

Memorandum

To: Nicholas Bircher MD, President Faculty Senate

From: William Zamboni PharmD and James Irrgang PhD, Co-Chairs of Senate Athletic Committee

Re: Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics

Date: May 2, 2005

The Senate Athletic Committee (SAC) has continued to discuss and debate the merits of joining the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA) over the past several months. It is the recommendation of the SAC that the Faculty Senate of the University of Pittsburgh not join COIA. The reasons for this recommendation are described below.

In January of 2005, the COIA adopted the document, Academic Integrity in Intercollegiate Athletics: Principles, Proposed Rules and Guidelines (see attached). This document contains several recommendations for changes in NCAA bylaws as well as best practice guidelines or policies that address admissions, scholarships, curricular integrity, time commitment, missed class time, scheduling of competitions and policies concerning the Office of Academic Advising for Athletes. The SAC, with assistance from the Athletic Department, the Provost's Office and the Faculty Athletic Representative reviewed performance of the University of Pittsburgh relative to the guidelines contained in this document in detail. The results of this review were completed April 28th, 2005 and will be reviewed by the full SAC in the Fall of 2005. The preliminary opinion is that the University of Pittsburgh meets or exceeds all of the best practice policies described in the COIA document.

We have also had a dialog with Bob Eno from Indiana University, who serves as the Chairperson of the COIA Steering Committee. This dialog has addressed issues related to governance and structure of COIA and the ability of member institutions to initiate changes in the existing framework, policies, and academic integrity guidelines.

The COIA is an organization representing faculty senates of institutions that participate in Division IA athletics. Currently there are 47 institutions that have joined COIA. From the Big East Conference, only Rutgers and Connecticut have joined.

There is no formal structure governing COIA. The organization has not adopted any bylaws and does not have any formal policies governing its actions. Direction for COIA is provided by a Steering Committee, however it is not clear how wone

becomes a member of the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee creates proposals, such as the policy on Academic Integrity in Intercollegiate Athletics: Principles, Proposed Rules and Guidelines, which are then forwarded to the membership electronically for review and vote to approve. Proposals are adopted by 2/3 e-mail vote of all ballots that are cast. Amendments to the proposals may be submitted and are adopted by majority vote. Based upon our correspondence with Bob Eno, it does not appear that developing a formal governing structure is a priority for COIA at this time.

In prior COIA documents, it appeared that COIA believed that the Athletic Department should be governed and controlled by the "faculty governing body". Currently COIA's position is that the faculty athletics committee (i.e. the SAC) should play an oversight role related to the budget, should play a major role in policy determination and should report on these matters annually to the faculty governing board (i.e. the Faculty Senate). The SAC believes that we already function in this manner, as described in the SAC Mission Statement (see attached). Specifically, at the University of Pittsburgh the SAC recommends policies and procedures related to standards for athletic participation and codes governing the conduct of varsity sports, reviews standards for admission of student-athletes, matters pertaining to academic performance and standing and the academic and counseling support services provided to student-athletes and may request and receive annual or other reports on budgetary matters pertaining to university sports, athletics and recreational programs and facilities. During our tenure as SAC members, any and all information related to these topics has been provided upon request to the SAC.

In correspondence that we have had with COAI as well as on the COIA website, it is stated that COIA has close working relationships with the NCAA, the Division IA Faculty Athletics Representatives, the Division IA Athletics Directors Association and other national groups interested in intercollegiate athletics, however there is little evidence to support this statement. Furthermore COIA states that they will be a catalyst for bringing these groups together to find solutions to very complex problems involving intercollegiate athletics. As evidenced by the recent Academic Performance Program, the SAC believes that there is already interest in reform to improve intercollegiate athletics and it is unlikely that COIA is in a position to serve as a catalyst for this reform.

In summary, given the lack of governing structure of COIA, the performance of the University of Pittsburgh relative to the guidelines contained in the Academic Integrity in Intercollegiate Athletics: Principles, Proposed Rules and Guidelines, the limited likelihood that COIA will contribute to reform of intercollegiate athletics and the current mission and function of the SAC, we do not believe that it is necessary or in best interest of the University of Pittsburgh Faculty Senate to join COIA.

We look forward to discussing the position of the SAC with you and other members of the Faculty Senate on May 3, 2005.