

## Annual Report of the Athletic Council for 2016-17

June 7, 2017

### Committee Membership, 2016-17:

| Final Year |   |
|------------|---|
| 2016       | Jason Breves, Biology (Leave Replacement, Fall 2016)                        |
| 2017       | Amon Emeka, Sociology (On leave, Fall 2016; Chair, Spring 2017)             |
| 2018       | T. H. Reynolds, Health & Exercise Science (Chair, Fall 2016)                |
| 2019       | Caroline D'Abate, Management & Business                                     |
|            | Beau Breslin, Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs   |
|            | Flagg Taylor, Government, NCAA Faculty Athletics Rep. - ex-officio (voting) |
|            | Gail Cummings-Danson, Athletic Director                                     |
|            | Megan Buchanan, Senior Woman Administrator, Athletics (non-voting)          |
| 2018       | Meaghan Lynch, Student Athlete Advisory Committee, Class of 2019            |
| 2018       | Emily Mendes, Student Athlete Advisory Committee, Class of 2019             |

The Athletic Council met six times during the academic year 2016-17:

### Regular Business:

Pursuant to the Athletic Council operating code, we received annual reports from officers of academic affairs, advancement, and admissions regarding their perspectives on Skidmore's athletic program.

**Annual Reports from the Director of Academic Advising (Kim Marsella) and the Director of Student Academic Services (Jamin Totino).** Kim and Jamin updated the Council on patterns of student-athlete academic performance in the most recent year. They pointed out that student-athletes have mean GPA's that are very similar to those of the student body, are no more or less likely to find themselves on academic probation, and are less likely to receive unsatisfactory work notices than other students. One cause for concern is an increasing use of tutoring services by student-athletes and non-athletes alike which is putting significant strain on SAS resources. More detail can be found in the minutes of the March 22, 2017 meeting.

**Annual Report from the Fundraising Coordinator for FOSA (Zach Schwan).** Zach updated the Council on fundraising efforts of student-athletes and challenges faced by larger fundraising efforts. He highlighted the importance of involving student-athletes in fundraising campaigns including the "Phonathon" which raised about \$5,000 this year. More detail can be found in the minutes of the April 5, 2017 meeting.

**Annual Report from the Director of Admissions (Catherine DeLorenzo).** Cathy updated the Council regarding procedures and patterns of admission as they relate to student-athletes. Of the approximately 8,000 applicants to Skidmore College this year 396 were identified by coach as student athletes. Of those 138 were accepted. It is not yet known how many of those will enroll, but based on the 2015-16 student-athlete yield, 95 new student-athletes in the Fall 2017 semester is a reasonable prediction. More detail can be found in the minutes of the April 19, 2017 meeting.

Also pursuant to the Athletic Council operating code, we contributed to athletics department functions including the peer review of physical activities instructors, selection of the Tim Brown Award winner, and consideration of regular reports offered by the Athletic Director.

**Review of Physical Activity Instructors:** The Athletic Council performs peer evaluations of Physical Activity instructors each year. This year Rob Hutchison, Tucker Kear, and Tom Oppedisano were evaluated by faculty members of the Athletic Council. The reviews have all been completed and the results forwarded to the Athletic Director, Gail Cummings-Danson.

**Tim Brown Scholar Athlete Award:** The award is meant to recognize a graduating senior who exhibits an outstanding level of dedication, discipline, and accomplishment in both his or her academic and athletic pursuits at Skidmore. The Council is responsible for reviewing the nominees and selecting one winner. This year's distinguished recipient was Becca Halter, an All-League and All-American field hockey player who earned a 3.94 cumulative GPA and numerous other accolades.

The Council agreed that the minimum cumulative GPA for consideration should, starting next year, be increased from 3.4 to 3.65 to keep the award criterion in line with criterion for College Honors.

**Reports from the Athletic Director:** Each meeting of the committee included a report from Gail Cummings-Danson and/or Megan Buchanan regarding the status of the athletics programs highlighting particular successes and/or problems. More detail can be found in the meeting minutes.

#### **Other Business:**

**Faculty Liaison Program:** In the April 5, 2017 meeting, Flagg Taylor, the NCAA Faculty Athletics Representative, offered a formal proposal for the establishment 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, increase recognition of the liaisons' contributions, and maintain strong connections between athletics and academics at Skidmore. The proposal was unanimously supported by the Council at the April 19 meeting and will be presented to FEC in the 2017-18 academic year.

**Disagreements around the College Mascot:** In late January 2017, there was an exchange on the faculty email list about the appropriateness of the "Thoroughbred" moniker and the "Thoroughbred Society," more specifically. The Council requested brief formal statements on the matter at the April 7, 2017 Faculty Meeting. In total, we received five comments—three of which expressed dissatisfaction with the Thoroughbred moniker and the remaining two of which were neutral to positive.

**Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) Contributions:** The two SAAC members who sat on the Athletic Council in the 2016-17 expressed a continuing desire to earn academic credit for their participation in intercollegiate athletics. They also kept the Council abreast of the student-athlete-initiated "It's On Us" campaign to draw attention to the problem of sexual assault on college campuses including our own.