

## **ATHLETIC COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2008-2009**

### **Membership, 2008-2009**

Paul Arciero, Professor of Exercise Science

Kate Berheide, Professor of Sociology and NCAA Faculty Athletics Representative

Malina Boreyko '09, SGA representative (fall term)

Megan Buchanan, Associate Athletics Director and Senior Woman Administrator

Rochelle Calhoun, Dean of Student Affairs

Gail Cummings-Danson, Athletics Director

Michael Ennis-McMillan, Dean of Studies and Dean of Faculty representative

Teddy Gowan '09, Student Athletic Advisory Committee representative

Mia Guajardo '10, SGA representative (spring term)

Dan Nathan, Associate Professor of American Studies

Adrienne Zuerner, Associate Professor of French and Chair of Athletic Council

Athletic Council (AC) met eleven times this academic year and completed regular business in addition to sponsoring new endeavors.

For the second year, faculty members of AC conducted an annual evaluation of Physical Activity (PA) instructors and submitted a confidential report to the Dean of the Faculty, the Dean of Student Affairs, and the Athletic Director. This year faculty evaluated three PA instructors, and we can state with confidence that our colleagues in Athletics achieve the highest standards in classroom teaching. These instructors also contribute significantly to the health and wellness goals of Skidmore's Strategic Plan, the "systematic promotion of lifelong habits of health — not just for those involved directly in intercollegiate athletics but for all of our students."

As per our operating code, we welcomed guests from Admissions and Academic Student Services to provide updates on policies regarding admissions and academic progress of student-athletes. Michael Ennis-McMillan reported in December that his office receives fewer unsatisfactory progress reports for student-athletes. During his spring report, in conjunction with Sue Layden, he noted that new summer advising procedures for first-year students have reduced the number of course conflicts when students arrive on campus. Michael's analysis of data revealed that student-athletes do not appear to be at increased risk of academic problems or probation compared to the general student body.

Gail Cummings-Danson provided AC with biweekly reports on athletics, including the progress of various teams, Thoroughbred Society and Hall of Fame induction ceremonies, and for the first time this year, the success of hosting the NY Knicks' training camp (September 29-October 4). Gail asked the committee to review the impact of sports participation on students' decisions to study abroad. Dual-sport and winter-sport athletes have a difficult decision to make if they wish to study abroad; in the case of dual-sport athletes, an absence from campus means missing an entire season, for winter-sport athletes, part of a season. For this reason, some of these athletes are less likely to participate in study abroad programs during the academic year, sometimes opting for summer programs. Students receive the full support of the coaching staff when they

decide to study abroad, and we acknowledged that the decision of those students who remain on campus in season reflects their sense of the value of playing intercollegiate sports.

The committee endorsed a proposal submitted by Athletics for a faculty affiliate and guest coach program, designed to increase opportunities for student-athletes to build stronger relationships with faculty outside the classroom.

In January, AC hosted a pedagogy workshop led by Jeff Segrave on the relationships between teaching and coaching. Paul Arciero introduced the event, and we were pleased by attendance and general response to the event. We'd like to make such events a regular feature of our calendar.

At the end of the year, the committee (minus the student representatives) selected the winner of the annual Tim Brown Student-Athlete Award. This year Nick Coppola took the prize. Coppola, a history major with a 3.6 cumulative GPA, was also a three-time Liberty League All-Academic selection and a Thoroughbred Society inductee.

At FEC's request, faculty on AC participated in the Committee Structure Review and concurred that AC should maintain its current faculty membership. The primary factor in determining our present configuration could be described as "external"—NCAA guidelines. The NCAA mandates the existence of an NCAA faculty representative, and while the association does not mandate an athletic council, it specifies that if such a board exists, faculty and administrators must constitute a majority and that only an administrator or faculty member can chair the committee. The outgoing chair nonetheless invites the committee to return to this topic next year and to consider whether the committee membership *overall* might be reduced, so that a reduction of one faculty member does not jeopardize the majority required by NCAA guidelines, an option we did not discuss last year.

Paul Arciero will chair AC during the 2009-2010 academic year. Flagg Taylor (GO) was elected to a three-year term and will replace Dan Nathan, who finished his three-year term in May.

Respectfully submitted,

Adrienne Zuerner, Chair  
June 5, 2009