

University Athletics Advisory Committee (UAAC) Annual Report, 2004-2005

The University of South Carolina Athletic Advisory Committee (UAAC) addressed a number of issues during 2004-2005. As explained in the Faculty Manual description of the committee and further described in the remainder of this report, the committee reviews and monitors admissions decisions and the academic performance of all student-athletes. It regularly receives appropriate and relevant information regarding the academic eligibility and progress of student-athletes, including graduation rates. The committee also receives and reviews reports on annual inter-collegiate athletic program schedules and major changes to them; the annual budget of the Athletics Department; admissions decisions for athletes receiving grants-in-aid; NCAA certification reports, including Title IX reports; major requests for waiver of any institutional athletic policies; major changes in Athletics Department personnel (specifically the director of athletics, director of the academic support unit, and head coaches for each sport); the needs, interests, and concerns of student athletes; all other issues regarding inter-collegiate activities as referred to it by University officials. The committee advises, as appropriate, the Faculty Senate, the NCAA Faculty Athletic Representative (FAR), the president, the director of athletics, and the Board of Trustees on all matters under its consideration. In addition to addressing these and other topics during 2004-2005, three head coaches (Mark Berson, Men's Soccer; Ray Tanner, Baseball; and Shelly Smith, Women's Soccer) met individually with the committee and discussed issues impacting their athletes and the academic environment of those student athletes.

During our initial meeting in October 2004, Russ Pate, the USC Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR), described the recommendations and report of the Committee on the Review of the Athletic Academic Support Unit. In addition, the committee discussed the "Policy on Special Admissions", as well as the academic progress of special admits during the last two admission cycles. Harold White, Interim Senior Associate Director of Athletics for Academic Support Services, provided an overview of his support unit and its programs. He presented information regarding the USC Program of Excellence and recent accomplishments of Team Gamecocks. In addition, Coach White explained the Student Athlete Statement (Form No. 04-3a). Next, Val Sheley, Senior Associate Director of Athletics and Senior Women's Administrator, reviewed issues related to team schedules and the effects of athletic-related travel and competition on class attendance. Her report included the distribution and review of the 2004-2005 report regarding missed class days across all individual athletic teams. All sports fell within policy requirements. Finally, Dr. Mike McGee, Director of Athletics, first summarized recent results for the 2004 Fall semester team competition. He presented a report on academic progress rates for 2004, including both aggregate data pooled across all teams and individually for each of USC's 18 NCAA teams. Dr. McGee's report regarding the APR information (NCAA Academic Performance Rate) described new NCAA requirements that are based upon a point system formula calculated per semester that delineates academic success, retention eligibility and graduation of student-athletes. The score for each team is then compared to other teams within the institution and for the same sports nationally. In reviewing USC's preliminary performance, the committee believes that the University will be in good

shape. If an institution falls below the predetermined cut score by sport, there are immediately penalties that can affect scholarships starting during the 2005-06 academic year. If an institution shows a historical pattern of falling below the cut scores by sports, there are three levels of penalties, each building upon the other. It is possible for an institution or team to lose scholarships and/or the ability to participate in post-season championships. In extreme cases, the institution could lose NCAA Division I membership status.

During the November meeting, Mike McGee and Brad Edwards, Senior Associate Athletic Director for Business and Development, reviewed the University Department of Intercollegiate Athletics Budget, Fiscal year 2004-2005. As part of their presentation, Dr. McGee and Mr. Edwards presented details regarding financial transfers and support of the general University by the Athletics Department. Second, Russ Pate, FAR, reviewed the University Policy on Special Admissions (established March 15, 2004). Third, Jim Augustine, Chair of the USC Faculty Senate, presented a summary of the University's involvement with the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA).

At the December meeting, Coach Mark Berson, Men's Soccer, met with the UAAC and described the academic performance and environment for his players and team. During the discussion, Coach Berson emphasized the fact that many student athletes, including all Olympic sports participants, are involved in their sports for the enjoyment of the competition and work very hard without any prospects of professional careers in sports. In addition, the coach reminded the committee, and indirectly all faculty and students, that many athletes pursue graduate degrees and very productive careers in business, healthcare, education, etc. Next, the committee discussed issues associated with the Clemson football incident. Val Sheley, Associate Athletic Director and Senior Women's Administrator, provided an overview of the University's response. The ensuing discussion centered upon ideas for enhancing the competitive interface and sportsmanship between Clemson University and the University of South Carolina. Finally, Harold White, Associate Athletic Director for Academic and Student Support Services, provided an overview of USC's current student support resources, as well as a comparison of those resources with similar resources at other universities, based upon a survey of other SEC institutions and Clemson University.

During the February meeting, Coach Ray Tanner met with the UAAC and described the academic environment and performance of his players and team. During the discussion, Coach Tanner emphasized the academic progress of his team, the support of the University faculty, and his approach for addressing student athlete performance. Following the discussion with Coach Tanner, Drs. Tim Malone and Rod Walters provided an in-depth review of USC athlete drug testing procedures and results. Finally, Russ Pate, FAR, summarized the annual report (through January 2005) regarding the progress and status of special admission student athletes.

In March, Coach Shelley Smith, Women's Soccer, met with the UAAC and described the strong academic performance of her players and the academic environment surrounding the team. During the discussion, Coach Smith, like the previous two coaches who visited

with UAAC, emphasized the fact that many student athletes are involved in their sports for the enjoyment of the competition and work very hard without any prospects of professional careers in sports. Moreover, she reiterated the fact that the publicized (misbehavior?) incidents of a few athletes do not represent the behavior of the large majority of USC athletes. Next, Jason Pappas, Director of Academic Support, described the new NCAA Academic Progress Report (APR) and the process for determining university performance. Based upon data for 2003-2004, the Men's Basketball team warranted some concern, which the committee was told is being addressed. Schools will first feel the impact of potential scholarship reductions during the 2005-2006 academic year. Contemporaneous penalties will be based on the performance data from both the 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 academic years. This information is available on the NCAA website. Finally, Val Sheley described a series of reports as required by the UAAC committee description. First, she summarized a 2003-2004 US Department of Education (EADA) document which reports the numbers of athletes involved across the different USC teams and the operating expenses for each team, as well as the number of assistant and head coaches involved. Data on total revenues and expenses, as well as recruiting expenditures and coaches' salaries, were also included. A question was raised regarding the difference between men's and women's head and assistant coach's salaries. It was suggested that the large assistant football coaching staff (9) may have skewed these numbers. This information is also available on the US Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education website. Second, Val Sheley described the NCAA 2004 Division I Graduation Rates Report. A question was raised regarding the performance of USC student-athletes as compared to previous years. The 2004 report showed an upward trend from recent years, with graduation rates improving from 52 percent for 2003 to 58 percent for 2004. This report is also available on the NCAA website.

During the April meeting, Dr. McGee provided a brief summary of athletic team performance for the Spring 2005 semester. Second, issues related to missed classes and exams associated with the Penn Relays were discussed. The committee agreed to present to the Faculty Senate a brief overview of Athletic Department policies related to missed classes. The remainder of the April meeting focused upon the COIA document entitled "Academic Integrity in Intercollegiate Athletics: Principles, Rules, and Best Practices." At the end of the April meeting, the decision was made to have a sub-committee of UAAC review the COIA document during the summer (1) to identify those aspects of the document already consistent with current USC Athletic Department policies and procedures and (2) to select specific recommended best practices that warrant future UAAC discussion in 2005-2006, as well as possible recommendation for Faculty Senate and/or Athletic department adoption.

Finally, and also at the April 20, 2005 meeting, the committee elected Bill Bearden to serve again as the UAAC Chair for 2005-2006, and welcomed new members, Geoff Alpert, Criminal Justice, and Gary Miller, Educational Studies.

Submitted by William O. Bearden, Chair of UAAC, 2004-2005

UAAC Members, 2004-2005

Elected

William O. Bearden, Marketing
Mathew Bernthal, Sports Management
James Coleman, Psychology
Dorothy Disterheft, English
George Holmes, Medicine
Pamela Melton, Law School

Appointed

Art Bahnmuller, Board of Trustees
Larkin Ellzey, Student
Augie Grant, Journalism
Holly Hodges, Student, Pres. Student Athletic Advisory Comm.
Martha McConnell, Graduate Student
Mike McGee, Athletic Director
Russ Pate, Faculty Athletic Representative
Dennis Pruitt, Student and Alumni Services
Val Sheley, Associate Athletic Director
Jessica Wells, Student
Harold White, Associate Athletic Director