

Merwin

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Board of Regents
Office of the Executive Director
and Corporate Secretary
220 Morrill Hall
100 Church Street S.E.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455
(612) 625-6300

DATE: June 1, 1990

TO: The Honorable Wendell R. Anderson
The Honorable Charles H. Casey
The Honorable M. Elizabeth Craig
The Honorable Jack P. Grahek
The Honorable Jean B. Keffeler
The Honorable Elton A. Kuderer
The Honorable Alan C. Page
The Honorable Mary J. Page
The Honorable David K. Roe
The Honorable Darrin M. Rosha
The Honorable Stanley D. Sahlstrom
The Honorable Mary T. Schertler

FROM: Ken Janzen *KJ*

RE: Report from the Ad Hoc Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics

Enclosed is the report from the Ad Hoc Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics co-chaired by Alan Page and Jack Merwin. This report is on the agenda of the Committee of the Whole meeting that begins at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, June 8.

The final page of the report is a summary of recommendations. The recommendations are distributed throughout the report. You will note the recommendations are directed to the administration, with specific request that the Board of Regents receive a report of progress.

KLJ/kff

cc: President Nils Hasslemo
Chris Voelz
Rick Bay
Members of the Committee

**REPORT OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON INTERCOLLEGIATE
ATHLETICS
May 31, 1990**

Introduction

The committee was appointed jointly by President Hasselmo and Board of Regents Chair Casey. The charge to the committee had two parts: (1) to review the steps taken to strengthen the role of intercollegiate athletics as an appropriate part of the University of Minnesota, and (2) to look to the future and identify matters of overriding importance for implementation to ensure intercollegiate athletic programs be properly related to the mission of the University. The committee devoted more time to the second of these issues, but it has arrived at positions regarding all parts of the charge.

There are four core conclusions we seek to communicate:

1. The University needs to combine a straightforward recognition of honorable intercollegiate athletics at the NCAA Division I level as part of its tradition with commitment to the support mechanisms necessary to assist recruited athletes to be successful students.
2. The committee strongly endorses as its major recommendation the development of a model program of academic support for "high risk" students.
3. There needs to be greater integration of intercollegiate athletics with the structure and mission of the University. This includes faculty involvement in budgetary review, and the utilization of coaches and athletic directors in campus governance.
4. In reviewing intercollegiate athletic programs, the committee recognizes there has been improvement in the last two to four years regarding the academic progress of student-athletes at the University of Minnesota.

Intercollegiate Athletics and the University of Minnesota

The committee believes the University and its community needs to be straightforward in the recognition that NCAA Division I athletic competition for men and women will continue at the Twin Cities campus of the University of Minnesota as long as recruited athletes can be successful students and the University can provide an environment of academic success for student-athletes without compromising its integrity. Such competition is a part of our history and of the culture of our state and country. It contributes to a sense of university community, it provides our larger community and state with a desired service, and serious people agree there are lessons of great value to be learned by those able to participate in the activity.

NCAA Division I competition demands a realistic perspective from the student-athlete and the University. On one side, those student-athletes recruited to the University for the athletic talent they can bring, must recognize that they are being recruited into an academic community that expects them to have a successful academic experience. On the other side, the University community must recognize that it has a special obligation to provide for recruited student-athletes, who are often at the center of community attention and thus often represent the University of Minnesota and, who by means of their talent, perform services that bring money into the University of Minnesota sports program. All of this is in accord with the Mission Statement on Intercollegiate Athletics adopted by the Board of Regents in 1986.

Program for High-Risk Students

The primary and focal recommendation of the committee is that the University shall pull together existing and new resources into a model program for academically "high risk" students. The idea of a student "at risk" received careful discussion. Not all student-athletes are "at risk". Not all students who are "at risk" are student athletes. The problem we are considering is the risk of being academically unsuccessful at the University of Minnesota. Usually, we have taken this to mean not completing a degree program, though occasionally the mark of success is not a degree. Problems placing students "at risk" include inadequate educational preparation, but often also include personal immaturity, lack of identification of educational goals, time mismanagement, poor peer influence, lack of sophistication in academic study, or racial and cultural differences and bias.

Athletes recruited to perform and study at the University may have any of these problems, but, in addition, they must contend with the pressures and distractions of top flight, public athletic competition. Many of the revenue sports athletes are people of color recruited for their athletic abilities, but expected to be academically successful in an environment that is predominantly white. These students also face racial and cultural differences and bias.

Given the institutional priorities of the Initiative in Undergraduate Education, and educational diversity, as well as the obligation to fulfill the educational goals of recruited athletes, it seems most appropriate to recommend the development of a model program that includes students "at risk" from the general population of matriculated University students.

The program we recommend is designed to identify problems of individual students "at risk" academically, and to provide the support needed to overcome such problems and become academically successful. The University has resources located in various places that, in part, serve this goal. Other additional initiatives may be needed. The most important need is for coordinated programmatic design and leadership.

The committee did not see itself as the proper source for completing the design of the recommended program. However, the recommendation is built on the solid ground of the general knowledge of some members of the committee; the testimony of coaches, student-athletes, academic advisors to student-athletes and faculty athletic representatives; and consultation with professional educators at the University who have experience with similar programs.

While we have not presented a full design for the recommended program, we assume there are generally understood elements that would be included, such as, orientation, testing, counseling and tutoring. In addition, the committee recommends the following, less obvious, elements be considered in the program design:

- Early development of a specific academic plan that is regularly monitored and adjusted seems to be a critical and useful support for students "at risk".
- The program should be open to all undergraduate students at the University whatever their collegiate home. Student-athletes should be served, but the committee viewed the program as a means of integrating many students.

- The program should be valuable as a research program for data about support for students "at risk" -- athletes and non-athletes -- high ability and marginal students, etc.
- We believe an extended summer orientation should be seriously considered. Academics should be introduced to new matriculants before they become involved in other activities, including athletic programs.
- We believe that this program should not replace any part of existing programs (such as General College, the Academic Advising program for Athletes, etc.), but utilize the resources and experience existing programs give.
- Social and community interaction for students has been found to be useful in similar programs.
- Funding for the program for "at risk" students should come, in part, from the revenues of Intercollegiate Athletics.

The recommendation is made to central administration with the request that the administration report back to the Board of Regents by December 1990 regarding progress toward implementing the program by summer 1991. The program might appropriately be responsible to either the Office of the Vice Provost for Arts, Sciences and Engineering or the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.

The committee co-chairs will be pleased to respond to questions at the time this report is presented. As the administration moves to implement the recommendation for a model program to support "high risk" students, individual members of the committee will be willing to respond to persons or groups having the assignment of specific design and implementation of the program.

Integration of Intercollegiate Athletics in the University

The committee believes there are healthy steps that can be taken to bring intercollegiate athletics into greater integration with the structure and mission of the University. In comparative terms, the University of Minnesota's intercollegiate athletic programs may be closer to the core of the University than is the case elsewhere. However, this is not an adequate resting point. There is still a separation that leads to unhealthy assumptions about integrity on all sides, and, at worst, opens the door to violations of trust.

A critical point of separation is financial. Funding of Men's Intercollegiate Athletics through sports revenue forces an undue emphasis on winning at all costs and sends the wrong signals to the programs and its student-athlete participants. Our first recommendation is that the isolation of the intercollegiate athletic programs be reduced by having the budgets of the departments receive faculty review, and that the administration take steps to see that this kind of review takes place. Our second recommendation to the Administration is that the revenues of the Men's and Women's Intercollegiate Athletic Departments flow into central university accounts and that the budgets of the Men's and Women's Intercollegiate Athletic Departments be established separate from the revenues.

The committee believes that intercollegiate athletics, if properly integrated with the academic enterprise, should be a part of, and contribute to, the campus environment. In addition, practice and playing facilities that are integrated with the campus assist the student-athlete in the very difficult problem of academic time management. For these reasons, the com-

mittee supports the administration's plan to renovate and build adequate facilities for basketball, women's sports and hockey on campus. It is the committee's understanding that the financial plan to accomplish this goal will not place additional pressure on the athletic programs.

It is the committee's understanding that coaches and athletic directors are excluded from regular participation in the governance of the University because of the nature of their employment contract . We believe this contributes to the separation of athletics from the rest of the institution. In addition, the committee found these people to be both knowledgeable about students and understanding of the University. We recommend that whatever is necessary be done to make them eligible for full governance participation, and that when they are hired, the expectation be made clear that they are part of the academic community and they should participate as much as possible in it.

Athletic directors and coaches, in their discussions with the committee, indicated their commitment to the academic progress of student-athletes. We were gratified at this commitment. Nevertheless, we recommend, in the interests of integration and formal understanding of this position, that all coaching contracts have a statement indicating that the academic progress of student-athletes on their teams will be a basis for their performance evaluations.

Review of Intercollegiate Athletics

The committee finds evidence to believe there has been progress in strengthening the academic experience for student athletes in recent years. We heard testimony that indicated the rate of graduation and grade point averages of student athletes have improved, in some cases dramatically. Women student-athletes have continued a tradition of strong academic performance. The two athletic directors and the coaches the committee interviewed all provided insight into useful means they developed for placing academic performance in proper perspective. Finally, the Academic Advising Program for men and women athletes was noted by the students as especially valuable.

The current environment, and the fulfillment of most of the recommendations of the 1986 Report on Intercollegiate Athletics, moves the University of Minnesota into position to assume leadership in those aspects of athletics on campus over which we have local control. We trust the president and other administrators will press the strongest possible reforms in the conference and national arenas.¹ The University can take charge of its own academic environment and become a model for integrating academics and athletics. We intend by our recommendations to move in that direction.

¹ The committee intends its support to be for strong reform that is targeted at problem areas, particularly in revenue sports, rather than across the board. It is not necessary to fix programs where academics and athletics are well integrated.

Committee Procedure

The committee held 8 meetings of approximately two hours each between March 6 and May 31. A substantial number of resource persons were interviewed during the early meetings. The individuals providing comment to the committee (in order of appearance) are:

Chris Voelz, Director, Women's Intercollegiate Athletics
 Elayne Donohue, Director of Academic Advising for Intercollegiate Athletics
 Stephanie Schleuder, Coach, Women's Volleyball
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 Bob Stein, Dean, Law School, Faculty Representative to the Big Ten
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Michael Wade, Professor and Director, School of Physical Education and Recreation
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Committee Membership

Membership on the committee was as follows:

Wendell Anderson
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 Tim Busse
 Elizabeth Craig
 Michael Holland
 Patricia Jones-Whyte
 Jack Merwin, Co-chair
 Cassandra Moe
 Alan Page, Co-Chair
 Michael Steffes
 Mary Trandem

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The committee recommends to central administration that existing and new resources be pulled together in a coordinated program of support for academically high risk students. The administration should report to the Regents in fall 1990 regarding the progress toward implementing the program by summer 1991. The program might appropriately be responsible to the Office of the Vice Provost for Arts, Sciences and Engineering or the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.
2. The committee recommends that the isolation of the intercollegiate athletic programs be reduced by having the budgets of the departments receive faculty review, and that the administration take steps to see that this kind of review takes place. The committee also recommends that the revenues of the Men's and Women's Intercollegiate Athletic Departments flow into central university accounts and that the budgets of the Men's and Women's Intercollegiate Athletic Departments be established separate from the revenue.
3. The committee supports the administration's plan to renovate and build adequate facilities for basketball, women's sports and hockey on campus.
4. The committee recommends to the administration that coaches and athletic directors be included as eligible participants in the University governance structure.
5. The committee recommends to the administration that coaching contracts include a statement that recognizes the academic progress of student-athletes as a basis for evaluation.

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