To: UIS Campus Senate
From: Intercollegiate Athletics Committee
RE: Mid-Year Report and Summary of Fall 2010 Agenda Items
Date: November 26, 2010 [Amended after December 3 Campus Senate meeting]

Campus Senate Chair Tih-Fen Ting asked that the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee (IAC) submit a mid-year report updating the Campus Senate on progress toward goals set in response to the Final Report of the Committee to Investigate Athletics (“investigating committee”) during Spring 2010. This report identifies areas currently on the IAC agenda for the 2010/2011 academic year, and highlights items discussed to date as well as areas requiring on-going attention.

History

Last spring, the IAC reviewed recommendations of the investigating committee and identified areas for immediate attention by the committee. These included: campus governance of athletics and role of the IAC, budget transparency and fiscal responsibility, relationships between Campus Health Services and the Athletic Department, and other matters pertaining to student-athlete welfare. A brief update on each of these areas is provided below.

In spring 2010, Associate Chancellor for Constituent Relations Ed Wojcicki was designated as the administration’s liaison for following up on recommendations of the investigating committee. The IAC was charged with working with Wojcicki towards an effective and timely campus response to the recommendations. After consulting with the IAC chair, the FAR, and the Senate chair in August, 2010, Wojcicki released a fourth administrative response to the recommendations (attached).

Early in September, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs Tim Barnett was asked by Chancellor Ringeisen to take over the role of administrative liaison to IAC and Senate on athletic matters. Barnett also took on the administrative role handling daily operations in athletics previously held by Wojcicki. Athletics continues to report directly to the Chancellor. Tim Barnett is also a voting member of the IAC (Chancellor’s designee). Chancellor Ringeisen asked Barnett to continue serving in both roles. The committee discussed the new dual role at our first meeting this fall. Members agreed that the current membership is productive and should continue for the present. The committee decided to revisit the matter as needed if perceived conflicts of interest arise.

Governance and role of the IAC: The IAC is pleased to report that last spring’s discussions between IAC and the Athletics Department about the IAC’s role and the need for timely consultation and communication have led to improved communication.

- The committee established a regular meeting schedule, and has met 3 times during the fall semester. A fourth meeting is scheduled for December 10. The chair, the Faculty Athletic Representative, the Student Athletic Advisory Committee, and the Athletic Department are offered opportunities to report at each meeting. Sub-committees have been established for the areas of budget/fiscal responsibility and student-athlete academic progress/welfare.
- Issues raised last year included concerns about timely communication of information related to student-athlete welfare, including notification of disciplinary actions. The IAC chair met with
Athletic Director (AD) Rodger Jehlicka to discuss expectations of the IAC during summer 2010. The AD has provided timely notifications of disciplinary actions this fall.

- Regular involvement in searches (for example, inviting IAC members to participate in campus interviews) was identified as one factor that could help improve communication between athletics and the IAC. Assistant Athletic Director Scott Reed invited all IAC members to meet with candidates for the head basketball coach position. These meetings helped to build awareness among IAC members of the goals and professional expectations of NCAA Division 2 coaches.

- More broadly, the IAC set a goal of improving communication between athletics and other campus constituencies. The goal is to reduce a perceived isolation of athletics on campus. IAC members representing various constituencies have developed and reported on initiatives in this area. For example, SAAC representatives on the IAC are exploring ways to increase awareness and understanding of athletics among non-athlete students. VCSA Tim Barnett has scheduled monthly lunch meetings between small groups of coaches, the IAC chair, and the Senate chair. FAR Marcel Yoder has reported regularly in IAC on initiatives intended to improve coach and faculty awareness of issues having to do with coach-student-faculty communication.

**Budget transparency and fiscal responsibility:** Last spring’s IAC began working with the administration to gather information on revenue and expenses in athletics, pursuant to its charge to “provide advice to the administration on matters relating to the athletics budget” (Senate Bylaws, p. 16). The IAC had long faced difficulties in getting access to expense/revenue reports. As reported last spring, Vice Chancellor for Constituent Affairs Ed Wojcicki made FY10 fund reports available to IAC in April, and provided a plan for athletics fundraising based on a consultant’s report. The “fourth report” provided a list of reports relating to athletics that should be routinely prepared and could be made available to the IAC. Though we expected to be able to move quickly on this in the fall semester, it turned out that complete and accurate fund balance reports were not immediately available. Questions raised by the investigating committee led to a realization that, as noted by Interim Chancellor Harry Berman at a Nov. 19 meeting, accounting practices in the athletics department have not been consistent with the norm across campus, leading to inaccuracies. The Chancellor’s division and OBFS provided assistance during the fall semester in establishing procedures for regular reporting of data on athletic expenses and revenues. Complete information for FY10 was made available to the IAC early in October. We were also provided with fund balance reports for FY11 with numbers final as of 8/31/10.1

- A budget subcommittee of the IAC (Layne Morsch & Lynn Fisher) was formed and met several times with VCSA Tim Barnett and staff members from the Chancellor’s office and OBFS. These meetings were tremendously productive. We were given an opportunity to specify the kinds of information the IAC needs to do its job. The budget subcommittee agreed on the following schedule of athletics revenue/expense reporting for IAC: the IAC will receive end-of-year reports including fund balances and breakdowns of expenses by sport each August, and will receive a similarly formatted report on the current fiscal year each February. Comparing these reports should allow committee members to build an understanding of expenses and revenues in athletics from year to year, track changes, and make appropriate recommendations to the administration. The budget subcommittee would like to thank VCSA Tim Barnett for his help in getting in touch with staff having expertise in these areas.

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1 Recommendation #20: Detailed budget reports.
- A second concern of the IAC has been lack of consultation in the budget planning process. We are continuing to work with VCSA Tim Barnett on this matter, and expect that as accounting practices are brought into line with campus norms, planning documents for the up-coming fiscal year will be made available to the IAC, as stated in the administration’s fourth response document, in July or August.²

- On Nov. 19, Interim Chancellor Harry Berman met with the IAC to make a presentation about goals and priorities for athletics. He provided us with an outline of plans for stabilizing the athletics budget in FY12. A brief summary of main points from the presentation and questions raised by IAC members is provided below. IAC appreciates the opportunity for an early review of budget planning for FY12. As these matters came to the IAC on the Friday before Thanksgiving break, the committee has not yet had an opportunity to develop a full response.
  - Berman said that intercollegiate athletics has potential to enrich student life at UIS. He noted this is important to continue to build a college experience that makes students want to come and stay. Intercollegiate athletics can increase our visibility to the community. Because of this, we need to do the best job we can with intercollegiate athletics.
  - Berman identified four goals for athletics: stabilize the budget, improve financial reporting, fully engage the Office of Development in fundraising, and build attendance at athletic events.
  - Berman elaborated on each of these goals. He plans to close the gap between available funds and expenses in athletics through an increase to the recurring budget for athletics as well as fund-raising. Berman proposes increasing the permanent budget line for the Athletics Department by $200,000 in FY12. This represents an increase of about 100% to the recurring (state) athletics budget, but does not completely close the gap between budgeted funds and current expenses. Fundraising will be needed to completely close that gap.
  - Berman described the proposed increase to the athletics budget as part of a set of strategic investments based on an expectation that increased tuition revenues experienced in Fall 2010 will continue into Fall 2011. Administration projections indicate that even after planning for a 15% cut in state funding as directed by President Hogan, improved tuition revenues combined with cuts already made should allow for a salary program as well as several strategic investments to advance goals or financial objectives of the university. Other strategic investments identified by Berman included: retaining accreditation in CBM (new faculty lines), increasing instructional capacity (faculty hire in MPA program), and investing in performing arts (faculty line and equipment). Berman stated that the total amount planned for academic initiatives was more than twice the proposed increase to the athletics budget.
  - Berman noted that the Athletics Department will always be dependent on fundraising. Assistant Athletic Director Scott Reed has taken on a new role in fundraising. The administration will work to engage expertise from the Office of Development to make sure fundraising is successful.

- Committee members had some immediate questions following the presentation. Questions included:

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² Recommendation #22, Proposed budget, and #23, Plan for deficit reduction.
What is the status of fundraising? We have been hearing about this for several years, but have not seen progress. A new initiative will be launched January 2011, and we should see an organized plan and beginnings of success by end of spring 2011.

What happens if actual tuition revenues do not match expectations? The plan is based on what are thought to be realistic expectations, but will be adjusted based on actual amounts. Most funds are not yet committed.

Who decides how funds within athletics are allocated? Budget process goes from Athletic Director to Chancellor, with VCSA handling day-to-day communication.

Would this come with a firm spending limit such as other departments have? The expectation is that the increase to permanent budget replaces temporary budget increases made to cover deficits in past years.

Though time for discussion was short in the Nov. 19 meeting, the IAC looks forward to additional opportunities to discuss plans and alternatives for stabilizing the athletics budget and controlling growth in costs with the Interim Chancellor. The administration’s proposal raises questions that require further discussion and follow-up. For example:

The IAC has long been concerned about the heavy reliance of UIS athletics on student fees. As state funding is cut, the burden of funding for higher education is increasingly shifted onto students and their parents in the form of tuition and fees. Some campuses around the country have made cuts to established athletic programs because of this, and some campuses have seen complaints from students and parents about the degree to which intercollegiate athletics is subsidized by tuition and fees. IAC is well aware that UIS athletics, like many programs on campus, is going through an important transition in bad budget times. However, we would like to see the administration consider and compare a range of alternatives that might help to restrain cost increases and reduce dependence of UIS athletics on tuition and fees.

For example, the administration should carefully consider the balance between recurring state funds and fund-raising, and compare this balance to that at other institutions in the GLVC. If other institutions in the conference derive a higher proportion of their annual expenses from fund-raising than UIS does, UIS may need to develop clear goals and a timetable for shifting the balance more towards fundraising specific to athletics.

The proposed campus investment in athletics is based on the argument that campus life will be enriched. How will the administration assess progress towards this goal? How will plans be adjusted if goals are not met?

At a time when the campus is struggling to adjust to deep and continuing budget cuts, reallocations of limited resources require broad campus communication. The IAC recommends that the process of finalizing plans for FY12 strategic investments should involve consultation with a broad range of campus constituents including the Campus Senate, Planning and Budgeting Committee, and the IAC.

Relationships between Campus Health Services and the Athletic Department. Another item on the IAC agenda for 2010/2011 is the need to assess the success of the 2010 practice of conducting athletic physicals during orientation, with continued cooperation between Campus Health Services and the Athletics Department. The IAC chair met with Campus Health Director Lynne Price in August to learn

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3 Recommendation #30, Fund-raising plans.
about her perceptions of the process. VCSA Tim Barnett is working with Lynne Price to formulate a policy on this. IAC will follow up on this.

**Other matters pertaining to student-athlete welfare.** IAC consulted with UIS Registrar Brian Clevenger to clarify the “legitimate educational interest” exception in FERPA and to discuss issues (including those of student-athlete privacy) related to generation of reports for assessing academic quality. One question that arose in last year’s investigating committee report was whether faculty whose students are suspended during the semester have a legitimate educational need to be informed by the administration about the status of those students. Clevenger explained that FERPA leaves it up to the student to decide what information he/she wants to share with faculty. Administrators can not assume that responsibility. The committee also asked whether faculty violate FERPA when they complete progress reports requested by coaches and brought to them by students. Clevenger said that the safest way to ensure that no information is released that the student does not want released is to communicate grade information only to the student (not directly to the coach).

Faculty should be made aware that they can choose how and on what schedule to communicate grade information to students. Some teams (like some other groups of scholarship recipients) request grade updates from students before the midterm, while some coaches are asking for more regular updates (e.g., every two weeks). This has been new to UIS faculty, and some questions were raised about the appropriateness of releasing that information. The IAC regards grade reporting as a useful way for coaches to help student-athletes (or other scholarship recipients) track their academic progress over the semester. The aim is to spot any problems early. The committee reviewed questions raised by faculty and coaches, and emphasizes the following points:

- Faculty member are not obliged to adopt a particular grade reporting system if it does not make sense in light of their syllabus or grading policies. For example, forms presented by students may ask for information about attendance or performance on tests, but it may be that a particular faculty member does not record attendance or give tests for the course or time period in question. Faculty can choose to provide whatever information does fit their course or grading policies, or may choose another way of presenting grade information to students (e.g., meet with the student in office hours, post grades in Blackboard gradebook, etc.).
- Coaches should not contact faculty directly to ask for grade information, but should request that student-athletes take responsibility for providing updates.
- Any questions about a particular grade update process and its appropriateness should be discussed either with the Faculty Athletic Representative or with the student-athlete’s coach.
- Under leadership of the FAR, a subcommittee is taking a closer look at issues of academic progress reporting, coach-faculty communication, and student-athlete advising. The group will assess faculty, student, and coach satisfaction and/or concerns about the academic progress sheets, forms used to record any agreed-upon accommodations for class absences due to away games, etc.

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4 Recommendation #12, Policy on CHS responsibilities.
5 Recommendation #17, Legitimate educational exception under FERPA.
6 Recommendation #2.
7 Recommendation #5, Recommendation #2.
The summary above reflects issues addressed in three meetings of the IAC. The committee will continue to follow up on these issues. Additional agenda items for the current academic year include:

- Follow up on on-going revisions to student discipline code.
- Continue discussions with the administration about making accurate and detailed information about the athletics budget available to IAC and the campus community.
- Track progress on completion and software updates to the electronic judicial database including information and updates on campus infractions. This process has begun; IAC will request an update during spring 2011.
- Assess policies related to allocation and renewal of athletic scholarships.