‘Well, nobody’s perfect.”
[Closing line of the movie “Some Like it Hot” (1959)]

Well, we have not been perfect with the Voice schedule this summer; a tad tardy with this issue, however, the next issue should be on schedule. Here we are, though, in the “dog days” of August. They announced themselves with the howl that serves as a precursor to another academic year. Fall sports teams have begun to arrive and team meetings have been scheduled. In addition, coaches want to schedule certification exams and compliance officers want paperwork reviewed. These activities, among others, seep into our daily schedules.

Undaunted, we carry on, dutifully attempting to fulfill our responsibilities as FARs. We keep in mind the three prongs of our role as FAR: academic integrity, student-athlete well-being, and athletics department oversight. When initiating any activity or responding to any request, we should ask ourselves how the action relates to one or more of the prongs. Perhaps this year we all should log our activities and categorize them according to the prongs. FARA would be most interested in analyzing the information.

In this issue, FARA President Alan Hauser offers insightful comments and interesting notes. Alan’s piece will introduce you to items in this issue.

As you read the feature article by Robert Manning, FAR at the University of Vermont, reflect on last year’s theme of the FARA Annual Meeting and Symposium, “Engaging the Faculty.” Thank you, Bob, for your contribution to FARA. We would like to hear from other FARs regarding effective programs for engaging the faculty.

Also, as you peruse this issue, give some thought to a topic of special interest. Consider submitting an article or commentary. We would appreciate hearing your voice!

And be sure to register for the FARA Annual Meeting and Symposium! See the announcement in this issue.

“And now the sequence of events, in no particular order.” Dan Rather

Joe Catanese
Saint Anselm College
FROM THE PRESIDENT

I hope all of you are enjoying the last few weeks of summer. My summer has been a full one, but also an enjoyable one, and I am beginning to peek toward the beginning of the fall sports season. Soon that excitement will be in the air!

Let me focus on two items today. The first is that the weekend of July 18-20 President-elect Roger Caves and I attended the national meeting of the SAACs in Minneapolis. We wish you could have been there with us. These young women and young men are enthusiastic and energetic, and are bubbling over with excellent ideas about intercollegiate athletics. Roger and I very much enjoyed attending their meeting and participating in their discussions. One of the things Roger and I are going to strongly promote is more frequent and more in-depth interaction between FARA and the SAACs. When you think about it, what we ultimately are about as FARs is providing a quality academic and athletic experience for our student-athletes. This means that, in order to be effective, we need to listen regularly and carefully to our student-athletes. This should not only be the case when, at national NCAA meetings, legislation is on the floor and student-athletes have excellent contributions to make to the discussions, as we have seen in recent years. This should also regularly be the case at all levels, nationally, in our conferences, and on our campuses. While Roger and I focused only on Division I athletes this past weekend, we want to build strong liaisons in all three divisions between the national SAACs and FARA. To that end, we will be presenting a letter from the two of us, as leaders in FARA, addressed through the SAAC newsletters to all SAAC members nationwide. Likewise, we will ask the leaders of the divisional SAACs to present letters in FARA Voice, commenting on what they are doing and on what they consider to be important matters of concern in intercollegiate athletics. We will provide in FARA Voice the Web site of the national SAACs, in order that you may visit them, and they will place in their newsletters the Web site of FARA. Such, we hope, will be the beginning of a productive exchange between FARA and FARs, on the one hand, and national leaders among student-athletes on the other. However, let me close this paragraph by noting that the most important part of creating FAR/student-athlete dialogue is what takes place on each of our campuses. That is the key component in making us effective advocates of the well-being of student-athletes.

My second item concerns the upcoming FARA meeting in November. Online registration is now open, and I encourage you to register soon, as we may run out of hotel space if you wait too long. As you know, our theme this year is “Enhancing the Student-Athlete Experience” and, as you will see from a look at the program, we have developed excellent sessions, including a number which involve active participation by student-athletes. We really will be extensively picking the student-athletes’ brains, and ours, for ways in which we can better understand their needs and be of assistance to them, and for ways in which we can more actively involve them in the betterment of intercollegiate athletics. It is the hope of Roger and me that not only in this year’s program, but also in what will take place throughout subsequent years and at subsequent FARA national meetings, student athletes will be very much at the forefront of our attention, and will be active contributors informing our work as FARs to make their intercollegiate athletics experience the best that it can be. Please look closely at the program that we have put together. I am confident that you will find it very inviting and worthwhile. I look forward to seeing you at the meeting in San Diego in November.

My best regards for a relaxing and rewarding remainder to the summer.

Alan Hauser
President of FARA
Brainstorming Faculty Engagement

“Faculty engagement” is emerging as a focus of Faculty Athletics Representatives (FAR) and intercollegiate athletics more broadly. And for good reason. Findings from the recent Knight Commission report, “Faculty Perceptions of Intercollegiate Athletics Survey” are potentially troubling. This national survey of over 2,000 faculty at 23 NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision universities found a striking lack of knowledge about athletics programs and policies. Moreover, faculty members report being generally dissatisfied with their roles in athletics governance and many feel disconnected from issues facing college sports.

These findings are especially surprising given that sampling for this survey was designed in a way to focus on faculty who are involved in university governance, and only 22 percent of respondents reported no current involvement in either athletics or campus-wide governance. Given this lack of knowledge and involvement, it’s probably not surprising that faculty support for athletics is “soft” at best. Of thirteen potential areas of priority across campus, intercollegiate athletics was ranked as twelfth (above only Greek Life), and the majority of faculty believe athletics financial needs get higher priority than academic needs.

However, many survey findings can be interpreted as more hopeful. Large segments of respondents reported that they have no opinion about a number of academic, governance and financial issues related to athletics. Moreover, faculty who are involved in athletics governance are more positive about all aspects of intercollegiate athletics than those who are not involved. This suggests that there is substantial potential to educate faculty about athletics programs and that these efforts are likely to result in more support.

Given this potential, it’s not surprising that last year’s FARA Annual Meeting and Symposium adopted “faculty engagement” as its theme. And the NCAA is also positioning itself accordingly. In a recent interview, NCAA President Myles Brand said that there is growing tension between academic and athletic needs on campuses across the country and that this is evolving into a “quiet crisis.” A recent article in USA Today quotes a professor at the University of Oregon who suggests that the NCAA is being too “quiet” about this, and that it has really grown into a “serious crisis.”

Given the need for faculty engagement, how do we proceed? Like most universities, the University of Vermont (UVM) has an Athletic Advisory Board (AAB) comprised of faculty, staff, students and alums. We were persuaded by the recent NCAA Presidential Task Force report, “The Second-Century Imperatives,” that some things – like faculty engagement – are probably best done at the level of individual universities rather than at the national level through organizations like the NCAA. Our AAB meets monthly and we decided at one of our meetings last spring to “brainstorm” ways that we (and maybe other universities) might engage the faculty about athletics. Here are our top twelve suggestions.

1. Of course, the first item on our list was a faculty-based advisory committee much like our own AAB. This group should be comprised of faculty appointed by the faculty senate or appropriate faculty governance organization. Strong consideration should be given to including staff, student and alumni representation, each appointed by their respective governing group. Consideration in faculty appointments should be given to representation from major academic units, and the FAR should be an ex officio member. The Director of Athletics and key athletics staff should participate in regular (perhaps monthly) meetings, but the agenda and administration of meetings should be driven by the advisory group and its faculty chair.

2. An end-of-year report on athletics should be presented at the faculty senate (or appropriate faculty governance organization). This report should not focus on the “won/lost”
record for the year but on matters that are more central to faculty: academic performance of student-athletes (including grade-point averages, graduation rates, and the NCAA Academic Progress Report), student-athlete wellbeing, and measures of institutional control over athletics. This report is given by the FAR and the Chair of the AAB at UVM and we feel it is effective.

3. Consideration should be given to extending this type of reporting to the college level. That is, a report on athletics would be presented at a meeting of each major academic unit once a year. This report could be presented by the FAR or the Chair of the AAB. Or if representation on the AAB is broad enough, the report could be presented by the respective faculty.

4. There should be faculty representation on athletics search committees. Just as with faculty positions, search committees are typically used in the recruiting and hiring process for coaching and athletics staff. At least one faculty member should be appointed to each of these committees and these faculty assignments should include representation from all major academic units.

5. A regular program of communication should be established and maintained between athletics and the faculty, probably primarily through electronic means. Most athletics programs have communications staff (ours at UVM does an excellent job) and a reporting program should be aimed at faculty. Like the reports noted above, the subject of this communication should be on matters that will resonate with faculty – academic performance of student-athletes, outstanding success stories (e.g., awards won by student-athletes), and community service and involvement of student-athletes.

6. A campus-wide athletics-related lecture could be arranged each year. Many dimensions of athletics – the benefits associated with participation in college athletics; the relationship between physical activity and health; gender and racial/ethnic trends and issues in athletics; periodic studies and reports by groups like the NCAA and Knight Commission – are the subject of a considerable body of research and scholarship. Most universities have campus-wide lecture programs or the athletics department could sponsor such lectures. These lectures would address the “serious side” of athletics and help to place athletics on the radar screens of many faculty, staff, and students.

7. Faculty should be involved in academic support programs of athletic departments. This involvement could include academic advising, study skills, and subject matter-related tutoring.

8. Similarly, athletics program academic support staff could be involved on campus more broadly. Strong programs of study and life skills have been developed under the auspices of athletics and these should be more widely shared with academic units and faculty.

9. Faculty should be involved in athletics honors and awards, particularly those that have an academic component. Most athletics programs have a series of awards that are presently publicly, and faculty should be asked to participate in the selection (if appropriate) and presentation of some of these awards.

10. Faculty could be asked to periodically serve as a “guest coach.” Perhaps student-athletes would be given the opportunity to ask one of their professors each year sit on the bench or sidelines with the team to experience the athletics program on a more intimate and personal level. This might provide faculty with more insight into the importance of athletics, the dynamics of athletic competition, the work, dedication and commitment associated with being a student-athlete, and the role of coaches as teachers.

11. Faculty who have not traditionally been involved with athletics should be engaged more directly where possible. For example, each member of the AAB should make a point of taking a faculty member from their academic unit to a game each year. Or the
athletics department should distribute a few tickets each semester to each major academic unit for use by faculty.

12. FARs should add “faculty engagement” to their job descriptions. Work with athletics staff, the faculty governance organization, university administrators, the athletics advisory group, the student-athlete advisory group, FARA, and the NCAA to help raise faculty consciousness and support for the athletics program and student-athletes.

Brainstorm a list of activities that will enhance faculty engagement at your institution. Then pick the best ideas and implement them!

Robert E. Manning
Faculty Athletics Representative
University of Vermont

Summer Reading, Reminders and Upcoming Events

Champion, the NCAA’s monthly magazine, and The Journal of Intercollegiate Sports make for interesting reading. Have you a response to an article? A comment on a topic? A reaction to a story? Send your copy to us (jcatanese@anselm.edu).

Have you an article or text to suggest to other FARs? Let us know.

Do not forget to register to receive the NCAA News online and daily division up-dates.

SCORE/GOALS HIGHLIGHTS

Brianna Scott
NCAA Research Department

This is a research update from the NCAA’s Study of College Outcomes and Recent Experiences (SCORE) and Growth, Opportunities, Aspirations and Learning of Students in college (GOALS) study. In this installment, we examine student-athlete access to and use of academic support services. These services include academic advisors for course selection and degree progress, tutors to review course materials and for writing assignments, study hall and faculty mentors. Overall, a high percentage of student-athletes reported having access to these various academic services on their campuses. However, there were statistically significant divisional differences (see Table 1). Division I had the highest level of access to these services, followed by Divisions II and III.

As you might expect, not all student-athletes who have access to these services actually use them. For example, of the Division I student-athletes who had access to writing tutors, only 50% reported having actually used the service provided (see Table 2). The differences among the Divisions still hold true when it comes to using the academic support services as well. Division II reported significantly less use of these services than Division I, and Division III reported significantly less use than Division II.

The NCAA has a strong commitment to the academic performance of the student-athletes at their membership institutions. It is encouraging to note that there seems to be high levels of access to programs designed to assist these student-athletes with academics across all three divisions. However, the student-
athletes with access to these services need to utilize them in order to reap the benefits. Encouragingly, a higher percentage of student-athletes who compete in men’s baseball, basketball, and football (the high profile sports with lower academic success) use these services than other sport groupings. For example, in Division II, just under half of student-athletes reported using tutors to help review course materials. A higher percentage of men’s baseball, basketball, and football student-athletes reported using these tutors, 51%, 55% and 58%, respectively. This discrepancy might suggest that only the student-athletes who feel they need to use these services actually are using them. However, we do not have empirical data to back up this assertion.

Table 1. Percentage of student-athletes who reported access to academic services

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Division I</th>
<th>Division II</th>
<th>Division III</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Advisors – Course Selection</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Advisors – Degree Progress</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutors to Review Course Material</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutors for Writing Assignments</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Hall</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Mentors</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>57%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

All divisional differences statistically significant at p < .01.

Table 2. Percentage of student-athletes who had access to and used academic services

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Division I</th>
<th>Division II</th>
<th>Division III</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Advisors – Course Selection</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Advisors – Degree Progress</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutors to Review Course Material</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutors for Writing Assignments</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Hall</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Mentors</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All divisional differences statistically significant at p < .01.
DATES TO REMEMBER

November 13-15, 2008
FARA Annual Meeting and Symposium
San Diego

January 14-17, 2009
NCAA Convention
Washington, DC

November 12 – 14, 2009
FARA Annual Meeting and Symposium
St. Louis

November 11-13, 2010
FARA Annual Meeting and Symposium
Baltimore

Tell Us How We Are Doing! We would love to hear from you regarding the FARA Voice. If you have any comments, questions, or ideas for future articles, please direct them to

Karen Cooper at FARA@ncaa.org.

http://www.farawebsite.org
2008 FARA Annual Meeting and Symposium

“Enhancing the Student-Athlete Experience”

November 13-15
Westin Gaslamp Quarter Hotel --- San Diego

Registration is now available at
www.planningpoint.net/events/fara2008

The registration fee for the meeting will be $225, which will include all registration materials, entry to all sessions, awards dinner, three additional meals, a welcome gift and a special gift for Saturday attendees. Tentative sessions will include:

- Keynote address by Dr. Myles Brand
- Presentation of the 2008 Walter Byers Scholarship Award winners
- Results of the NCAA Wagering Study
- Postgraduate Scholarships
- NCAA Survey Process
- Diversity
- Review of NCAA legislation
- Division I Sessions will include:
  - Academic Advisors Panel; Participation in NCAA Investigations; Time Demands; Strategic Tools for APR – Communicating with your Coaching Staff; FAR, AD and Compliance Coordinator Panel
- Division II sessions will include:
  - Division II Strategic Positioning and Community Engagement – Enhancing the Student-Athlete Experience and the Role of the FAR; Best Practices – Community Engagement and the Student Athlete Experience; Enhancing the Student-Athlete Experience – The FAR and Postgraduate Scholarships, Degree-Completion Scholarships, and the SAAC; Current Issues including the Academic Success Rate program, Champs/Lifeskills, Leadership Opportunities for Student-Athletes
- Division III sessions will include:
  - Reducing Class/Sport Conflicts, Student-Athlete Interaction with Faculty; Perception of the Student-Athlete by Faculty; Faculty Communication with Coaches; NCAA Scholarship Opportunities
  - Divisional Issues, including the Restructuring Survey
  - “How Can We Make Your Life Easier” SAAC Presentation
  - Action Plan for Enhancing the Student-Athlete Experience