

**Boston College
Athletics Advisory Board
Annual Report, 2015-16**

This Report is intended to summarize for the University community both the major developments related to Boston College's intercollegiate athletics program and the Athletics Advisory Board's (AAB) activities during the preceding academic year.

1. The Year's Academic and Athletic Highlights

A. ACC Academic Collaboration

The Academic Collaborative among Atlantic Coast Conference Universities (ACCAC) sponsored its eleventh year of initiatives, with full participation by BC students. The eleventh annual "Meeting of the Minds" conference, designed to showcase undergraduate research at member institutions, was held at North Carolina State University, April 8-10, 2016. The Student Leadership Symposium, which brings together teams of five to ten student leaders from each ACC university to discuss specific social topics, was held this year at Clemson University for three days in February. This year's theme was empowering diversity and overcoming stereotypes that are inhibiting the contributions of minorities.

Other ACCAC activities this past year included a student Debate Championship, held at the University of North Carolina in April, a Student Advocacy trip to Washington, D.C. in March, and the first annual Inventure Prize Competition, hosted by Georgia Tech in April, in which teams of students from all fifteen conference schools pitched their business ideas or inventions.

B. Academic Achievements of Individual BC Student-Athletes

Several BC student-athletes were recognized this year for their combination of academic and athletic achievements. Nicole Boudreau (Women's Basketball), Caroline Margolis (Lacrosse) and Katty Workman (Volleyball) were awarded ACC Postgraduate Scholarships for distinguished achievement in academics, athletics and community service and their potential for graduate study. They were honored at the annual ACC Scholarship Banquet in Greensboro, NC, on April 13, 2016. Thirty-three BC student-athletes were named to the ACC All-Academic teams in their sports, and Olivia Adragna was named ACC Women's Fencing Scholar-Athlete of the Year.

C. NCAA Measures of Student-Athlete Academic Progress

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) continues to use two measures of academic achievement as part of its Academic Performance Program (APP). These are the Academic Progress Rate (APR) and the Graduation Success Rate (GSR), and they are applied at each NCAA Division I member school for all full or partial scholarship student-athletes.

The APR looks at the eligibility, retention and graduation of all athletically-aided student-athletes (and, for teams that do not award athletic aid, all recruited student-athletes). The APR awards 1 point for each student-athlete who is academically eligible to compete in the next semester and an additional point if that student-athlete returns to school for the next semester. For the academic year, therefore, each student-athlete could receive a maximum of

four points for the fall and spring semesters. The APR compares the total number of points actually received in a given year to the maximum total points.

The primary use of the APR measure is on a team-by-team, rather than an overall institutional basis. The NCAA has imposed a cutoff APR of 925 (i.e., 92.5% of the maximum total points), and any school with a team whose four-year average APR falls below that level in its sport may be subject to penalties in the form of reduction of the maximum allowable financial aid for that sport, or in some cases ineligibility for postseason competition. Based on the most recent data, none of BC's teams were subject to these penalties. In addition, 12 of BC's teams received public recognition from the NCAA for having an APR among the top 10% of Division I institutions sponsoring that sport, and 12 BC teams recorded perfect APR scores of 1000.

The second measure of academic performance used by the NCAA is the Graduation Success Rate (GSR), which measures the percentage of student-athletes entering an institution who graduate from that institution, excluding students who transfer to another institution while still academically eligible to compete at their initial institution. The latest data available cover students entering college in 2005, '06, '07 and '08. For Boston College student-athletes overall, the four-class average GSR was 95%, compared to a GSR of 83% for all Division I institutions combined. Thirteen of the varsity sports that BC currently sponsors achieved the highest possible GSR of 100%. Further details on APR and GSR for individual sports and other NCAA schools can be found at www.ncaa.org, under Division I/Academics.

D. Student-Athlete Community Service

Annually, most BC student-athletes take part in any of a number of community service activities, organized through BC's Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC). These include visiting the Franciscan Children's Hospital, volunteering at the Boston Food Bank's Food for Families program, and visiting elementary schools through the Help Educate through Athletic Responsibility (HEAR) program. For the seventh year, a group of BC student-athletes, 20 this year, were chosen to participate in the Devlin S-AFE Service Immersion trip to New Orleans to help with the continuing rebuilding effort following Hurricane Katrina. The trip occurred during the January portion of Christmas break. At the year-end Golden Eagle Awards ceremony in May, Meghan Grieves (Women's Ice Hockey), Peter Lynn (Sailing) and Fiona Walsh (Sailing) were honored with the Richard "Moe" Maloney Award for their outstanding community service.

E. Athletic Program Highlights

A number of BC teams and individuals achieved athletic success during the past year. In the fall, men's soccer won three tournament games and advanced to the Elite Eight of the NCAA soccer tournament. Junior Zeiko Lewis was named to the All-ACC second team and sophomore Len Zeugner made the All-ACC third team. Women's soccer was also selected for the NCAA tournament. Juniors McKenzie Meehan and Hayley Dowd were named to the All-ACC first and second teams, respectively, while Meehan was named a third-team All-American. Field Hockey made the NCAA Tournament field and advanced to the second round. Senior Leah Settupane and junior Emily McCoy were both selected as second-team All-Americans. McCoy was also named to the All-ACC second team as was junior Romee Stiekema. In football, senior Connor Wujciak made the All-ACC first team, and classmates Steven Daniels and Justin Simmons were selected

to the second team. In women's cross country, graduate students Laura Hottenrott and Danielle Winslow and sophomore Isabelle Kennedy made the All-ACC team.

In the winter, women's ice hockey won a school-record 40 games and advanced to the NCAA tournament Championship game for the first time ever. The team also won the Beanpot and Hockey East tournaments. Head Coach Katie Crowley was named Division I Women's Ice Hockey Coach of the Year for the second straight year. Senior Alex Carpenter and sophomore Megan Keller were selected to the All-American first team, and senior Haley Skarupa made the second team. Men's Ice Hockey similarly excelled, winning the Beanpot tournament and advancing to the Frozen Four in the NCAA tournament. Head Coach Jerry York surpassed 1,000 career wins and was given USA Hockey's Distinguished Achievement Award. Junior Thatcher Demko won the Mike Richter Award as the outstanding goaltender in NCAA men's hockey. In women's basketball, Mariella Fasoula was named to the All-ACC Freshman Team. In women's indoor track, graduate student Liv Westphal finished tenth in the 5,000 meter run at the NCAA championships, earning her a place on the All-American second team for the second consecutive year. Westphal, Laura Hottenrott and sophomore Molly McCabe were also selected for the All-ACC team. In women's fencing, senior Olivia Adragna was named to the All-ACC team.

In the spring, baseball won 35 games and made both the ACC and NCAA post-season tournaments. The team advanced to the Super Regional round of sixteen in the NCAA tournament, just one win short of the College World Series. Junior Justin Dunn was named to the Baseball America All-America third team, and Jacob Stevens was named to the Freshman All-American second team, as well as the All-ACC Freshman team. In men's golf, freshman Matthew Naumec was selected as the New England Division I Rookie of the Year. Lacrosse made the NCAA Tournament field for the fourth consecutive year. Senior Sarah Mannelly was named to the All-ACC first team as well as the All-American second team, while sophomore Kenzie Kent was named to the All-ACC second team. In rowing senior Catherine Goldberg was selected to the All-ACC second team. In sailing, senior Raul Rios and sophomore Scott Sinks were named Coed All-American Skippers, and seniors Katherine Downey and Allison Downey were selected as All-American Crews. Downey, Ferraris and junior Allyson Donahue also earned Women's All-American Skipper honors. In softball, senior Jessie Daulton and junior Tatiana Cortez were selected to the All-ACC first team, while sophomores Jessica Dreswick and Annie Murphy were named to the second team. In women's tennis, junior Lexi Borr and sophomore Asiya Dair were voted to the All-ACC third team. In women's track, graduate student Danielle Winslow won the 3,000 meter steeplechase at the ACC Championships, which earned her a place on the All-ACC first team. Sophomore Laura Leff was selected to the All-ACC second team for the same event, while graduate student Liv Westphal and sophomore Isabelle Kennedy earned All-ACC first- and second-team honors, respectively, for their performances in the 10,000 meter run.

2. AAB Activities during 2015-16

A. AAB Monthly Meetings

The minutes of all eight AAB meetings held during 2015-16 are attached to this report. Our guests this year included Director of Athletics Brad Bates; three representatives from the BC Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC); BC Vice Provost for Enrollment Management Nanci Tessier; Learning Resources for Student-Athletes (LRSA) Director Dard Miller and Learning

Specialists and Academic Counselors Patrice Bouzan and Anna Harris; and Deputy Athletics Director and Senior Woman Administrator Jaime Sequin and Campus Recreation Director Caitriona Taylor.

The AAB's monthly meetings covered a number of current issues. These included cost pressures on college athletics programs; student-athlete academic advising and support, student-athlete health care, particularly with respect to concussions; the perception of student-athletes by non-athlete BC students; University policies for making up work missed by students because of University-sponsored activities; class scheduling issues raised by varsity sport practice and competition schedules; and the plans for BC's new Recreation Center.

At our first meeting in October, AAB Chair Bob Taggart reported on a meeting he had in September with BC Provost David Quigley and Vice Provost for Undergraduate Academic Affairs Akua Sarr about two outstanding AAB recommendations from 2014 – 15. The first of these was a recommendation that BC become a member of the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA). Bob was told that a decision on membership had not yet been made but that the Provost's Office would continue to support two AAB members to attend the annual COIA meeting, held this past year in February, 2016. The second recommendation was that BC no longer permit student-athletes to be given make-up exams while they are travelling for competition and that BC establish a testing center where proctored make-up exams could be taken. While not being willing to establish an outright ban on make-up exams during team travel, Provost Quigley did agree to establish a committee to assess funding and space needs and potential hours of operation for a University testing center. Bob also reported to the group on this year's inclusion of student-athlete representatives as voting members at the NCAA Annual Convention and at business meetings of the "Autonomy Five" conferences and about proposed legislation to reduce athletic time demands on student-athletes¹. AAB members spent the remainder of the time planning meeting topics and guests for the 2015 – 16 year.

Director of Athletics Brad Bates was the guest at our November meeting. He spoke first about cost pressures on collegiate sports, pointing out that recent NCAA legislation allowing schools more discretion in providing food to student-athletes and allowing them to provide athletic scholarships that cover up to the full cost of attendance (COA) has added over \$1 million to the cost of operating BC's varsity athletics program. Brad also spoke about academic support and acclimation to college life for the most academically-at risk as well as first-generation college student-athletes at BC. He said that he had been working with Vice Provost Akua Sarr, Vice President for Mission and Ministry Fr. Jack Butler and the AHANA organization on potential improvements in these areas. Some AAB members suggested looking for ways to encourage student-athletes to seek out faculty members for academic advice and support. This was followed by an extensive discussion of student health care. Brad described a new partnership that had been formed with Newton-Wellesley Hospital, which he felt would provide a more structured relationship with hospital doctors and greater health care continuity for BC student-athletes. However, one AAB member pointed out that an unintended side effect of discontinuing the previous partnership with St. Elizabeth's Hospital had been a severe cutback in clinical practicum and service opportunities that St. Elizabeth's had formerly made available to

¹ The time demands proposals were subsequently withdrawn from the 2015 – 16 legislative cycle in anticipation of developing a more comprehensive and integrated set of proposals on this topic for 2016 – 17.

Connell School of Nursing students. The health care discussion also covered concussion policies, with some AAB members expressing the opinion that BC policies rely too heavily on self-reporting by student-athletes and on return-to-play decisions made by doctors who have a relationship with BC. The final topic was the game-day experience for BC home football games. Brad said that tailgating had been allowed this past year on the Brighton Campus for the first time. Since a majority of BC football game attendees do not drive themselves to the game, he also said that, in the future, he would like to establish a non-vehicular tailgating opportunity somewhere on campus. Asked for feedback, one AAB member expressed enthusiasm for the easy exit following games afforded by the reserved-space parking system on Shea Field this past year, but another felt that the Shea Field atmosphere had become less enthusiastic, perhaps because of restrictions on pedestrian access.

In December, the AAB met with three representatives from BC's Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC), from the sports of ice hockey, sailing and track and field. Asked about the quality of their interactions with Learning Resources for Student-Athletes (LRSA), the students responded enthusiastically, citing the academic support they had received and the flexibility of counselors and tutors in arranging meeting times. In response to another question, the students said that they generally sought academic help from LRSA first, but that LRSA counselors often pointed them to faculty members for additional help. All three students reported at least some amount of difficulty in finding classes that meshed with their practice and competition schedules, and they said that some form of priority registration for student-athletes would be very beneficial. While there has been considerable opposition to this concept in the past, one AAB member argued that the time demands on varsity athletes are of a higher magnitude than those imposed by other extra-curricular activities and advocated revisiting the issue. The student were asked if they had had any success in approaching faculty members for overrides into closed sections of classes, and they had, but also said that faculty members differed widely in their understanding of student-athlete time demands. Responding to a question on how they are perceived by non-athlete BC students, the SAAC members felt that there was substantial lack of understanding of the time demands that student-athletes face. This sometimes contributes to a perception that athletes are not serious students. In response to another question, the three students said that they appreciated BC's Jesuit tradition, citing the ideas of care for the whole person, reflecting on one's experience, the liberal arts focus and the emphasis on community service. Finally, the student-athletes were asked about ways in which the student-athlete experience could be improved. They cited the limits on per diem allowances for food during team travel or during vacation times when they must remain on campus for practice, arguing that these limits were not sufficient to allow adequate nutrition. In addition, referring back to the question about their perception by non-athlete students, they suggested that BC's Orientation program might include some information about the lives of student-athletes so as to promote greater understanding.

Vice Provost for Enrollment Management Nanci Tessier was our guest at the January meeting. Nanci explained that, in the late 1990s, BC's bursar, registrar and financial aid functions had been split off from undergraduate admissions and enrollment management. Since then, however, increasing competition among schools for top-caliber applicants and a shrinking college applicant pool from the Northeast region of the U.S. have led to a need for BC to be more strategic in its use of financial aid and marketing efforts to attract top students. Thus, Nanci's position was newly-created in 2015 to reintegrate admissions, financial aid and student services for this purpose. The group then discussed the role of the athletics program in

increasing awareness of BC in other parts of the country and in enhancing the experience of students and alumni. At the same time, Nanci cited research indicating that college choices of students with the highest academic ability are influenced far more by the availability of student clubs, internships and intramural sports than by the presence of a major varsity athletics program. The final topic addressed was the gap in average academic preparedness between BC student-athletes and the rest of the student body. Some AAB members asked if providing scholarships to student-athletes impinged on BC's ability to offer financial aid to other students. Nanci acknowledged that some compromises in admissions standards must be made in order to attract student-athletes capable of competing at the highest level. She felt that BC's primary responsibility in sponsoring a major athletics program is to provide students with the academic support they need to succeed academically and complete their degree programs. She also said that the budgets for athletically-related and need-based financial aid are entirely separate and that one does not influence the other.

The February AAB meeting took up three separate topics. The first of these was athletics-related concussions. Aspects of this topic included concussion diagnosis, which can be difficult because symptoms can manifest themselves in different ways from one case to another; return-to-play decisions; and the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of concussion policies. Team doctors typically make return-to-play decisions, and there was discussion of whether these doctors, while not BC employees, have an inherent conflict of interest in light of Newton-Wellesley Hospital's partnership arrangement with BC Athletics. For the second topic, Athletics Director Brad Bates joined the meeting to solicit suggestions for improving the quality of interaction between student-athletes and their academic advisors. AAB members pointed out that advising events for student-athletes can be difficult to arrange because of their varying practice and competition schedules. Several AAB members suggested that it would be worthwhile for Brad to begin some discussions with the Academic Advising Center in the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences. The third topic was testing accommodations for students with disabilities. A colleague of one AAB member had complained about receiving notice of a learning disability testing accommodation from LRSA rather than from the Connors Family Learning Center. It was agreed to discuss this issue further at our next meeting with members of the LRSA staff.

At the beginning of April, we met with LRSA Director Dard Miller, as well as Learning Specialists and Academic Counselors Patrice Bouzan and Anna Harris. Dard raised two issues with the AAB, the first of which was her desire for a clear, University-wide policy on assignments or other work missed by students because of travel for University-sponsored activities. Speaking for the Provost's Office, AAB member Joe Burns said that it is University policy that students must be given an opportunity make up any class work missed because of University-sponsored activities. Dard expressed the hope that this policy might be further clarified by specifying some type of guidelines on a range of missed classes that could be considered acceptable. She also mentioned that this had been a recommendation of the visiting committee when LRSA had undergone its last Academic Program Review in 2011. The system of having student-athletes present their professors with a list of potential absences because of competition travel at the beginning of each semester was also discussed briefly. Dard reported that some professors balk at making accommodations or impose grade penalties for what they consider excessive absences. Second, Patrice Bouzan and Anna Harris described their work with both student-athletes with diagnosed learning disabilities and those with other significant academic deficits and challenges. In answer to the issue of faculty confusion over the relative roles of LRSA and

the Connors Center, which had arisen at the preceding AAB meeting, Patrice explained that, while paperwork for all BC students with learning disabilities is initiated in the Connors Center, LRSA then assumes responsibility for deciding on necessary accommodations and coordinating service delivery to all such student-athletes. It is hoped that a testing center, which will serve all BC students with learning disabilities and which is to be opened this coming year under the direction of the Connors Center, will help alleviate confusion over LRSA's role.

Later in April, the AAB held its annual review of practice and competition schedules for all varsity teams. Prior to this meeting, AAB members identified those class time blocks (e.g., Monday-Wednesday-Friday at 8, 9, 10 and 11 AM or 12, 1, 2, 3, and 4 PM or Tuesday-Thursday at 9 and 10:30 AM and 12, 1:30, 3 and 4:30 PM) that a given team's practice schedule leaves open for taking classes. Available class time blocks are then compared to the team's competition schedule to see which class time blocks would entail less than two full weeks of missed class (e.g., 5 or fewer missed classes in a Monday-Wednesday-Friday time block or 3 or fewer missed classes in a Tuesday-Thursday time block). Sports with large numbers of contests and frequent travel, typically pose challenges for student-athletes trying to take a full course load without missing numerous classes. These usually include volleyball in the fall and baseball and softball in the spring. AAB members did note that increasing numbers of BC classes are offered in nontraditional time blocks (e.g. once per week in the late afternoon or evening). Some of these time blocks afford additional flexibility to student-athletes trying to balance class scheduling with their practice and competition schedules. For example, to the extent that members of the volleyball team this past fall could have taken classes that did not meet on Fridays, the problem of missed classes could have been greatly mitigated. AAB members Kathy Bailey and Tracy Regan also reported on their trip to attend the annual convention of the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA) in February. Topics covered had included student-athlete concussion diagnosis and treatment, the role of faculty in the new NCAA governance structure and calls for greater transparency on the expenses and financing of college sports programs. Asked if they would recommend BC's continued participation in COIA meetings, both Kathy and Tracy felt that the meetings deal with important topics, but Tracy was less sure about whether the discussions were leading anywhere. Finally, there was discussion of the role of the AAB at BC. Some members expressed frustration that the AAB is not usually called upon for advice on major Athletics decisions and therefore does not play a truly advisory role. Another member, however, described the closeted nature of BC Athletics decisions prior to the establishment of the AAB and expressed the opinion that the situation has improved since then.

The final AAB meeting for the academic year was held in May, and Deputy Athletics Director and Senior Woman Administrator Jaime Seguin and Director of Campus Recreation Caitriona Taylor outlined the plans for BC's new Recreation Center, whose construction is scheduled to begin soon. Caitriona explained that the new Center, to be built on the site of Edmonds Hall, will have four levels and will include multi-activity courts for basketball, volleyball, indoor soccer, badminton and special events; three indoor tennis courts; expanded space for fitness activities, including climbing and bouldering walls, and several golf simulators; an indoor track, suspended above the third-floor activity courts, for running and walking; and two twenty-five yard pools. One will be an eight-lane deep pool for swimming and water polo competition, equipped with two one-meter diving boards. The second will be a four-lane shallow pool, accessible by a ramp for users with mobility issues, with warmer water than the deep pool to facilitate therapeutic and cross-training use in addition to recreational swimming. The part of the plan that generated the most discussion was the swimming pools. Some AAB

members argued that the lack of a three-meter diving board would put BC at a competitive disadvantage in recruiting varsity swimming and diving student-athletes and would also jeopardize the whole swimming program, as it would signal a lack of commitment to swimming as a varsity sport. Home swim meets would require more time, because the lack of a separate diving well would mean that swimming and diving events would have to share the deep pool and could not occur simultaneously. Questions were also raised about the implications for the varsity tennis program of reducing the number of indoor courts from four in the existing Recreation Complex to three in the new facility and of eliminating outdoor tennis courts altogether. More generally, some AAB members argued that the AAB should have been asked for its advice about the plans for the new Center before those plans advanced as far as they had at the time of our meeting. Following the meeting, several AAB members developed a supplement, containing additional discussion points, details on aquatics facilities at other schools in the Boston area and at other ACC schools and comments from local and national swimming and diving coaches and officials. A majority of AAB members voted to include this supplement along with the meeting minutes.

B. Committee Composition

At the beginning of the year, the AAB welcomed newly-elected members Stacey Barone (CSON) and Tracy Regan (Economics). At the end of the academic year, Kathy Bailey (Political Science) and Mike Cassidy (Law) completed their elected terms on the Board, and Sharon Beckman (Law) and Michael Naughton (Physics) were elected to new three-year terms, beginning June 2016.

Please feel free to seek out any AAB member with questions and concerns you may have. One of the Board's primary functions is to serve as a channel for communication between the academic and athletics programs, and we are always open to your questions or other input.

The Athletics Advisory Board, 2015-16:

Kathleen Bailey (Political Science)	Stacey Barone (CSON)
John J. Burns (Office of the Provost)	Michael Cassidy (Law)
Donald Fishman (Communication)	Burton Howell (Intersections)
Michael Malec (Sociology)	Tracy Regan (Economics)
Robert Taggart (CSOM, AAB Chair and Faculty Athletics Representative)	