

ATHLETIC COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2010-2011

Membership, 2010-2011

Paul Arciero, Associate Professor of Health and Exercise Sciences, Chair

Catherine Berheide, Professor of Sociology and NCAA Faculty Athletics Representative

Megan Buchanan, Associate Athletics Director and Senior Woman Administrator

Rochelle Calhoun, Dean of Student Affairs

Gail-Cummings Danson, Athletics Director

Joerg Bibow, Associate Professor of Economics

Tonya Dodge, Assistant Professor of Psychology

Jennifer Wood, Academic Advisor, Office of Academic Advising

Corey Freeman-Gallant, Associate Dean of the Faculty for Academic Advising & Professor of Biology

Elizabeth Gronquist, Class of 2011, Student Government Association Committee Representative

Jay Dwyer, Class of 2014, Student Athletic Advisory Committee Representative

Athletics Council (AC) met eleven times this academic year and completed regular business in addition to sponsoring some recently added events.

For the fourth year, faculty members of AC performed annual evaluations of Physical Activity (PA) instructors and submitted a confidential report to the Dean of Faculty, the Dean of Student Affairs, and the Athletic Director. This year, faculty on AC evaluated three PA instructors all of whom were from the Riding Program, and found each of them to uphold the highest standards of academic rigor in their classes and provide the students with a stimulating and engaging learning environment. We believe these instructors are continuing with the tradition of the Athletics Department in executing the mission of the college to promote the health and wellness goals as outlined in Skidmore's Strategic Plan, which states the "systematic promotion of lifelong habits of health – not just for those involved directly in intercollegiate athletics but for all of our students."

Additionally, we invited members from Admissions and Academic Student Services to report on various aspects of admissions and academic performance of our student-athletes. In November, Beau Breslin and Erica Bastress-Dukehart visited AC on behalf of the Faculty Learning Communities and Faculty Liaison to Coaches, respectively. These discussions led to the invitation of coaches to attend some of the fall 2011 Faculty Learning Community events led by Beau Breslin. The AC was very pleased with the outcome of these discussions as it will help integrate both new faculty and coaches into the Skidmore environment in beneficial ways. In March, Catherine DeLorenzo from Admissions visited with AC to discuss the process by which student-athletes are recruited to Skidmore using the "slotting" process. Catherine reported that the Admissions and Athletics Department work well together and feel the process of recruiting student-athletes to Skidmore is appropriate and successful. In April, Sue Layden from Student Academic Services and Corey Freeman-Gallant from the office of Academic Advising reported on the overall success of the advising efforts in both departments specifically pertaining to the academic support and performance of our student-athletes. Both confirmed that summer advising has been a huge success in terms of reducing course and schedule conflicts for incoming students and that, in general, student-athletes do not seem to be at risk of more academic problems or probation compared to non-athletes. The AC in consultation with Sue and Corey decided that in future years it would be best to present this data to the AC at one of the fall meetings of AC so they may present data for the entire year.

In October and November, AC invited guests from various programs to discuss pertinent matters affecting athletics. In October, Tim Clemmey, representing FOSA, visited with AC to discuss the goals, structure, and challenges relating to student-athlete alumni of Skidmore. Tim stated the two primary FOSA fundraising goals currently are the boathouse and an indoor facility (tennis). He stressed that a primary goal of FOSA was to educate parents and alumni about the model used to raise money for athletics and increase fundraising efforts for student-athlete alumni who graduated 10-20 years ago and those graduating each May. FOSA efforts have been successful so far. In November, Jen Burden, the Director of Health Promotion, visited with AC to present comparison data on the AOD surveys she conducted in spring 2010 and 2009 with about 500 students at Skidmore for each survey. Unfortunately, the use of both alcohol and psychotropic, prescription drugs has increased during this time, which also reflects local and national trends. Jenn discussed the role of Health Promotions and the Health Task Force in dealing with these problems at Skidmore. She presented three useful strategies that she is working collaboratively with others on campus, they include: 1) Harm reduction and responsible usage and reporting, 2) Abstinence and, 3) Responsible citizenship and leadership. All initiatives are working in conjunction with the athletics department.

There were several important agenda items impacting the athletics department that were handled very adeptly by Gail Cummings-Danson, Kate Berheide and others. These included the NCAA Institutional Self-Study, athletics facility master plan update, NCAA Legislation Amendments Review, and the NCAA DIII Identity Initiative.

Throughout the year, Gail Cummings-Danson provided AC with bimonthly reports on athletics, including performance of athletic teams, Thoroughbred Society and Hall of Fame induction ceremonies, Friends of Skidmore Athletics (FOSA) events, team sponsored events and fundraisers. AC was also regularly briefed on the status of the athletics facility update and the business of the Athletics Facilities Committee (AFC), which is charged with producing a master plan for athletics. While much progress has been made, funding is a central issue related to moving forward with the goals of the AFC.

This year the AC made some additional revisions to the "Athletic Council Procedures for review of physical activity instructors" in order to clarify the process and timeline of when letters are due. These revisions have considered the teaching schedules of the physical activity instructors and the academic demands of the faculty completing the reviews. In additions, AC revised the Tim Brown Scholar Athlete Award criteria to read that it will be "awarded annually to a graduating senior".

In March, AC selected the winner of the annual Tim Brown Student-Athlete Award. This year's recipient of the award was Alexandra (Alex) McGuire for equestrian. McGuire was a double major in computer science and mathematics with a 3.56 overall GPA. She was a two-time individual National Champion in the Walk-Trot-Canter.

Paul Arciero will be leaving AC having served for three years, the last two of which he was Chair. Flagg Taylor will return to AC in the fall following his year sabbatical and serve as Chair. Both Tony Dodge (accepted a position at another university) and Joerg Bibow (serving as a replacement for Flagg Taylor) will be leaving the committee. No replacement for Tonya Dodge has been elected yet.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul J. Arciero, Chair
May 13, 2011