

Annual Report of the Athletic Council for 2014-2015
May xx, 2015 -- DRAFT 1

Committee Membership, 2014-2015:

2015	Carol Chiarella, Management & Business
2016	Mark Huibregtse, Mathematics and Computer Science, Chair
2017	Amon Emeka, Sociology
	Beau Breslin, Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs
	W. Rochelle Calhoun, Dean of Students and Vice President for Student Affairs
	Flagg Taylor, Government, NCAA Faculty Athletics Rep - ex-officio (voting)
	Gail Cummings-Danson, Athletic Director - ex-officio (non-voting)
	Megan Buchanan, Senior Woman Administrator, Athletics (non-voting)
2015	Kate Lambos '15, student rep
2015	Dan Miller '15, student rep

The Athletic Council met five times during the academic year 2014-2015.

Regular Business:

Review of Physical Activity Instructors: One of the committee's regular items of business is the peer evaluation of the Physical Activity instructors. Assignments of instructors being reviewed to faculty members on the committee were made at our first meeting in the fall; due to various unforeseen circumstances, not all of this work is complete as of this writing.

Annual Reports from the Director of Academic Advising (Kim Marsella), the Director of Student Academic Services (Jamin Totino), the Fundraising Coordinator for FOSA (Jeremy Deason), and the Director of Admissions (Catherine DeLorenzo): Pursuant to our operating code, we received reports from these officers regarding their perspectives on Skidmore's athletic program. In general, and consistent with past experience, the statistics reported by Kim Marsella and Jamin Totino indicate that athletic participation has a positive effect on academic performance. In a very thorough and informative report, Jeremy Deason outlined the mission and structure of the Friends of Skidmore Athletics (FOSA) and described the various fundraising efforts in support of our athletic program. Cathy DeLorenzo presented an overview of the student athlete recruitment process; not surprisingly, perhaps, the most important factor in successful recruitment is the availability of financial aid, which was more tightly constrained this year than last.

Scholar Athlete Award: The Committee reviewed the (remarkably impressive) qualifications of the nominees for the Scholar Athlete Award and selected this year's winner: Lauren Bosche, Class of 2015.

Reports from the Athletic Director: Each meeting of the committee included a report from Gail Cummings-Danson regarding the status of the athletic program and highlighting particular successes and/or problems.

Review of NCAA Rule Changes: Skidmore, as a member of the NCAA, has the right to vote on proposed rule changes. The committee discussed this year's proposals and made suggestions as to which we should support or oppose.

Concerns:

Title IX and Gender Equity: Skidmore's student population is approximately 60% female and 40% male, but athletic participation runs close to 50% male and 50% female -- about 190 students each. To be in compliance with Title IX, we need to bring the participation percentages in closer alignment with the population percentages, or else be able to demonstrate that we are meeting all student athletic participation needs. The survey executed last year demonstrated that there is interest (from both men and women) in cross-country, and some interest in women's ice hockey (but not enough to field a team). The department and the committee are monitoring the situation; it is expected that the survey will be re-run in another year or two.

Concussions: Gail Cummings-Danson noted that the number of reported concussions among the student body (not just student athletes) has been increasing. Academic accommodations for such cases depend largely on individual faculty, but in some cases administrative/late withdrawals could be in order.

Recruitment Calendar Changes: There is a trend toward earlier and earlier recruitment of high school athletes, which complicates the recruitment efforts of institutions trying to resist this unfortunate trend. The Admissions Office now does an "early read" of a potential student athlete in the summer preceding the candidate's senior year of high school. Early reads used to occur at a later date, after the student's senior year program was known.

Financial Aid: As mentioned earlier, success in recruitment is heavily influenced by the availability of financial aid. Schools that award significant merit aid have an advantage over institutions strongly committed to need-based aid, such as Skidmore. Increased financial aid is indeed the rising tide that will lift all boats at the college.

Other business:

Academic Credit for Intercollegiate Athletic Participation: The student members of the committee raised this issue, which was discussed in a preliminary way. Further consideration will likely be on the committee's agenda for 2015-2016.

Faculty Liaison Program: Flagg Taylor, the NCAA Faculty Athletics Representative, has been exploring the creation of a Faculty Liaison program for the athletic teams. Currently some faculty members have unofficial "advisory" connections to certain teams; a more formal liaison program would endeavor to provide liaisons for all teams and increase recognition of the liaisons' contributions. Flagg kept the committee apprised of his progress throughout the year.