THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
REGENTS COMMUNICATION
ITEM FOR INFORMATION

Subject: Review the Academic Advising of Student Athletes

This report is an overview of a report endorsed by SACUA on January 26, 2009.

Our concerns about the academic environments of our student-athletes flow from the following realities. First, student-athletes must spend substantial amounts of time preparing for and participating in intercollegiate competition. Practice times are set by athletic department staff and, as a result of practice schedules, departmental course offerings necessarily constrain academic choices. Well over ninety percent of these students will never have athletic careers and their academic choices are important to their futures.

Second, the options for careers available to our student-athletes, consistent with their capabilities, are sometimes reduced as a result of their admission to particular colleges within the university. Nearly forty percent of first-year scholarship athletes enroll in programs they almost certainly will not complete. Too many student-athletes transfer from one school or college to another, and by the time that takes place many of them have access to only a very limited number of academic options. Student-athletes admitted to LSA and Engineering, because of time constraints mentioned above, have somewhat narrower options compared to other students admitted to these colleges; a scholarship athlete initially enrolled in Kinesiology who then transfers to LSA as a junior, has much narrower options and may not be able to meet the requirements for an LSA concentration.

The recommendations are based on one principle: all students---regardless of their participation in intercollegiate athletics---should have a rich choice of options in terms of courses, concentrations, and advising. These choices must be consistent with the high expectations we have for all Michigan students and also consistent with the capabilities of the students we admit.

The advising function with regard to course selection, choice of concentration, and student performance and standing should be primarily in the hands of trained academic advisors. When it is anticipated that student athletes will graduate from a particular college, we would want these students to enroll in that college.

The Academic Success Program for student-athletes should supplement academic advising of the colleges and schools where these athletes are enrolled. The Bridge Program serves the needs of any undergraduate college/school on campus and must also serve student athletes.

- New concentrations within the Individual Concentration Program (ICP) of LSA should be developed that are attractive to many students, including student-athletes.

- Responsibility for making recommendations to the Provost on student-athlete eligibility based on standards set by the University of Michigan should be transferred from the Academic Performance Committee (APC) to Student Academic Affairs in LSA.

- An enriched "Bridge Plus" Program coupled with the Academic Success Program should continue to serve as resources for the enrichment of student capabilities. The existing programs need to be augmented in various ways, including some provision for the support of students who enter in mid-year. Currently, the Bridge Program does not accommodate the schedules of some student-athletes. The tutors provided by the Academic Success Program should be trained in a consistent manner.

- Implementation of this plan should be reviewed by our committee every six months for the next two years.

- Undergraduate Admissions should continue to oversee enrollment in the Bridge and Bridge Plus programs based on current levels.

- The "Sliding Scale" for student-athletes, implemented by the NCAA, should be replaced by separate standards for GPA and SAT/ACT scores, and the University of Michigan should work to see that happen.

We believe the University of Michigan should be an outstanding institution for student-athletes, with academic programs in place that deliver exciting and useful academic options. We anticipate that new concentrations will be developed that are attractive to students in general and to athletes in particular. These are likely to reside in LSA but may also include joint programs with the Schools of Business, Education, Kinesiology, and Social Work.

(Submitted June, 2009)

Regents' Bylaw 4.04. The Senate Assembly shall serve as the legislative arm of the senate…The assembly shall have power to consider and advise regarding all matters within the jurisdiction of the University Senate which affect the functioning of the University as an institution of higher learning, which concern its obligations to the state and to the community at large, and which relate to its internal organization insofar as such matters of internal organization involve general questions of educational policy.