

**Boston College  
Athletics Advisory Board  
Annual Report, 2016-17**

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 twelfth year of initiatives, with full participation by BC students. The twelfth annual "Meeting of the Minds" conference, designed to showcase undergraduate research at member institutions, was held at Duke University, March 31 – April 2, 2017. The Student Leadership Symposium, which brings together teams of student leaders from each ACC university to discuss specific social topics, was held this year at Wake Forest University for three days in February.

Other ACCAC activities this past year included a student Debate Championship, held at the University of Miami, March 31 – April 2, 2017, and the second annual Inventure Prize Competition, hosted by Georgia Tech in March, in which teams of students from all fifteen conference schools pitched their business ideas or inventions.

A new initiative, scheduled for October 13 – 15, 2017, is the ACC Smithsonian Creativity and Innovation Festival. It will feature 65 "pop-up" exhibits throughout the National Museum of American History, featuring innovative projects from 14 of the ACC's universities, including BC.

**B. Academic Achievements of Individual BC Student-Athletes**

Several BC student-athletes were recognized this year for their combination of academic and athletic achievements. Renée Bichette (Women's Fencing), Audra Hampsch (Field Hockey) and Kevin Kavalec (Football) 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 12, 2017. During the year, 40 BC student-athletes were named to the All-ACC Academic teams in their sports.

**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 11 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 2006, '07, '08 and '09. For Boston College student-athletes overall, the four-class average GSR was 95%, compared to a GSR of 84% 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](http://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) and the office for Student-Athlete Development. 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 eighth year, a group of BC student-athletes, 22 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, the lacrosse team was honored with the Richard "Moe" Maloney Award for outstanding community service. Devaun Bovell (M Track), Peter Lynn (Sailing), Kayla O'Connor (Lacrosse), Morgan Rann (Rowing), Maria Russo (W Swimming) and Justine Sheehan (Field Hockey) were BC's honorees as the ACC Top Six for Service.

#### **E. Athletic Program Highlights**

A number of BC teams and individuals achieved athletic success during the past year. During the fall season, men's soccer was selected for the NCAA tournament and advanced to the second round. Senior Zeiko Lewis was named to the All-ACC first team, and at the end of the year was honored as BC's male Eagle of the Year. Lasse Lehmann was named to the All-ACC Freshman team. In women's soccer, graduate student McKenzie Meehan was selected for the

All-ACC first team, and at the end of the year was named female Eagle of the Year. Senior Hayley Dowd was named to the All-ACC second team. Field Hockey made the NCAA tournament field for the fourth consecutive year. Seniors Audra Hampsch and Emily McCoy and sophomores Ymke Rose Gote and Frederique Haverhals were all named to the All-ACC second team. Haverhals was also chosen as a first-team All-American, while Gote was selected to the third team. The football team was chosen to play in the postseason Quick Lane Bowl in Detroit, where it defeated Maryland. Junior Harold Landry was named to the All-ACC second team, while senior Matt Milano earned Honorable Mention. Landry was also named to Walter Camp All-America second team. In women's cross country, sophomore Isabelle Kennedy raced to a second place finish at the ACC Championship. She was named to the All-ACC team along with fellow sophomore Paige Duca. In men's cross country, sophomore Sean Burke was named to the All-ACC team. In fall sailing, senior Erika Reineke became the first BC sailor to win her fourth National Singlehanded Sailing Championship, while freshman Scott Rasmussen was the first BC sailor to win the men's singlehanded championship.

In the winter, women's ice hockey won the Beanpot and Hockey East tournaments, both for the second year in a row, and advanced to the Frozen Four in the NCAA tournament for the third consecutive year. Junior Megan Keller was named a first-team All-American and was the first defenseman to win the Hockey East Player of the Year award. Junior Katie Burt was named to the All-America third team, and freshman Caitrin Lonergan was selected to the All-Rookie team. Keller and Burt were also named to the Hockey East first and third team All-Star teams, while sophomore Makenna Newkirk was selected for the second team. Men's Ice Hockey played in the championship game of the Hockey East tournament, and senior Austin Cangelosi was selected for the Hockey East Best Defensive Forward award. In men's basketball, sophomore Jerome Robinson earned All-ACC Honorable Mention, and Ky Bowman was named to the All-ACC Freshman Team. In women's fencing, senior Renée Bichette was chosen as ACC Fencer of the Year in the Épée. In women's indoor track and field, senior Claudia DiSomma, juniors Robin Gross and Molly McCabe and sophomore Paige Duca were all named the All-ACC second team.

In the spring, lacrosse had its best season ever, finishing with a record of 17 – 7 and advancing all the way to the championship game in the NCAA Women's Lacrosse Tournament. Junior Kenzie Kent, who played only half the season because she is also a member of the women's ice hockey team, set a new tournament scoring record and was named the outstanding player of the tournament. She later won ACC Female Athlete of the Year honors, the first BC female athlete to do so. Sophomore Sam Apuzzo led the nation with 80 goals on the season and was selected for both the All-ACC and All-American first teams, while fellow sophomore Elizabeth Miller was named a second-team All-American. Miller and junior Katie Weeks were also named to the All-ACC second team. Head Coach Acacia Walker was chosen as Division I National Coach of the Year. In women's golf, freshman Lois Kaye Go was named to the All-ACC team, while in rowing, senior Caitlin Yaccarino was named to the All-ACC second team. In spring sailing, the BC women's team finished second in the Sperry Women's National Championship, and senior Erika Reineke was named Sailor of the Year and an All-American. Senior Ally Donahue was also named to the Women's All-American team. The BC softball team won 31 games, including a best-ever 14 ACC games. Seniors Jessica Dreswick and Chloe Sharabba were named to the ALL-ACC first team, and senior Tatiana Cortez and junior Annie Murphy made the second team. In women's tennis, senior Lexi Borr and junior Asiya Dair were named to the All-ACC third team.

## **2. AAB Activities during 2016-17**

### **A. AAB Monthly Meetings**

Our guests this year included Director of Athletics Brad Bates; three representatives from the BC Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC); four guests from around the campus who discussed ways to improve the acclimation of student-athletes to college life and BC life; and Learning Resources for Student-Athletes (LRSA) Director Dard Miller.

The AAB's monthly meetings covered a number of issues. These included the role of the AAB relative to BC's Athletics Department; progress to date in achieving the Athletics Department's strategic plan; priority course registration for student-athletes and other aspects of the BC student-athlete experience; the tendency of student-athletes to "cluster" in certain classes or class sections; ways to improve the acclimation of student-athletes, particularly those whose backgrounds differ most from the average BC student, to life at BC; and the current and future challenges facing Learning Resources for Student-Athletes.

At the initial meeting in September (please see Attachment A to this report), potential meeting topics for 2016-17 were discussed. Several AAB members expressed a desire to have the role of the AAB relative to BC's Athletics Department and to the University administration clarified. The unequal distribution of resources across BC's varsity sports, efforts to prepare BC student-athletes for future careers and the possibility of priority course registration for student-athletes were also raised as potential topics for discussion.

At the October meeting (please see Attachment B), Director of Athletics Brad Bates discussed progress to date on the Athletics Department's strategic plan, which encompasses three "Pillars of Excellence": student-athlete development, competitive success and resource development. Under the first pillar, he cited two goals: achieving a Federal Graduation Rate (FGR) for BC student-athletes within 5 percentage points of that for the BC student body as a whole and having at least 90% of BC student-athletes leaving BC with either a job offer or acceptance to a graduate program in hand. BC is still a bit short of the first goal, with student-athletes achieving an FGR of 77% in the most recent data available, versus a rate of about 91% for the entire BC student body. Real progress has been made toward the second goal, however, with 85% of graduating student-athletes in 2016 having either a job or graduate school plans, up from 70% in 2014. In terms of competitive success, Brad cited BC's highest-ever finish in 2015-16 in The Learfield Sports Director's Cup competition as well as its second-highest number of teams receiving invitations to post-season competition. For the pillar of resource development, Brad pointed to a recent revamping of the Athletics marketing and communication efforts as well as a steadily increasing number of major gifts.

In the general discussion that followed Brad's presentation, questions arose about the role of the AAB relative to Athletics. Asked what issues he would like to receive some advice on, Brad mentioned the establishment of some form of priority course registration for student-athletes, an analysis of some data on student-athlete "clustering" in classes and the issues faced by BC student-athletes of color, particularly those who come from backgrounds that are very different from the BC environment. Brad was also asked about the experience of BC student-athletes in sports that do not have the same level of resources as the more high-profile sports. He said that, while he had expected to find that students in under-resourced sports were having

a miserable experience, he had found that coaches do a good job of both scheduling and selective recruiting so that most of the teams had a prospect of some success against at least a portion of their opponents.

Our November meeting (please see Attachment C) was attended by three representatives from BC's Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC). The primary topic was establishing a system of priority registration for student-athletes. Three potential objections were discussed: (1) priority registration for student-athletes could be unfair to students with other types of time demands, such as other extra-curricular activities or part-time jobs; (2) the override system is in place to help students get into classes that they need to satisfy university or major course requirements; and (3) it would be undesirable, as well as unfair to non-athlete students if the enrollments in popular classes were dominated by student-athletes. AAB members suggested that the SAAC members gather data on instances in which student-athletes had been severely handicapped by an inability to get into certain classes and to study possible ways to limit priority registration so that student-athletes did not gain an undue advantage over other students.

Other topics that came up for discussion included the SAAC members' experience with Learning Resources for Student-Athletes (LRSA), their view of the perception of student-athletes by non-athlete BC students and recent reports from other schools of inappropriate behavior toward female student-athletes on the part of male student-athletes. The SAAC members reported generally favorable experience with LRSA and also said that they felt BC student-athletes acted in a respectful manner toward one another. They said that they had sensed feelings of jealousy toward them from some non-athlete BC students. They attributed these to a lack of understanding of the heavy time commitment that all student-athletes must make as well as a mistaken impression that all or most student-athletes are receiving full scholarships.

At the February meeting (please see Attachment D), AAB members discussed two of the issues that Athletics Director Brad Bates had previously asked us to address. The first issue was the extent to which student-athlete course enrollments tend to be clustered in certain courses or sections of courses. At the outset, several AAB members asked what the specific concerns are about clustering. For example, are student-athletes likely to be over-represented in less challenging classes? Do they tend to be disruptive if there are too many in one class? The available data, which covered the three most recent semesters simply show numbers of student-athletes enrolled in given sections, so by themselves, they do not indicate whether the presence of a high proportion of student-athletes affects the class atmosphere. The data show that there are quite a few sections each semester for which student-athletes account for at least 10% of total enrollment. However many of these are introductory classes that satisfy university or school core curriculum requirements and many meet at times that might be suitable for student-athletes' schedules. The number of sections for which student-athletes account for a very high percentage of total enrollment is relatively small.

The second topic discussed was the acclimation to BC of student-athletes whose backgrounds differ most from those of the average BC student. AAB members agreed that a fruitful beginning would be to solicit advice from those BC offices and services that are oriented toward helping students of color, students from low-income backgrounds, students who may have deficits in their academic preparedness and first-generation college students. These include the Thea Bowman AHANA and Intercultural Center, the Montserrat Coalition, the

Options through Education (OTE) Transitional Summer Program, the Learning to Learn Office, the McNair Scholars Program and the Connell School of Nursing's Keys to Inclusive Leadership and Nursing (KILN) scholarship program. The group agreed to try to have several representatives of these offices as guests at our next meeting.

As a follow-up to the discussion at the February meeting, the March meeting was attended by four guests, representing the Athletics Department, the Learning to Learn Office and the Connell School of Nursing. It was suggested that integration into the life of the university can be particularly difficult for student-athletes because their very full schedules of classes, practice and competition leave them with little opportunity to interact with the wider BC community. The guests described some of their programs and initiatives that are open to both non-athlete students and student-athletes alike. It was suggested that some student-athletes could benefit from participating in at least the community-building activities that are part of such summer programs as Options through Education. It was also suggested that it could be beneficial to give more information to coaches to make them better aware of the existence of these programs and their functions. Another suggestion was to try to better educate non-athlete BC students about the challenges that student-athletes face to try to combat misconceptions and stereotypes that can arise concerning varsity athletes.

The discussion then turned to resources needed to help student-athletes become better acclimated to the full life of the university. The group recognized the Athletics Department's efforts to date to expand and strengthen its student-athlete development programs. It was suggested that it could be very helpful to have dedicated person in student-athlete development to help gather and disseminate information about university programs and services that are available to all students and to encourage student-athletes and coaches to participate in a wider range of university activities. The current exit survey of graduating student-athletes was discussed, and it was suggested that similar survey evidence might be gathered earlier in order to identify and help alleviate any acclimation issues that student-athletes are experiencing.

The first part of the April meeting was devoted to a report by current AAB member Sharon Beckman and former member Kathy Bailey, who had attended this year's annual conference of the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA). Many of the topics discussed at conference sessions were relevant to those taken up by the AAB in the current and immediately preceding year. These included academic integrity, monitoring the clustering of student-athletes in certain classes, the tendency of student-athletes to be segregated from the larger university student body, health and safety issues for student-athletes and achieving greater transparency for athletics programs to the rest of the university. The issue of BC membership in COIA was also revisited, and it was agreed that AAB members would review a new set of proposed COIA by-laws and take up the issue more formally at a future meeting.

In the second part of the meeting, Dard Miller, Director of Learning Resources for Student-Athletes (LRSA), announced her coming retirement at the end of June, 2017, and discussed what she saw as the major challenges facing LRSAs in the future. Dard sketched the changing landscape of college sports as well as changes that have occurred since BC joined the ACC, a highly-competitive athletics conference, in 2005. These have included increased travel demands for most of BC's varsity teams, which has reduced the time that student-athletes have available to spend with LRSAs counselors and tutors. At the same time, she felt that pressure to

field competitive teams has led to the admission of an increased number of developmentally-challenged student-athletes. These forces, she said, have challenged the capacity of the time-intensive developmental instruction model that she and her staff members have successfully employed in the past. Dard saw the coming of a new Director of Athletics and a new LRSA Director as an opportunity to inject some new thinking into the provision of academic support for BC's student-athletes. She also urged the AAB to be particularly mindful of its role in maintaining academic integrity and upholding BC's reputation in the new environment of college sports.

### **B. Committee Composition**

At the beginning of the year, the AAB welcomed newly-elected members Sharon Beckman (Law) and Michael Naughton (Physics). At the end of the academic year, Michael Malec (Sociology) completed his elected term on the Board, and Tara Pisani Gareau (Earth & Environmental Sciences) was elected to a new three-year term, beginning June 2017. In addition, John J. Burns (Office of the Provost), Donald Fishman (Communication) and Burton Howell (Intersections) completed their appointed terms, and newly appointed members are currently pending.

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, 2016-17:**

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