Athletics Board Report to the Faculty

The following are the topics discussed by the Athletics Board during the 2009-10 academic year.

**Missed Class Time**

The Board discussed the issue of missed class time by student athletes. Student athletes are given a letter from the Faculty Athletics Representative to present to professors either the first day of class or before the start of the block. The letter lists the days student athletes will be away from campus due to athletic contests, and emphasizes that student athletes are not allowed to miss class for practice. Professors have been very helpful in advising student-athletes about the effects of missed class time and helping student athletes make up any missed class. The Athletic Department and the coaches will continue to stress the importance of student athletes communicating with professors about their athletic and academic commitments. Coaches will also continue to try to schedule athletic events off campus during the Block break. Because of the success of our varsity teams, next year possible NCAA Championship dates will also be included in the letter to professors.

**ACM Conference on Intentional Integration of Academic and Athletics:**

The ACM held a conference on Intentional Integration of Academics and Athletics. The purpose of the program is to integrate athletics with academics within the ACM consortium. There were 3 foci for the conference; 1) strengthen ties between academics and athletics, 2) promote student athlete learning, and 3) determine innovative ways to integrate athletics and academics. CC representatives, Greg Capell, Sally Meyer, and Geoff Falen attended the conference. There were 3 major ideas that came from the conference: 1) Orientation of coaches, staff and new faculty, 2) Mission statement from athletics and support for the mission across campus and 3) the college and departments definition of success.

1) Can New Faculty Orientation overlap with athletics and have coaches talk to new faculty during orientation? Can new coaches shadow faculty for a day? Can faculty shadow coaches for a day?

2) The current mission statement from athletics is over 20 years old and needs to be revised. The department needs to revise and incorporate the meaning of athletic success, sportsmanship, conduct, and gender equity issues.

3) Groups on campus need to have a definition of success and support from the institution. Need to discuss metrics beyond “wins and losses”. Need some quantitative or qualitative measure of character, development, quality of experience, in addition to GPA, graduation rate, wins and losses. Currently there is no coherent measure for assessment.

Sally Meyer agreed to follow up on the conference and to work with Dean Ashley to see if an orientation between faculty staff and coaches was possible.

**El Pomar Recreation Center:**

Architects from Oz Architects have designed a new recreational facility to renovate and add to the current 1970’s El Pomar facility. The concept drawing does not include demolition of
existing structures, will be ADA compliant, meet the need of the students faculty and staff, and will be LRD compliant. Donors have inquired about contributing to the new facility. Ken Ralph, Greg Capell, and Chris Starr showed drawings of the new facility to the members of the Athletics Board.

**WCHA Expansion**

The Western Collegiate Hockey Association (WCHA) lifted a moratorium on conference expansion in January 2009. The CC Athletics Board discussed the consequences of allowing two more schools into the WCHA. During the Athletics Board meeting in February 2009, Ken Ralph presented the anticipated increased costs of travel and the decrease revenue that would result from expanding the WCHA from its current 10 members to 11 or 12 members. The WCHA moved forward with the expansion during the summer of 2009. CC abstained from voting for the expansion because the commissioner did not follow the bylaws of the association for expansion. Bemidji State and Nebraska Omaha will join the association this fall.

**Effectiveness of the Athletics Board:**

Bob Manning asked about the effectiveness and the mission of the Athletics Board. Bob asked specifically about the past recommendations to the President to start non-traditional seasons at the College. It is not clear what actions if any were taken because of the Board's recommendations. This issue of the Board's role has been raised in the past and several past presidents have attended Athletics Board meetings. Ralph Bertrand arranged for President Celeste to speak to the Athletics Board during the February meeting to address the role of the Athletics Board.

President Celeste addressed the questions that were submitted to him before the meeting. The President stated that he felt the Athletics Board was necessary and provided a group of diverse voices for issues relating to athletics. He stated that he did not see the Board as a decision making body but as a focus group to look at the issues and make recommendations. He said he felt the Board had addressed 3 key issues over the last several years.

1. Non-traditional seasons. He said this was currently in the Dean’s hands and he would talk to Susan Ashley and get back to the Board with an answer before the end of the year. Before any recommendations he also wanted to talk to the FEC and get their views.
2. Role in getting rid of Football, Softball and Women’s Water Polo. He stated that the Board had been instrumental in acquiring data, getting the views of faculty, staff and alumni on this important issue and making a recommendation.
3. Conference issues. He felt that the Board should be involved in discussing the current conference and the possibility of an ACM conference (although he said that only 8 members of the ACM are even remotely interested in an ACM conference). He stated that the Board should discuss the appropriateness of DIII versus DII and that even though the Board itself should not make a decision on DIII-DII that it should seek a working group that was against the idea of DII to make recommendations.

The President suggested that he should come to the Athletic Board meetings more often (1-2 times per year) and discuss the Athletics Board end of the year report with the Board, Dean Ashley, and the faculty.

**Exploring Conference and Divisional Affiliation:**

The current economic situation at the College, proposed changes in Division III governance and philosophy, student missed class time due to travel, and our current affiliation with three different conferences raised concerns among members of the Athletics Board. The
Board decided that in order for us to move into the future with a solid athletics program our current conference and divisional status should be reviewed.

The President suggested that if the Board wanted to review the current status of athletics at CC that the Board should consider forming a Conference and Division Exploratory Committee (CDEC). The members of the Board discussed the formation of a CDEC and decided that a committee would consist of 2 alums, 3 faculty members (appointed by the FEC), 3 trustees, 2 staff, and 2 students.

The process and charge of the committee will be determined over the next several months. The Athletics Department will gather data on current conference affiliations and various options to present to the CDEC next year.

**Recognition of Student Athletes at CC**

This year 117 athletes were named to the student-athlete honor roll for the Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference. Ten CC student-athletes earned all-conference honors for their accomplishments in competition and the classroom for the fall season.

Both the men’s and women’s soccer programs earned the prestigious Team Academic Award from the National Soccer Coaches Association of America for the 08-09 school year. And this year women’s soccer had 17 players named to the Conference USA Honor roll, with two receiving Academic Medals for exceptional achievement in the classroom.

Both the men’s and women’s track and field teams were named All-Academic Teams by the United States Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association, with the men posting the highest average GPA in Division III.