

ATHLETIC COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT  
MAY 2004

Academic 2003-04 was an unusually busy year for Athletic Council, but likely a harbinger of the future activity level for the group. The Council met 13 times over the course of the full year.

In the fall our conversations were dominated by consideration of the reinvigoration--in part in relation to the initial then reversed decision regarding the elimination of men's varsity ice hockey--of Friends of Skidmore Athletics and the mission clarification of that group. We met once with Michael Casey and Steve Clark to discuss the startup of a Friends steering group and once with Steve alone who shared the new fundraising brochure accompanied by a letter from AD Segrave.

A few weeks later, AD Segrave was also able to share the preliminary results of the "branding exercise" for a new Skidmore Thoroughbred logo. Next year, the Council will meet with John Chaplin, the new Advancement officer who will be on point in working with Friends of Skidmore Athletics.

We considered the draft of a Strategic Plan for Skidmore Athletics, prepared by Associate Dean and Council Member John Brueggemann. That document is now in final form. And the Council members read or reread the ARC Report and the Report of the External Reviewers of Skidmore Athletics. As a consequence of the consideration of these documents, the latter of which frequently refers to the work of the Gender Equity Committee, the Council revised its function statement and produced an operating code. Both of these latter documents have been passed on to CFG. As a consequence, however, of CFG's proposal to the faculty to revise the faculty governance system, the function statement revision has not yet been voted on by the faculty; we were willing to await the faculty's determination about changes in governance before consideration of a revised functioning of Athletic Council. It should be said, however, that we have functioned according to the revisions over the course of the year. [See Appendix A at the end of this report for our revised function statement. Appendix B, immediately thereafter, is a copy of the email rationale sent to CFG by the Chair, arguing that the Council remain a faculty committee in the event that the faculty vote to reconfigure the governance system. As CFG has outlined the reconfiguration, AC would become an all-college committee. Doubtless, this issue will be on the docket for the fall.]

One of the revisions to Athletic Council, one of which has already taken place as a result of the endorsement of CFG, the Dean, and the President is to add to the list of Council members the position of NCAA Faculty Representative, a position mandated by the NCAA. The faculty member who fills this position may or may not be a regular member of the Council, may or may not be the chair. Indeed, Kate Berheide, a regular member of the Council, was in the late fall appointed by the President and Dean to this position, effective immediately. The NCAA recommends that the NCAA Faculty Representative hold that position continuously for several years at least.

The Council also considered recommendations of the External Reviewers and our role in making athletics more visible on campus and in "bridging the gap between athletics and the rest of the academic programs." We met with members of the Student Athletic Advisory Committee and their advisor, Beth Hallenbeck, and heard their concerns and received information about what they had been working on. One project in the works we hope will be realized very soon is to add signage to the entrance to the Sports Center Parking lot that will advertise the home events scheduled for the week or so ahead. Additionally, the Council recommended:

- 1) that email invitations to attend the games of the in-season sports be sent to the entire community at the beginning of each semester;
- 2) that faculty "buddies" be solicited for each varsity sport, faculty members to attend games, encourage attendance among other faculty, perhaps to meet with students, etc.;
- 3) that a pedagogy session on Skidmore athletics and the classroom be scheduled for the coming fall;
- 4) that Athletic Council be invited to sports recognition and awards events as they occur.

AD Segrave also shared the results of Legislative Actions taken during the January 12th business session of the NCAA Division III conference. The Council reviewed the NCAA Gender Equity report submitted by the AD. We have seen as well the other two external reports supplied by the AD: the NCAA Designation of 2003-04 Demographics and Sports Sponsorship and the U.S. Dept. of Education Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act.

In fulfillment of a very pleasant duty, the Council received the nominations for the recipient of the Tim Brown Student Athlete award and made a determination of the student to be so honored.

Throughout the year, the Council received updates from AD Segrave and Dean Brueggemann regarding personnel and capital decisions made to address gender equity concerns and overall athletics issues. We are hiring, for example, an additional athletic trainer, have hired a full-time volleyball coach and a full-time women's soccer coach. (We are also hiring a women's basketball coach to replace the most recent coach.)

Finally, in the area of assessment, the committee was privileged to receive copies of Council member Keith Ganzenmuller's senior thesis, which includes a multi-variate analysis of a substantial number of variables affecting student athletes' experiences at Skidmore. We believe the thesis provides a wonderful basis on which to build ongoing assessment of athletics at Skidmore, as well as some very interesting correlations. Keith presented his work at Academic Festival in May. Council members are eager to see Keith return to campus for various sessions with individual groups who have particular interest in his results: e.g., coaches, student athletes themselves, possibly members of the Management and Business Department since approximately 25% of the student athletes are M/B majors. And we further hope that the studies which Keith has initiated under the supervision of Kate Berheide will be continued in order to provide continuous assessment of the success of intercollegiate athletics, beyond the tally of season wins:losses.

Athletic Council is delighted that Kate Berheide will chair the Council in 2004-05 and that we have in the wings Ela Lepkowska-White who will be in her second year on the Council next year and that Pat Fehling will be joining the Council in the fall. We are particularly grateful to our

student representatives this year, Keith Ganzenmuller and Meg Schade, who were with us through almost all of a grueling schedule and some quite sensitive meetings, particularly in the fall, and who worked very hard on behalf of Skidmore Athletics, both in the meeting room and on the field/court!

Athletic Council 2003-04

Kate Berheide, SASW, NCAA Faculty Representative  
John Brueggemann, DOF rep  
Don Hastings, DOSA rep  
Keith Ganzenmuller '04  
Ela Lepkowska-White, M/B  
Phyllis Roth, English, Chair  
Meg Schade '04  
Jeff Segrave, AD

Appendix A: Revised Function Statement  
Operating Code

FINAL DRAFT - needs to go back to CFG to come before the Faculty Meeting once the decision about revision of the governance system is made.

To assist the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty in articulating and espousing the vision for athletics at Skidmore and in efforts to assure productive links between the athletic programs and all other academic programs, working in coordination with the Athletic Director, the Student Athletic Advisory Committee, Student Affairs, and Advancement. To recommend to the VPAA/DOF policies regarding the Skidmore athletic program, including: the determination of the scope and level of competition in intercollegiate, club, and intramural sports; eligibility rules and relevant admissions processes; and establishment of priorities for the athletic program, including fitness/wellness and recreation. To monitor implementation of Skidmore's policies for athletics, including gender equity, and to evaluate annual reports related to the athletic program, including those filed with external agencies. To assist in such other matters as may be brought to the Council's attention by the Athletic Director or by any of the constituent groups of the college community. All meetings will be open and advertised in advance.

Membership: Three faculty members, each from a different department, elected to serve three-year terms; two students selected by SGA; the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty or his/her designee, the Dean of Student Affairs or his/her designee, the Athletic Director ex-officio (non-voting), and the NCAA Faculty representative ex-officio (voting and may be a member of the Committee as well).

PAR - 5/14/04

Appendix B - email to CFG (Gove Effinger)

Gove -- regarding switching Athletic Council from the category of Faculty Committee to one under a newly configured IPPC, Athletic Council members do understand why CFG is making this recommendation. However, for the following reasons, we are strongly convinced that the Council needs to remain a faculty committee.

As the revised function statement we recently forwarded to you indicates, Athletic Council advises the Dean of the Faculty on wide institutional matters such as the vision for athletics (understood broadly) and the Athletic Director on matters as specific as reports to external agencies.

Moreover, we are proposing in that revised function statement (and as recommended by external reviewers) that the Council monitor gender equity in athletics, particularly but not exclusively, in relation to intercollegiate athletics' programming, staffing and financial support.

Above all, however, is the philosophy that athletic experience is part of the students' EDUCATION at the college (not part, e.g., of admissions, advancement, certainly not financial aid, the college's fiscal picture, etc.), but part of their education -- ergo, philosophically, it should be a faculty committee. Moreover, there are staff in athletics who are tenured faculty or teaching associates, many who teach for-credit courses. It would be extremely confusing to retain the personnel matters as faculty matters and yet change the reporting relationships of the other business of the committee.

Finally, and also practically speaking, it makes much more sense to try, as we are now, to further bridge "academics" and athletics, rather than exacerbate a gap that is often problematic, and is reflected in the fact that, as at others schools and perhaps understandably, several of the major non-academic areas perceive a vested interest in athletics.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if CFG has further issues or questions to address to us. Thanks.

Phyllis