

DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

**REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES
CONCERNING THE CREATION OF A STANDING FACULTY COMMITTEE
ON ACADEMICS AND ATHLETICS**

Bruce P. Palka, (mathematics), chair of the Committee on Committees, has filed with the Secretary of the Faculty Council the report set forth below.

The Secretary has classified this report as general legislation. Notice is hereby given that this report will be presented to the Faculty Council for action at its meeting on March 20, 2000.

John R. Durbin, Secretary
The Faculty Council

**REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES
CONCERNING THE CREATION OF A STANDING FACULTY COMMITTEE
ON ACADEMICS AND ATHLETICS**

At the end of the 1998-99 academic year, Shelley Payne, then chair of the Faculty Council, referred to the Committee on Committees (CoC) a motion made at the April 19, 1999, meeting of the Council by Alan Friedman, which called for the creation of a standing faculty committee on academics and athletics. (See the attached excerpt from the minutes of the April 19 meeting for the specifics of the motion, which appears as Motion III under the heading "Motions introduced by Professor Friedman.") The 1999-2000 CoC devoted two meetings to discussion of this issue, at the latter of which CoC members came to a decision not to recommend the establishment of a new standing committee of the type proposed by Professor Friedman. In a nutshell, the rationale for the committee's decision is this: although the current system is by no means perfect, the majority faculty presence on each of the existing athletics councils adequately represents academic interests insofar as they relate to the intercollegiate athletics program. Concerted steps by the faculty to improve the operation of the present athletics councils, such as the reforms carried out by President Faulkner in response to the report of the *ad hoc* Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics (hereafter referred to as the Wright committee, after Professor Charles Alan Wright, its chair), are seen by the CoC as a course of action more likely to be productive than the creation of a new standing committee of the general faculty.

That said, there is one element of Friedman's motion in which a majority of the CoC finds independent merit; namely, in the suggestion that his proposed committee be charged with the development of a vision statement which would respond from a faculty perspective to a pronouncement in the Wright committee report: "If we were to redesign our system of intercollegiate athletics, it would look nothing like that which we now have." A majority of the CoC regards the formulation of such a plan as a potentially valuable exercise, but views this activity as more appropriate to an *ad hoc* committee, with a narrow and very specific charge, than to a permanent standing committee. Furthermore, in producing what would be tantamount to a faculty response to the Wright committee report's mission statement (with its underlying principles), this *ad hoc* committee would effectively complete the work of a now defunct standing Committee on Academics and Athletics that failed to survive the transition from the Faculty Senate to the Faculty Council. At the time of the changeover, the committee in question was preparing a mission statement of roughly the kind the CoC recommendation now envisions. The foregoing considerations frame the CoC's recommendation in regard to Friedman's Motion III.

Recommendation: Recognizing that intercollegiate athletics has become and will remain an integral part of campus life, but seeking to make clear the faculty viewpoint on the future relationship between the academic and athletic enterprises at the University, the Committee on Committees recommends the formation of an *ad hoc* Faculty

Committee on Academics and Intercollegiate Athletics (FCAIA) with the following charges, to be carried out in consultation with the Faculty Council:

- I. to outline the components of an intercollegiate athletics program whose academic policies and standards furnish a “best case” model for this and other institutions;
- II. to develop a plan for the phased implementation of such a program;
- III. to develop a strategy of advocacy for such a program at the University, Big XII, and NCAA Division I-A levels.

We further recommend: that the membership of the FCAIA consist of seven members of the general faculty, representing a diversity of academic units; that the chair of the Faculty Council solicit nominations for the FCAIA from the general faculty; that the chair of the Faculty Council, in consultation with the Committee on Committees, appoint the FCAIA and name its chair; that the FCAIA annually report to the Faculty Council on its progress, until such time as it fulfills its charges and issues its final report and recommendations.

Minority Report.

The majority’s rationale for the creation of an *ad hoc* FCAIA argues from this statement made by the committee chaired by Professor Wright: “If we were to redesign our system of intercollegiate athletics it would look nothing like that which we have now.” The rationale then states that “the majority of the CoC regards the formulation of such a plan as a potentially valuable exercise.”

The rationale does not mention the following statement, which comes immediately after the sentence quoted from the Wright committee's report: “But we deal with a condition, not with a theory.”

We cannot foresee a product from the proposed *ad hoc* committee that would be anything more than “a theory.”

In the past nine years, five different campus committees, excluding the Men's and Women's Athletics Councils, have reported on athletics to the faculty: the *ad hoc* Working Group on Academic/Athletic Relationships (Kenneth Tolo, chair) 1991; the Faculty Senate *ad hoc* Committee on Academics and Athletics (Patricia Witherspoon, chair) 1993; the Faculty Senate standing committee on Athletics and Academics (Larry Abraham and others, chairs) 1994-96; three subcommittees of the University's Accreditation Study, 1997; and the *ad hoc* Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics (Charles Alan Wright, chair) 1999.

The report of the committee chaired by Professor Wright, and President Faulkner's written response to the report, can be found through links at the Faculty Council web site (D 67-75, the minutes of the Faculty Council meeting on September 20, 1999). We urge you to review those documents. The Wright committee, whose members were chosen with input from the chair of the Faculty Council, was representative of the broad University community having an interest in intercollegiate athletics. The committee heard from persons who were dedicated to the intellectual mission of the University and who were also well aware of the realities of intercollegiate athletics. Their report itself states: “Our university has an obligation to be a forceful advocate for reform of intercollegiate athletics.”

In President Faulkner's response to the report of the Wright committee, he acknowledged that the “intercollegiate athletics enterprise in the United States is in flux and is in need of diligent attention.” He committed himself and the University's faculty representative to major roles in working with the Big 12 and the NCAA.

The report of the Wright committee states: “We recommend that every effort be made to keep the faculty and other University communities fully informed about the athletics programs.” We believe the most effective and efficient way for the Faculty Council to influence intercollegiate athletics is by increased communication with the faculty's representatives on the Men's and Women's Athletics Councils. We must remember that there are other issues that deserve our attention, affecting thousands of our students and the future of the University.

Posted on the Faculty Council web site (<http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/>) on March 14, 2000. Paper copies are available on request from the Office of the General Faculty, FAC 22, F9500.

ATTACHMENT 1

Motion introduced by Alan Friedman (English) at the April 19, 1999, meeting of the Faculty Council. Reference to "Underlying Principles" and "the Report" refer to the Report from the *ad hoc* Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics (D&P 17001-17034):

MOTION III. To establish a standing faculty committee on academics and athletics (elected by the General Faculty or the Faculty Council) to serve a continuing evaluative, monitoring, and reporting role. The charge to the Committee to include but not be restricted to:

1. Examining the feasibility of changing the "Underlying Principles" to Recommendations.
2. Providing a statement of specific information on what University resources and personnel, if any, were diverted from other projects for the stadium renovation and what steps have been taken to prevent such diversion from happening in the future (see D&P 17018).
3. Providing a clear and specific statement on the "many important benefits" that the University reaps from intercollegiate athletics and the costs, if any, to the success of the academic enterprise (see D&P 17020).
4. Providing a statement in response to the Report's challenge that "If we were to redesign our system of intercollegiate athletics, it would look nothing like that which we now have" (see D&P 17033). Statement to answer the questions: "What might it look like?" and "What leadership could UT offer (short of "unilateral disarmament") that might help to move the current system of intercollegiate athletics in that direction?"
5. Implementing Motion IV: This report shall be sent to the faculty senates at other Division I-A universities and to the NCAA for their consideration in the hope of stimulating a national dialogue on this important subject.