program.

- With the exception of some scholarships for women athletes, in compliance with Title IX requirements, no state funds are used for the Intercollegiate Athletic Program. The program is supported by gate receipts and private donations, and some revenues generated by football are applied to other sports. Although the new football coach will be very highly paid, we have been assured that it will not be \$6 million per year, and that the report to this effect is speculative and fantastic.
- The Faculty Athletic Representative, Pat Dobel, has substantial oversight and authority to maintain the integrity of the athletic program. Pat Dobel is planning to present one of his quarterly reports to the Senate Executive Committee on January 12th. He will also give his required annual report to the Senate during spring quarter. There is an Advisory Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics, chaired by Bob Stacey, and the Faculty Senate leadership has nominated members who take seriously their responsibility for academic oversight.
- Since the scandals of eight years ago, there have been substantial changes in policies, procedures, and resources affecting admissions, student conduct, academic support, and the mission of the athletic program. Metrics have been established on the academic progress of student athletes, which indicate that in the PAC-10, the UW is second to Stanford in the academic performance of student athletes. Among others, Ty Willingham and the previous athletic director, Todd Turner, deserve praise and credit for these gains.
- The role of the athletic program at the UW and the principles that must govern it have been discussed in meetings of the faculty leadership, the Senate Executive Committee, the Senate, and the search committee for the new athletic director. We have stated that faculty are concerned not only about academic standards, but about preventing the exploitation of student athletes. This objective requires that students specially admitted to participate in marquee sports must be committed to our educational mission and that the UW provide the resources needed to help them fulfill this commitment.

- Reconstruction of the new football stadium will not be funded by state revenues. The UW has requested that the state allow for funding half the cost by means of King County's hospitality tax, previously directed to professional sports facilities. These funds, \$150 million, would support those improvements (seismic, replacing lower bowl seating, ADA requirements) needed to keep the stadium safely inhabitable. Other improvements to the stadium and the football facility would be paid for by donations.

None of this means that high-profile athletic programs are happily married to a university's educational mission, that we should pay exorbitant salaries to coaches, or that we can relax and take it for granted that we're doing justice to the people we recruit and the communities from which they come. Recognizing that some measures have been taken to address faculty concerns, the Faculty Senate must and will encourage an exchange of views and continuing vigilance on these issues.

/nlb