

University Athletics Board Report to Senate

May 9, 2011

UAB Mission Statement

The UAB serves to provide a structure for the dissemination of information about the athletics program to the Faculty Senate and the University community; it also works with the administration to oversee institutional control of athletics. As an academic committee, its areas of responsibility include academic progress of student-athletes and related elements that impact academic progress.

The Academic Progress of CCSU Teams

Data on the academic progress of CCSU teams is provided on the attached page. The attachment includes three semesters of data on team grade-point averages (GPA), Academic Progress Rate (APR) scores, and Graduation Success Rate (GSR) information. Noteworthy is that CCSU cumulative team GPA's exceeded 3.0 for both the Fall 2010 and 2009 semesters. More importantly for NCAA reporting is that only one team (Men's Soccer) fell below the 925 standard for 2010 and only Women's Basketball fell below that standard for the four year period. CCSU one-year APR scores compared favorably against other division 1 universities and against public universities as a whole. CCSU team GSR scores and the overall average of 61% compare less favorably against the NCAA average of 79%. Even so, the current GSR average, and the graduation rate for scholarship student athletes (66% in the 2003 cohort) compare favorably with the overall 6 year CCSU graduation rate of 49%. Moreover, six programs (Volleyball, Women's Swimming, Men's Soccer, Women's Soccer, Men's Cross-Country and Women's Cross Country) were recognized by their respective regional and/or national coaches associations for outstanding academic performance.

Competitiveness

The overall athletic success of teams in the NEC is reflected in the NEC Commissioner's Cup standings. Points in the standings are accrued based on the ranking of teams within the conference. CCSU has traditionally finished in the bottom half of the NEC standings. In part, this results from the fact that CCSU does not participate in all of the sports that are included in the Commissioner's Cup. Even so, CCSU teams have done quite well this year. As of the time of submission, CCSU was ranked 4th in the Commissioner's Cup standings. If this ranking holds, it would mark CCSU's best Commissioner's Cup result since 2001-2002. This includes first place finishes in Men's Cross-Country, Men's Track, and a share of first place in Football.

Core Principles of Athletics Programs

Under the guidance of the new athletic director, and in conjunction with feedback from staff and from surveys of student-athletes, the CCSU Athletics Department has adopted a series of four core principles as guides for their staff, teams, and students. The four are 1) academic success, 2) competitive success, 3) campus integration, and 4) community engagement. By following its core principles, the athletics program will be able to achieve its strategic objectives of providing a positive educational experience for the student-athletes and of making CCSU one of the premier athletics programs in the NEC.

One of the new programs linked to the core principles is the faculty-mentor program that is currently under development. The program would link interested CCSU faculty members to CCSU athletic teams, contributing to the academic success of students and to the campus integration of the sports programs. Based on the core principles, CCSU athletes participated in a variety of community outreach programs including work with the Boys and Girls Club of New Britain and with the Hospital for Special Care.

Closer to home, the Athletics Department engaged in a comprehensive marketing plan intended to increase attendance at all athletics department sporting events and to enhance collaborative efforts between athletics and the campus community. One example of this was in student orientation when the entire class of 2015 participated in a 'Pep Rally' at Arute Field.

The UAB has contributed to these efforts by providing assistance in program development, especially with the faculty-mentor program, and in an advisory/informational role. In the future, the UAB will likely play a more active role in assisting the Athletics Department in the pursuit of its core principles.

Changes to UAB Bylaws

Due to confusion over membership and sabbatical leaves, elected AAUP/SUOAF members in the UAB had increased over the past three years from 5 to 7 members. With changes in UAB responsibilities, the accidental increase in elected members was beneficial to the work of the committee. As such, it was decided that the increase in membership should be retained. The UAB bylaws were officially changed so that they now provide for 7 elected AAUP/SUOAF members.