

Principles, Proposed Rules, and Guidelines Concerning the Faculty Role in Campus Athletics Governance

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Responsible, well coordinated governance of athletics at the campus level is of central concern to the NCAA and its member institutions. The day to day operation of athletics programs is the responsibility of athletics directors and coaches. A century of experience has shown that many strong forces from both within and outside of athletics departments make athletics governance uniquely difficult in a university setting. For this reason, the engagement of the three major participants in campus governance, the administration, the governing board, and the faculty, in athletics governance is essential to the effective management of athletics. In this regard, presidents must take a leading executive role, governing boards must provide oversight and support in accord with their ultimate responsibility for the institution, and faculty must engage their academic perspective to help ensure that the institutional investment in athletics remains in the interest of the primary academic mission of the institution. All three participants in campus governance must work in coordination to support athletics directors and coaches in ensuring the proper role of athletics on campus.

This document focuses on the faculty role in campus athletics governance. It articulates a set of principles, proposes a set of uniform rules, and discusses in detail guidelines that, when adapted and applied by individual campuses, can help ensure the proper function of this faculty role. In focusing on the faculty role, this document assumes the leading role of campus presidents, the ultimate authority of the institutional governing board, and practical centrality of athletics directors and coaches.

The faculty role in campus athletics governance is generally exercised through three different organs: the Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR), the Campus Athletics Board (CAB), and the Faculty Governance Body (FGB), the last of which refers to the elected representative council of faculty that legislates all campus-level governance matters assigned to the campus faculty, often called the "Faculty Senate." This document is concerned with the nature and function of the FAR and CAB, and with those activities of the FGB that bear on athletics governance.

The basic premise of this document is that all three faculty entities must be well configured to work together in order for the faculty to exercise its proper role in campus athletics governance. It discusses, in sequence: 1) the nature and role of the FAR; 2) the nature and role of the CAB; 3) the role of the FGB.

Structures and traditions of athletics governance at schools vary. This document recognizes this fact and stresses the need to adapt its guidelines to local circumstances. However, the specific forms listed here represent more than an inventory of successful approaches – they are recommended as best practices, and the purpose of this document is to help campuses strengthen athletics governance by offering these models.

1. The Nature and Role of the Faculty Athletics Representative

The NCAA Constitution requires that all member institutions designate a Faculty Athletics Representative. This individual must have faculty rank and not hold either an administrative or coaching position in the athletics department. It is suggested that the FAR play a central role in the overall checks and balances system designed to insure academic integrity, sound governance and commitment to rules compliance, attention to equity, and athlete welfare.

Some duties related to these functions are stipulated in the NCAA bylaws. Others are left to the discretion of each institution or the individual who occupies the position. Both mandated and optional duties are listed in The Faculty Athletics Representative Handbook (referred to below as the Handbook). The Faculty Athletics Representative: A Survey of the Membership further itemizes FAR duties under the categories of: a) academics, b) compliance and rules interpretation, c) student-athlete welfare, and d) administration.

The overall success in performing these functions varies considerably from campus to campus. At some institutions, the FAR enjoys a considerable amount of visibility and influence. At others, the position carries less prominence and clout. Even at schools where a long history of support for the FAR exists, some parts of the job may go well while others languish.

Given this variability in the role of FAR and inherent difficulties in executing all parts of the job well, the following guidelines have been developed. They are designed to provide principles and strategies for strengthening the FAR position and thereby increasing faculty voice in overseeing intercollegiate athletics.

1.A Principles of the FAR Position

Certain values or principles inform this outline of the FAR position. Five of them are identified here.

1. **Independence/integrity.** The FAR is part of the checks and balances system for administering and overseeing intercollegiate athletics. While the FAR is in nearly all cases appointed by the President, he or she is expected to provide a perspective on intercollegiate athletics issues that reflects the institution's faculty experience, and that is a component of the faculty's engagement in campus athletics governance. Both the appearance and the reality of this faculty perspective must be maintained. This leads to a number of policies and practices that are designed to provide some distance between the FAR and the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics. This principle is implicit in the NCAA constitutional requirement that FARs not be coaches, administrators, or faculty employed or compensated by the athletics department. It is also underlies recommendations that funding for the FAR and his or her duties not come from Intercollegiate Athletics.

2. **Stature/visibility.** According to the Handbook, the FAR is to enjoy a degree of visibility and stature “beyond the level of a typical service appointment.” Both of these factors—the stature and the visibility—should allow the FAR to perform duties with greater effectiveness. Any number of policies and practices can both symbolically and concretely elevate the position. For instance, the amount of fiscal support provided, the method by which searches for the position are conducted, and the degree of FAR access to the President affect stature and visibility.
3. **Communication.** The FAR works at a crossroads where the interests of athletes, the athletics department, the NCAA, the faculty and administration, and other interest groups need to be heard. Policies and procedures that ensure clear and regular communication between the FAR and FGBs, CABs, the academic advising center for athletes, and student body and athlete leaderships are needed.
4. **Influence.** The FAR must carry out duties that promote the integrity of the intercollegiate athletics program at his or her institution. To do so, this individual must be involved in the internal workings of athletics—from administration to compliance, from eligibility to student welfare. Consequently, policies and procedures are needed that place the FAR in a position to know, advise, and act. A clear job description that spells out FAR responsibilities and mandated membership on key committees is essential in this regard.
5. **Uncertainty/fluidity.** The position of FAR is not fixed once and for all. Intercollegiate athletics itself is in a period of dynamism, and the role of FAR can be expected to change as well. Consequently, policies and procedures for FARs may require revision from time to time.

1.B Recommendations for Uniform Rules

Although there is great variety among institutions, there are certain features that experience indicates are so characteristic of successful FAR function that this document recommends them as uniform rules (with provisions for certain exceptional cases), which the NCAA should adopt as bylaws.

- The appointment of the Faculty Athletics Representative shall be made by the President; the process of appointment shall involve meaningful consultation with the elected body that exercises campus-level faculty governance; the appointment shall be made for a specified term; a review of the performance of the Faculty Athletics Representative that includes meaningful participation by the elected faculty governance body shall take place prior to any reappointment. If no elected faculty governance body exists on a campus, the campus athletics board shall be the consulting body.

1.C Guidelines for Campus Consultation and Adaptation

The guidelines are designed to provide a method for quickly and efficiently checking the strength of the local FAR position. They are not meant to be comprehensive. It is not expected that each guideline will be applicable to every institution. Different histories, administrative structures, institutional missions, and personnel at each school affect what will work. The practices described below are utilized at many colleges and universities where FARs enjoy high degrees of influence and productivity.

Those provisions that are included above in recommended uniform rules are not listed below as guidelines; however, until such rules are adopted, they should be interpreted as recommended guidelines.

Guidelines Concerning the FAR Position

1. The position is defined by a written job description, which has been reviewed and approved by the President, in consultation with the CAB, FGB, and Athletics Director.
2. The position is comprehensive (see sample job descriptions on the FARA website, and in Appendix B of the Handbook).
3. The position carries financial support consistent with the job description. (This may include a stipend and/or release time for the FAR, clerical assistance, travel and other support.) This financial support comes from the general budget or other non-athletic source; it cannot come from the athletics department or athletics-based accounts.
4. A public announcement of an appointment process will precede nominations for the position.
5. The position includes membership on committees or other governance bodies that facilitate communication with such constituencies as: faculty governance; the athletic governance board; the athletic administration; athletes.
6. The position entails regular access to the President of the institution.

Note: This document does not advocate term limits for FARs, favoring instead an NCAA bylaw mandating meaningful review procedures, involving faculty governance participation, prior to FAR reappointment, in order to ensure the independence and effectiveness of FARs. A bylaw mandating annual reports of faculty governance leaders to the NCAA concerning the faculty role in athletics governance will create an opportunity to confirm the integrity of reappointments.

Guidelines Concerning FAR Individuals

1. The FAR is a senior member of the faculty, preferably at the rank of full professor, and at tenure-granting institutions must be tenured.
2. The FAR has experience in faculty leadership prior to accepting the position of FAR.
3. The FAR has a campus reputation in a role unrelated to intercollegiate athletics, such as excellence in teaching, research, or prior administration, in order to enhance the visibility and effectiveness of the position.

4. The FAR operates from an office that is located outside both the department of intercollegiate athletics and the academic athlete advisement center.
5. The FAR must avoid both the reality and appearance of any conflict of interest, particularly in relationship to accepting perks or other fringe benefits.

Guidelines Concerning FAR Functions

-- Related to Athletes

1. The FAR meets with the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC).
2. The FAR attends start-of-season and other special events.
3. The FAR participates in exit interviews.
4. The FAR attends a variety of athletic events, not just football and basketball games.
5. The FAR fulfills all roles related to student eligibility (see the Handbook).
6. The FAR is available to meet with athletes on an individual basis.
7. The FAR promotes academic excellence and coordinates nominations of athletes for such awards as the NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship.

-- Related to Faculty

8. The FAR reports regularly to the FGB.
9. The FAR provides substantive information to the faculty on such matters as graduation rates for athletes, admissions statistics including any special admits for athletes.
10. The FAR sits on the CAB.

-- Related to Administrators

11. The FAR meets regularly with and reports to the President.
12. The FAR meets regularly with the Athletics Director.
13. The FAR meets regularly with others, such as (depending on individual campus structures):
 - a. The head of the athletics academic advising center
 - b. The advisor for the SAAC
 - c. The Compliance Coordinator
 - d. The Director of Admissions
 - e. The Director of Financial Aid
14. The FAR holds conversations with administrators related to institutional control, academic integrity, budget, NCAA legislation, and so forth.
15. The FAR sits on search committees for athletic administrators and head coaches.
16. The FAR serves as a leader or committee member for NCAA Athletic Certification.

--Related to Conferences & NCAA

Note: Since the NCAA governance reorganization in 1998, much legislation is now shaped by conference commissioners and by college and university Presidents who

sit on the Board of Governors. Input from FARs on legislation and influence on other matters at the conference level may have increased significance.

17. The FAR serves on conference and/or NCAA committees.
18. The FAR meets regularly with conference FARs and governance organizations.
19. The FAR holds local conversations on institutional position for conference and NCAA legislation.
20. The FAR exercises authority (vis a vis conference bylaws) on matters delegated to FARs (e.g., academic responsibility, student welfare).

2. The Nature and Role of the Campus Athletics Board

Athletics boards, along with the Faculty Athletics Representative, are supposed to play an important role in the overall checks and balances system designed to ensure academic integrity and athletics rules compliance. This intent is made clear by board membership requirements established by the NCAA. According to Article 6 of the Constitution, each athletics board must include “at least a majority” of full-time academic administrators and regular faculty. Where parliamentary procedures require more than a simple majority to enact policies, faculty and administrators “shall be of sufficient number to constitute at least that majority.” Some conferences stipulate faculty majorities for CABs, which better ensures that faculty can fulfill their governance role.

Such guidelines help to keep the operation of intercollegiate athletics in line with the central educational mission of each campus. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of athletic boards varies considerably from campus to campus. Some provide a strong counterweight to the economic pressures on athletics. Others seem unable or unwilling to enact and enforce academic policies that would assure, for example, sound admissions decisions for athletes and standards for academic progress that are consistent with regulations used for the rest of the student body.

Boards typically have both advisory and legislative functions. Depending on the blend of these responsibilities and the specific duties that have been delegated to them by the President of the institution, boards may play central and highly influential roles in athletic governance. They establish policy, monitor compliance, and promote a strong academic climate for athletics—always with the understanding that the President has final responsibility and authority for intercollegiate athletics.

2.A Principles of Campus Athletics Boards

1. **Independence/integrity.** The athletics governance board is part of the checks and balances system for administering and overseeing the intercollegiate program. It is essential that, both in appearance and in fact, members of the board have the best interests of the core academic mission of the institution at heart. This implies the need for policies that provide some distance between athletics and the operations of the board, and that stipulate a majority of board members be academic administrators or faculty members. It also underlies the recommendation that individuals of

academic and/or administrative stature and integrity be selected for the board, and that the campus-wide FGB contributes to decisions on who serves in this capacity.

2. **Consistency.** If a single guideline were given for athletic governance boards is might be this: Academic policies and standards for athletes should be consistent with the regulations that apply to the student body at large. This leads to a number of guidelines that affect the functions of athletics boards. For instance, guidelines for establishing policies on admissions, normal progress, grade point average requirements and the like stem from this principle.
3. **Sunshine.** Sunshine informs and enlightens but it also exposes. The ethical concept on which this principle is grounded is broadly accepted: always act in ways that you would be willing, in principle, to make public.
4. **Integration.** If faculty are to take a more active role in monitoring intercollegiate athletes, they must be connected to athletics operations in some way. One connection is provided by regular and effective communication, including an open, two-way flow of information. Athletics will not be integrated into the larger campus community so long as members of that community do not know what is going on in that program. But it is also important that the athletics board not be isolated from other elements of faculty governance.
5. **Uncertainty/fluidity.** Higher education and the intercollegiate athletics programs within it are both undergoing change. Thirty years ago, many athletics units were housed in physical education or other departments and most coaches were on academic appointments. Today, in most institutions, athletics resides (administratively and, often too, culturally) outside the academic mainstream, and few if any coaches hold academic rank. Faculty governance of athletics must change as the institutional landscape for intercollegiate sports continues to evolve.

2.B Recommendations for Uniform Rules

Again, great variety among institutions, limits the extent to which uniform rules will ideally serve the interests of campuses; however, certain minimal standards can be designed.

- All NCAA member institutions shall have campus Campus Athletics Boards. A majority of Board members shall be faculty and academic administrators. The appointment of the faculty representatives to the Board shall be made through a process of election by the campus-level faculty-governance body, or by the President through a process involving meaningful consultation with the faculty governance body, unless no such body exists. Appointments shall be made for a specified term.
- The Faculty Athletics Representative shall sit as an ex officio voting or non-voting member of the Board.

2.C Guidelines for Campus Consultation and Adaptation

The guidelines are intended to allow an institution to check its athletics governance board structure and function in an efficient way. It is not designed to provide a comprehensive look at all potentially useful practices. Readers will need to review the recommendations critically to determine which ones may be helpful for their institution or their particular circumstances.

As was the case with the guidelines for FARs, different institutional traditions, personnel, missions, academic standards, league affiliations, and the like will influence what will work and what will not. In general, however, it is suggested that the specific guidelines provided below reflect sound educational values and principles that are shared by all institutions.

Those provisions that are included above in recommended uniform rules are not listed below as guidelines; however, until such rules are adopted, they should be interpreted as recommended guidelines.

Board Charge and Composition

1. The Board has clearly established functions and responsibilities that are acknowledged by the president of the institution.
2. The Board has both advisory and legislative functions.
3. The Board has legislative functions, either delegated by FGB policy or exercised in tandem with the FGB, that have a substantial effect on academic integrity. These may include the following: admissions policies, standards for normal progress and good academic standing (GPA), and limits for missed class time for competition.
4. The Board includes faculty and academic administrators who are highly respected by peers for their research, teaching, service, or administrative work outside intercollegiate athletics.
5. The Board includes the Athletics Director.
6. Other athletically-related personnel (e.g., Senior Women's Administrator, Director of Admissions, the head of the athlete advisement center) participate in Board meetings as staff.
7. The Board has a specified relationship to the Faculty Governance Body. This relationship may be established in one or more of the following ways, listed (in general) from weaker to stronger connections:
 - A member of the board is designated as the official liaison to the FGB.
 - A specified number of board members must also be members of the FGB.
 - A specified number of board members are appointed or elected by the FGB.
 - The Board is required to send all legislation that affects the academic well-being of athletes through the FGB.
 - The Board is required to provide regular informational reports to the FGB, minimally on an annual basis
 - The Board is a standing subcommittee of the FGB.

Board Functions

8. The Board reviews data on admissions decisions, including progress and graduation success rates by admission category.
9. The Board promotes admissions policies that are consistent with admissions policies outside intercollegiate athletics.
10. The Board reviews data on normal progress and grade point averages and reports its findings to the FGB..
11. The Board, by FGB policy or in tandem with the FGB, establishes policy for normal progress and grade point average that meets minimal NCAA and any conference requirements.
12. The Board, by FGB policy or in tandem with the FGB, establishes policy for normal progress and grade point average that exceeds NCAA and conference requirements, where this is consistent with the institution's standards for other students.
13. The Board reviews information on all athletic schedules and reports its judgment to the FGB.
14. The Board establishes a confidential personnel subcommittee of faculty and academic administrators that participates and advises in searches and major personnel decisions concerning athletics directors and head coaches.
15. The Board, by FGB policy or in tandem with the FGB, guides athletics program decisions by establishing policy for excused absences and maximum amount of missed class time for athletic competition.
16. The Board reviews certification of the academic eligibility of students on athletic grants-in-aid.
17. The Board reviews major requests for waiver of any institutional athletics policies.
18. The Board delegates responsibilities for review of minor requests for waiver of institutional athletics policies to the Faculty Athletics Representative.
19. The Board develops a method to determine needs, interests, and concerns of athletes.
20. The Board reports activities, on at least an annual basis, to the FGB.

Board Communications and Accountability

21. The Board communicates information beyond won-loss records (and other athletic achievements) to the broader campus community and specifically to the FGB, including information on graduation rates and continuing eligibility performance, by sport.
22. The Board shares information, within boundaries established by institutional policy and Federal regulations, on such matters as the following:
 - the number of Presidential or special admits
 - a comparison of the number special admits for athletes and similar admissions for other reasons (e.g., unusual musical talents)
 - an analysis of the academic success (including graduate rate and continuing eligibility performance) for all special admits in comparison to other athletes and the entire student body
 - a longitudinal analysis of student athlete graduation rates in comparison to the entire student body

- information on the grade point averages of athletes in comparison to the entire student body
 - information on the distribution of majors selected by athletes in comparison to the entire student body
 - information on academic honors (e.g., academic All-America) won by athletes
23. The Board coordinates informational reports to the FGB, given by the Chair of the Board and/or the Faculty Athletics Representative.
24. The Board encourages informational reports to the FGB by the Director of Athletics

3. The Role of the Faculty Governance Body

At many schools, low faculty interest in athletics governance issues has led to minimal or no involvement of FGBs in athletics governance; at others, higher faculty interest has combined with an absence of structure for faculty involvement, and created tension between faculty and administration. Maintaining adequate FGB attentiveness to athletics affairs can add great strength to campus athletics governance. Faculty have a unique focus on the institution's academic mission and are relatively free from the types of pressures that may create discrepancies between athletics decision making and academic priorities and values. It is in the interests of campuses, and of the NCAA as a consortium of schools, that faculty, through their FGBs, fulfill basic responsibilities in athletics governance.

Efficient exercise of faculty responsibilities requires structures that will encourage and make it feasible for faculty to be adequately informed about athletics administration to fulfill its governance responsibilities. The most effective way to ensure this is through FGB involvement in the appointment and review of FARs and the appointment of faculty members of the CAB, and through regular reports of specified form submitted to the FBC or to its executive committee by the FAR and the CAB chair.

3.A Recommendations for Uniform Rules

We recommend that a method be created that will allow the NCAA, perhaps through the review of a subcommittee of the Faculty Athletics Representatives Association, to receive confirmation that campus faculties have contributed to campus athletics governance, and that a bylaw of the following form be considered:

- Each year the NCAA shall request from faculty leaders of campus Faculty Governance Bodies confirmation that the faculty has been able to fulfill its responsibilities in regard to athletics governance, or specification of the obstacles that has prevented it from doing so, unless no such body exists.

3.B Guidelines for Campus Consultation and Adaptation

The primary recommendations for FGB fulfillment of its athletics-related responsibilities are entailed in the guidelines for FARs and CABs. Because the form of the FGB varies among campuses, in some cases it makes sense to consider making a committee of the

FGB, such as an executive committee of FGB officers, the main contact group with FARs and CABs, so long as required reports are distributed as publicly as would be the case if delivered directly to the FGB.

Note that the following roles for the FGB have been specified earlier in the form of recommended uniform rules.

1. The FGB is consulted in the appointment and review of FARs.
2. The FGB is consulted in the appointment of faculty positions on the CAB.

In addition, the following guidelines are recommended, to be consulted and adapted by individual campuses according to specific campus conditions:

Concerning FARs

3. Public announcements of FAR searches solicit statements of interest from individuals, to be submitted to a committee of the FGB, which forwards a stipulated number of nominees to the President; the President selects the appointee from among the names forwarded by the committee.
4. The FGB participates in the policy decisions concerning term lengths for FARs.
5. The FGB participates in the campus delineation of FAR responsibilities.
6. The FGB periodically receives information from the FAR, specifying such matters as graduation rates for athletes and admissions statistics, including any special admits for athletes.
7. The FGB schedules a presentation on the status of campus and conference intercollegiate athletics matters by the FAR at least once each year. The presentation may be made together with the chair of the CAB.

Concerning CABs

8. The FGB elects members to the CAB or nominates a stipulated number of individuals for appointment to each faculty position on the CAB, from among which the President selects appointees.
9. The FGB participates in or is responsible for developing the policies that govern the CAB.
10. The FGB schedules a presentation on the status of campus intercollegiate athletics programs by the chair of the CAB at least once each year. The presentation may be made together with the FAR.
11. The faculty chair or president of the FGB consults regularly with the FAR and chair of the CAB to learn of issues that may be of concern to the faculty.

Concerning the President

12. The faculty leader of the FGB consults at least annually with the President concerning the success of the faculty in fulfilling its athletics governance responsibilities.