

**Athletic Council  
Annual Report 2013-2014**

**Membership, 2013-2014**

2014	Linda Hall, English, (LV S '14)
	Steve Frey, Chemistry (replacement for Hall) S '14
2015	Carol Chiarella, Management & Business, Chair
2016	Mark Huibregtse, Mathematics and Computer Science
	Beau Breslin Dean of Faculty, Vice President of Academic Affairs
	W. Rochelle Calhoun, Dean of Students and Vice President for Student Affairs
	Flagg Taylor, NCAA Faculty Athletics Rep - ex-officio (voting)
	Gail Cummings-Danson, Athletic Director - ex-officio (non-voting)
	Megan Buchanan, Senior Woman Administrator, Athletics (non-voting)
2014	TBD, student rep
2014	Melissa Hirsch SAAC- Student Athletic Advisory Committee Representative

Athletics Council (AC) met eight times this academic year and completed regular business.

**Evaluation of Physical Activity instructors**

Faculty members of AC performed annual evaluations of Physical Activity (PA) instructors and submitted a confidential report to the Athletic Director, Associate Dean of Student Affairs. This year, faculty on AC evaluated three PA instructors, and found each of them to uphold 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.

**Annual Reports from Associate Dean of Faculty, Associate Dean of Student Affairs (to include Student Academic Services), and Director of Admissions**

In keeping with our operating code, we invited members from Admissions and Academic Student Services to report on various aspects of admissions and academic performance of our student-athletes. In April we heard reports from Corey Freeman-Gallant, Associate Dean of the Faculty, Sue Layden, Associate Dean of Student Affairs, and Cathy Delorenzo, Director of Admissions. Student athletes continue to demonstrate strong academic performance and in some semesters out-perform non-athletes GPAs. Sue Layden's office (Student Academic Services) continues to work closely with student athletes and evidence indicates continued success. Cathy Delorenzo reported that diversity goals of the College were met with success. She updated the AC about current early recruitment strategies and the success of early communication with the coaches. She did, however, express concern about Skidmore's ability to remain competitive with its current level of financial aid available to students. Admissions also reported that Division I schools begin recruitment steps at a younger age and was concerned about the impact this might have on Division III schools.

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### **Regular Reports from Athletics Department**

Throughout the year, Gail Cummings-Danson and Megan Buchanan provided AC with 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 also provided feedback to Athletic director about 2014 NCAA Division III Legislative Proposal Summary. Of particular attention was the penalty for an athlete testing positive for street drugs from one calendar year to 50% of the next season.

### **Concerns:**

#### Field maintenance

During the Spring season it was noted that the College had insufficient level of staff available to maintain the fields. Weather conditions played a major role in field maintenance but additional support is needed to support the current game schedule. At least one game was relocated to a neighboring college who could support better field maintenance.

#### Block Scheduling

Athletic Director expressed strong support for block scheduling to provide student athletes with a more consistent and in-depth course selection. Because of travel requirements and field availability many student athletes are confronted with limited course choices in afternoon time periods. This request was communicated to the Dean of Faculty by AC. Physical space was cited as the biggest hurdle for successful implementation of block scheduling.

#### Examinations taking place outside of the master schedule class time

The number of required exams held outside of scheduled class times was also brought to the attention of the AC. There are several courses that require exams to be held outside of the scheduled class times and this is not always communicated on the syllabus. In some cases it is communicated on the syllabus but the students have very limited options to change their course schedules during the first week of class since many class sections are closed (full enrollment). AC would like to see all out-of-class requirements communicated to the students during advance registration. AC expressed this concern to the Associate Dean of Faculty and the Chair of CEPP (Committee on Educational Policies and Planning). This concern has been addressed by CEPP and is undergoing further analysis with a recommendation for action forthcoming.

#### Undocumented flexible 4<sup>th</sup> credit hour

Flexible 4<sup>th</sup> credit hour is another scheduling concern for student athletes. Some instructors do not communicate on the syllabus exactly how the flexible 4<sup>th</sup> credit hour will be scheduled. This concern has been addressed by Curriculum Committee and each syllabus must document the details of the flexible 4<sup>th</sup> credit.

No other concerns were communicated. Over all it was a year of strong and successful athletic participation. (See 2014 Intercollegiate Athletic Recognition Night Program for summary documentation of outstanding team and individual performance.)

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**Title IX Follow-up**

A 2012-2013 study identified a weakness in our participation rates (female to male). In an effort to meet Title IX compliance standards and further understand our student population's interest in athletics an Athletic Interest Survey was conducted. Data collected from this survey will be used by SGA leadership and Athletics Department for planning purposes. Some sports that are not represented but may have student interest include cross-country, bowling, fencing, golf and ice hockey (women).

**Committee on Academic Standards (CAS) request**

AC was asked to express an opinion. Question from CAS "Should athletes granted a waiver of our minimal standards of continuation be allowed to petition to play during their semester of academic probation?" In summary, it is our intention to agree with CAS and allow a student to participate in sports but only under extraordinary circumstances and to use this option very sparingly.

**Strategic Planning (request from the College President)**

The Athletic Director in conjunction with AC prepared a written document in response to a College Wide Strategic Planning Document. Final report was submitted under the Dean of Student Affairs report.

Key concerns:

- Sufficient financial aid to remain competitive with peer institutions
- Appropriate facilities
- Outside perception of Athletic Program-would like to see it improve

**Scholar Athlete Award - Tim Brown Award**

Nominations for the Tim Brown Award were directed to the Athletic Director and then presented to the AC. Final decision was to recommend Corinne Palmer for the Tim Brown award. Summary: Four-time Thoroughbred Society Award, All American in 2012 (American Volleyball Coaches Association), 2012 Player of the year (Liberty League), 2011, 2012, 2013 Player of the Week (All Liberty League), and holds several records at Skidmore.

**NCAA Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR)**

Flagg Taylor reported the growing interest, at a national level (based on correspondence with other institutions), of faculty advisors for each athletic team. The topic and the possible impact to students and faculty are currently under review.

**2014-2015 Committee Membership**

Mark Huibregste will serve as Chair. Flagg Taylor will continue to serve as NCAA Faculty Athletics Representative. Amon Emeka from Sociology will be new faculty member. Student Representatives, TBD.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Chiarella, Chair  
August 18, 2014