

University of Washington
Faculty Council on Student Affairs
December 3, 2013, 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm
Gerberding 36

Meeting Synopsis:

1. Call to Order
 2. Approval of the Agenda
 3. Review of the Minutes from November 5, 2013
 4. Student Athletes
 5. Chair's Report
 6. Adjourn
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1) Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Treser at 1:30 p.m.

2) Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as submitted.

3) Review of Minutes from November 5, 2013

Minutes from November 5, 2013 were approved as amended.

4) Student Athletes

Robert Stacey (chair of the Advisory Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics – “ACIA”) and Pete Dukes (Faculty Athletics Representative) were present to share their perspectives on student athletes at UW.

The ACIA is a faculty council with the charge to oversee academic welfare of student athletes. In that role ACIA conducts annual reviews of the academic progress of all students recruited and admitted as “priority” and “special” admits. ACIA designed this process which was approved by the President and Faculty Senate allowing for intercollegiate athletics to admit (through the admission process) up to 70 students as “priority admit” and 30 students with “special admit” status. Stacey clarified that “priority admit” students have an 80% chance or better in receiving a 2.0 GPA at UW while freshmen, while “special admit” students are not projected to have an 80% chance or better in receiving a 2.0 GPA. Last year there were only 19 “special admit” and 50 “priority admit” students who entered UW as freshman.

Each year ACIA will review how these groups of students are performing to identify patterns in their academic success. Overall, UW student athletes rank second in the PAC-12 behind Stanford. Current graduation rates of student athletes are 82%, with football being 75%. Stacey mentioned that he cannot remember the last time UW lost a “special admit” student on academic grounds. Instead, these students would leave UW as a result of transferring or withdrawing for other reasons. ACIA has a strong commitment to only accept students they know have a very good chance of succeeding academically at UW. Through the admissions process ACIA does not know if the applicants are starters or

benchwarmers, only their designated sport and potential academic performance. This is different compared to other PAC-12 schools, such as UC-Berkeley, which considers athleticism as a primary factor in determining admissions. Stacey mentioned that this may be a factor in UC-Berkeley's low graduation rate for student athletes.

ACIA also tracks the majors that student athletes take to identify concentration of particular majors. This is done to ensure particular programs are not just seen as good majors for student athletes. Stacey mentioned that there are no majors that draw particular concern to ACIA, but mentioned that social sciences are more common compared to the whole student body. One surprising concentration is American Ethnic Students which ACIA will be looking into. ACIA also pays close attention to changes within the NCAA. For example, ACIA has been recently monitoring changes in the scheduling of athletic contests due to a new television contract.

Dukes discussed his role at the Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR). The FAR is UW's voice to the NCAA and PAC-12 to address the academic success of student athletes and the support they need to be successful. Dukes will typically spend several days a week with ACIA and Kim Duran (Associate Director for Student Development) to ensure these students are having a good experience beyond academics. One thing that ACIA coordinates is an exit survey of student athletes when they graduate or leave UW. This survey addresses various issues, including:

- Support from the athletic department
- Support from faculty
- Connection, identity and attachment with the UW community
- Recruitment
- Preparation for UW
- Overall athletic, academic and social experience

Dukes discussed the findings from the recent survey. There has been a lot of data generated and Dukes mentioned that perhaps ACIA should ask these questions earlier in a student's career, such as when they are sophomores rather than outgoing seniors. Average GPA of student athletes is 3.0 which is a little lower than UW's overall average, but is not bad. Many student athletes reported a positive response towards their overall academic experience, as well as student athletic advisory services. Dukes clarified that there are approximately 12 staff that provide assistance such as tutoring services. Generally, student athletes feel pretty good about being at UW. However, those in the football and track programs reported a lower rating than their peers. This could be a result of their high-profile status and not being as engaged with the UW campus.

A comment was made that the coaching staff is very influential in determining academic success for student athletes. For example, the average GPA of the soccer team is 3.6 because the coach is very focused on academics. McNerney provided an example of a recent track athlete who is very involved with ASUW. Cross country, gymnastics and softball are other sports whose athletes are academically successful as well.

Approximately 85% of student athletes feel close to the athletic community, while 52% feel part of the UW community as a whole. Discussion ensued regarding the connection between student athletes and the university community. The goal is to make the handoff so that students who received most of their academic support through ACIA can transition to upper campus and receive similar support to ensure their success, such as academic advising. For example, in the School of Business students apply at the

end of their sophomore year. Once accepted the students are immediately in touch with a Business School advisor who tells them which courses to take. Generally, ACIA will have formal contact with the school or college by directly contacting advisors. Additionally, ACIA will try to ensure “special admit” students receive the support they need in order to be successful. Stacey mentioned that these students will require less support by the time they are seniors. One of the reasons why so much attention is spent on support services for these students is that a number of them come to UW with undiagnosed learning disabilities that have not been diagnosed or treated while in high school.

Fabien commented that while it may be a mistake for UW to allow these “special” and “priority” admit students, the UW is very good at creating an open system that explains how it works to ensure these students succeed and graduate. The concern about admissions is that UW is tipping the scales for particular students who would not normally be admitted while spending a lot of resources to ensure they graduate. Services include special testing facilities, courses, seminars and workshops which require a lot of money to support. Discussion ensued. Stacey explained that all costs are paid out of the athletic department’s budget.

Stroup made a comment that the survey findings lump all student athletes together. Citing personal experience, Stroup’s student athletes will write about their insecurities about being stereotyped as “dumb jocks” which is common for student athletes who participate in highly visible programs such as football and basketball. Additionally, student athletes do not feel that they are taken seriously by faculty. One student athlete compared his status to a slave; using his body for other people’s benefit. Since he was from Compton, and did not have a good education, his only options were to join the military or play competitive sports.

Fabien commented that UW’s admissions policy perpetuates the stereotype of “dumb jocks”. As a black man who has a black son, his son is often viewed as attending UW simply because he is on the basketball team, which is not true. As a result of UW’s admission policy towards student athletes the majority of students now believe that minorities on campus are only at UW to play sports. For most sports programs, most universities accept students first who later try out for sports once they are enrolled, similar to his experience at Columbia University. Discussion ensued. That assumption does not appear to be correct since recruitment for intercollegiate athletics is common for most institutions.

A comment was raised expressing surprise that amongst all the “special” and “priority” admit student athletes; few are actually from the football program. It is clear that this admissions policy touches on all sports, not just a particular few. Concern was raised that there is still an assumption that student athletes are not intelligent and it is hurting them. The university is creating student athletes similar to gladiators who are a special kind of slave. This is perpetuated by the fact coaches have so much pressure to win championships. A comment was raised that while Kim Durand can be trusted, this data being provided can be made up and faculty would not know. Therefore, a system should be put into place to maintain academic integrity. Stacey explained that there are athletes which UW coaches are unable to enroll into UW due to the university’s high academic standards.

A question was raised asking how other PAC-12 schools can increase their academic standards for incoming student athletes. This would be difficult to accomplish because there is so much pressure from the media, university alumni and money tied to winning. Collegiate sports are now viewed in the same way as professional sports because of the media and the millions of dollars that drive that expectation. A comment was raised that the data should be trusted and work needs to be done to communicate the findings to faculty. Additionally, not many faculty members know that student athletes are a diverse

group of individuals and that many take their own classes. This data is currently used by ACIA for monitoring purposes, but it could be very useful in highlighting accomplishments to the general public. A comment was made to notify the Seattle Times about these findings.

A comment was raised that students will follow the lead of professors, so it is the faculty's responsibility to set examples for their students. Stroup mentioned that she has experienced a surprising number of dismissive remarks about having student athletes in her class. One possibility would be to highlight student athletes on the university's home page. A comment was raised that many councils similar to FCSA are passionate about their particular issues but it is difficult to communicate the importance to people who are going about their daily lives. Discussion ensued. While that is true, it is important to get the word out. However, there is a cultural divide creating a larger problem. One cannot twist people's arms to care about the issues, but it does require visibility. A comment was raised comparing this to Nike because the company's symbol is seen everywhere. If the issue is constantly visible then it will be internalized by the public.

A question was raised asking how this could be accomplished. The council has the data, now it needs to communicate the message. A suggestion was made to create articles that show the data while incorporating a human side to it. Discussion moved to student athletes and the physical intelligence required to play their sport. Stroup provided an example of students who demonstrated their use of physical space on a recent archeological dig she supervised. A comment was raised that athletic bias is permissible compared to other stereotypes in society. By providing the data to the faculty, FCSA could finally address the cultural aspects of this issue.

Court explained that an easy, effective method in communicating this information is through a Class C resolution which the council can present to the Faculty Senate. A comment was raised stressing the importance of providing data that is graphically appealing. Discussion ensued to identify ways to get the message out to be more visible to the public. A suggestion was made that departments could identify students within their programs to provide recognition.

5) Chair's Report

Treser is working with Court to develop the agenda for the rest of the year. Treser has invited Joshua Kavanaugh and Celeste Gillman to an upcoming council meeting to discuss changes to the U-PASS program. Student study centers and the Faculty Appeals Board will be other agenda items the council will address as well.

6) Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Treser at 3:00 p.m.

Minutes by Grayson Court, Faculty Council Support Analyst. gcourt@uw.edu

Present: **Faculty:** Treser (Chair), Fabien, Laws, Lopez, Stroup, Svircev
President's Designee: Johnson
Ex-Officio Reps: McNerney

Absent: **Faculty:** Burke, Ezeonwu
Ex-Officio Reps: Jones Wiles, Tawatao