

Date: August 1, 2017

TO: Robert Powell, Chair
Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate

FR: Malo Andre Hutson, Chair
Senate Athletics Council (SAC)

RE: 2017 SAC Report

This report details the activities of the SAC over the past academic semester (spring 2017), and provides the basis for our recommendation that the SAC be re-authorized to continue its work during the 2017-18 academic year.

The Council this year took direction from the report filed by then-Chair Kathryn Abrams in spring 2016, and from the report of the Chancellor's Task Force on Academics and Athletics ("TF Report") issued in September 2014. We determined that we would focus generally on the well-being of student-athletes. Specifically, we focused on the integration of student-athletes into the academic and social life of the University and on the relationship between student-athletes and faculty.

The SAC met monthly during the spring 2017 academic semester only, due to the fact that the SAC was not re-authorized by the Academic Senate in time to have meetings in the fall 2016 semester. As a result, this severely limited the scope and effectiveness of the SAC in carrying out its primary mission. The following were the areas of primary focus for the committee over the past semester. Actions that were undertaken, or that we believe should be undertaken in the coming year, are described in italics.

Our meetings throughout the spring semester were devoted to presentations by leaders in the Chancellor's Task Force on Academics and Athletics, the Academic Study Center, and Intercollegiate Athletics (IA). The goal of these sessions was to update the committee on IA policies relating to the physical and mental well-being of student-athletes and campus-wide initiatives relating to their academic and social integration. The SAC felt that these meetings were necessary because we needed to understand the progress that had been made in implementing the TF recommendations, and the policies that were being embraced by the Director of IA, Mike Williams, and to try and build off of the recommendations outlined in Chair Abrams' report from the previous year.

- 1) Faculty Advising for Student-Athletes and Prospective Student-Athletes.** We began the semester by seeking to implement a recommendation of the TF that seemed directly within the scope of the SAC. The TF Report (in the section on Academics & Athletics and the Senate) found that current and prospective student athletes could benefit from greater access to faculty members, who could confer with prospective student-athletes about their academic interests and serve as informal advisors to student-athletes

throughout their academic careers. Several teams have already invited individual faculty members to serve as formal advisors to the team. However, the TF Report also recommended compiling, and circulating to coaches and IA staff, a list of faculty willing to confer with prospective and current student-athletes in response to specific needs and shared interests. Last year's SAC got approval from DIVCO to send out a letter to Deans and Chairs soliciting their help in identifying faculty (including lecturers) who may be interested in becoming involved as informal advisors to current student-athletes and prospective recruits. Unfortunately, this letter did not receive wide distribution. As a result, this year's SAC updated the letter and sent it out through VC Koshland's office in May. As of July, nine responses from interested faculty were received. As last year's SAC report stated, "building a cadre of faculty advisors will not only provide guidance to student-athletes; it will also offer faculty more direct exposure to student-athletes, thereby reducing the stereotyped and stigmatizing assumptions about athletes held by a small segment of the faculty, a problematic attitude identified in the TF Report."

- ***In addition, the SAC also had lengthy discussions about ways in which student-athletes could meet faculty as soon as they stepped foot on campus. We discussed the opportunities that exist for faculty to meet with student-athletes and their parents/guardians during their visits to Cal in the spring before they enroll and in the summer when they have their campus Student-Athlete Orientation (this year it was scheduled for July 8; this will be discussed in greater detail in section #4 of this report).***

2) Information-gathering on the Task Force Recommendations: SAC met with Professor Emerita Meg Conkey, Task Force Co-chair, to discuss questions of academic and social integration. According to Professor Conkey, implementation teams are focused on advising, admissions, the Athletic Study Center, student affairs, and undergraduate education. Many of the 54 recommendations in the Task Force report are completed. The Implementation Team of the Task Force (primarily Prof. Conkey, with limited input from David Chai, Senior Advisor to the Chancellor) has been productive but she suggested some areas that the SAC could help with going forward:

- Check with CEP (now merged with UGC) on proctoring guidelines (in progress by the Academic Integrity Committee)
- The Academic Integrity Committee (Chair Hutson is liaison) will look at enrollment of student-athletes in online courses, independent courses, and graduate transfers
- Engaging mentors from professional schools (faculty and students)
- Identify student-athletes with needs, and provide resources to support them, especially student-athletes on probation, and support student-athletes in getting the classes they need
- Connect with new Chancellor, and meet with Cathy Koshland (Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate Education)

- Consult with chair of the Budget Committee about service credit for Faculty Fellows
 - Check on GSI training in re: accommodation and proctoring policies
- ***If continued into 2017-18, the SAC should begin by reviewing the final implementation efforts of the TF, to determine which efforts could benefit by reinforcement or continuing oversight. Chair Hutson was a liaison to the Academic Integrity Committee, where he was part of the discussion around ways to improve the proctoring guidelines for student-athletes as well as the enrollment of student-athletes in online courses and independent study courses. SAC could partner with the AIC to bring more Senate input into these discussions.***

In addition, Professor Molly Van Houweling conducted some background research on considering whether we need a special policy to accommodate injured student athletes; she found out that there is no firm campus policy on illness/injury. There are some guidelines, and advice from the Center for Teaching and Learning and University Health Services. She had a conversation with Ryan Cobb (Head Athletic Trainer/IA coordinator for medical services); he said that he did not see a systematic/special problem with student-athletes; in fact, student-athletes often have better support and resources than non-athletes. ***Further guidance for faculty does seem to be needed on concussions.*** Some faculty do not understand the treatment requirements and could use information on concussions similar to what has been done for the flu. The Academic Integrity Committee would be a good starting point.

3) Information-gathering on Academic and Social Integration: The SAC met with Athletic Study Center Director Derek Van Rheenen to learn more about the challenges and opportunities to support the academic achievement and social integration of student-athletes. ASC Director Van Rheenen gave an overview of the ASC's goals and in response to questions, listed some "opportunities and challenges" facing the ASC:

- Educating the campus community about what the ASC does and correcting misconceptions.
- Addressing reductions in staffing due to budget cuts.
- Increased demand for services.
- Clarifying and managing reporting lines.

Van Rheenen said that the SAC could support the ASC with integration into campus culture, and acknowledgement of the purpose/mission. Student representative Makayla Ward said that debunking myths about the ASC would be important, and suggested that all student-athletes learn about it at orientation, and that coaches and athletes also be sent informational emails. SAC can consider how to reach out to the campus to try to change the narrative.

- *Several issues were raised for next year's SAC 2017-18 from these discussions: first, the SAC may wish to investigate further the level of funding for the ASC; second, the SAC should consider how departmental faculty and GSIs can communicate better with advisors and tutors from the ASC, to provide more coordinated assistance to student athletes, particularly student-athletes of color who are struggling to balance academic and athletic responsibilities; third, the SAC could work to ensure that the ASC is better integrated into campus culture.*

4) IA's response to the TF Implementation. The SAC met with IA Director Williams to gain his insight into how he best thinks the SAC could support student-athletes in understanding the value of a Berkeley degree. Director Williams emphasized that there is value to enhancing faculty-student relationships, especially for underrepresented minority students with limited access to social capital. In addition, URM students often find faculty intimidating.

Director Williams also stated that the 2014 task force focused on low graduation rates. Barriers for student-athletes include difficulty in getting the majors they want because of prerequisites or scheduling; limited paths to certain majors; and perceptions about accessibility to certain fields.

Director Williams also said that it would be helpful if faculty participated in the Student-Athlete orientation. He said that the Faculty Fellows program has been very important in helping student-athletes know their value beyond athletics. Williams said that mentoring by graduate students is also an opportunity to support student-athletes academically. He said this would be especially beneficial for Law and Haas students. He said that the faculty and campus should find ways for student-athletes to do research projects.

- *The SAC should focus on increasing greater contact between faculty and student-athletes, and creating mentoring opportunities for these students, especially URM students. This has already begun with faculty being invited to attend this summer's Student-Athlete Orientation. Class schedules by major should be analyzed to see what effect, if any, scheduling has on student-athlete major selection.*

Recommendation:

- *We recommend that the SAC be continued in the 2017-18 academic year, to advance the work on the integration and well-being of student athletes that is ongoing from previous years.*