

Annual Report
President's Athletic Advisory Committee (PAAC)
University Senate Presentation
Spring 2007

During the 2006-07 the University has been engaged in the self-study phase of the NCAA recertification process which will culminate in a campus visit of a review team in October of 2007. The major work to review the Division of Athletics' programs has been finished with a draft report available at the NCAA certification website (<http://web.uconn.edu/ncaa/>). Virtually all members of PAAC served on one of the three recertification subcommittees that addressed the areas of Academic Integrity, Governance and Commitment to Rule Compliance, and Equity and Student-Athlete Well-Being. The work of these review teams overlapped significantly with the work of the various PAAC subcommittees and therefore much of the work of the subcommittees is subsumed in the final report.

Academic Subcommittee

This was the first year in which UConn was required to implement an NCAA requirement to review the unit that provides academic counseling to student-athletes (The UConn Counseling Program for Intercollegiate Athletes or CPIA). The requirement is that the program must be reviewed every three years. This review is then incorporated into the recertification documentation (which occurs every 10 years). It was determined that PAAC should do this review and therefore an additional activity this year was the review of CPIA by the Academic Subcommittee of PAAC. That review will be available on the PAAC website at <http://paac.uconn.edu>. The report was very positive about the operations of CPIA and its counselors and that it was meeting the needs of student-athletes. One issue that came up in the report that will need further discussion and exploration is the need for additional support in diagnosing learning disabilities amongst student-athletes. As the review team discovered in talking with Steve Jarvi this is really a campus-wide issue, in that there is a significant wait time to get students an appointment with staff in UPLD and then to complete testing and diagnosis. CPIA currently pays for additional assessment services using an outside consultant to facilitate this process. While the number of student-athletes that are identified as needing testing is not large (approximately ten a year) the timing of diagnosis and the creation of the plan to assist the student-athlete in being successful is critical as failure to perform academically can lead pretty quickly to ineligibility.

In addition the Academic Subcommittee raised some concern for a proposed change to the University By-Laws that would explicitly permit faculty to incorporate class attendance as part of their course grading. Given the travel schedules of some student-athletes that is not under their control, the concern was that student-athletes be treated fairly as they are representing the university in official events and that such a policy not be used by faculty to punish students (any other student who had to miss class for a required University sponsored event). PAAC considered the issue and transmitted its concerns to the Chair of the University Senate Scholastic Standards Committee for their consideration.