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April 15, 2015

To: Joshua Socolar  
Executive Committee of the Academic Council

Re: Report of the Athletic Council's activities for 2014-15

This has been a busy but relatively uneventful year for the Athletic Council. We had two meetings in the fall, which are described below. The Academic Committee of the Council met on March 23, 2015, to discuss the academic progress of Duke's student-athletes. The Council will have its spring meeting on April 17, 2015. There were no extraordinary events or issues that commanded our attention this year.

We had a special meeting of the Council on October 24, 2014, to discuss recent developments that are impacting intercollegiate athletics. Lee Simon, a lawyer, sports law professor, and Law School alum, presented a paper to the Council on major antitrust and administrative litigation currently challenging key aspects of intercollegiate athletics. Kevin White and members of the Department discussed the recent restructuring of the NCAA to give the so-called Big 5 Conferences (including the Atlantic Coast Conference) more autonomy to set their own agenda for dealing with governance and other key issues that affect student-athletes in the five conferences, including providing full-cost of attendance scholarships, other benefits, and four-year scholarships. I prepared a briefing book for the special meeting. Two members of ECAC attended the meeting.

The Executive Committee of the Council met with the President and Provost on November 6, 2014, to discuss the Council's agenda for the 2014-15 academic year.

The Council held its regular fall meeting on November 14, 2014. Mike Cragg, Senior Associate Director of Athletics for Operations, made a presentation to the Council on Duke's athletic facilities and plans for renovations and additions. He discussed the renovations to Wallace Wade Stadium, which began after the Wake Forest football game, and shared plans for renovation of Cameron Indoor Stadium. Mitch Moser, [Deputy Director of Athletics/Chief Financial Officer](#), provided a general overview of the Department's budget and explained the budgeting process to members, in advance of a more comprehensive budget presentation at the spring meeting of the Council. Dean Christoph Guttentag made his annual report on undergraduate admissions for student-athletes. There were no issues of significant concern raised or discussed.

This spring several athletic directors have raised the issue of freshmen ineligibility for participation in intercollegiate athletics. Under such a rule, freshmen would be ineligible to participate in varsity athletics; in effect, it would be a mandatory red shirt year. The rule was in effect for several years until 1972, when it was abolished. The current proponents of the rule are unclear about what the purpose would be. The most coherent rationale is that it would give academically underprepared freshmen an opportunity to make the academic adjustment to college without the major distraction of athletic competition. Some apparently also see the rule as a firewall against the corrosive effect of one-and-done athletes on college basketball. On March 5, 2015, I participated in a meeting called by the President to discuss this proposal; Martha Putallaz, the Faculty Athletic Representative, Kevin White, and others from the Department also attended the meeting. The consensus of the group was that trying to reinstate the rule was not a good idea, at least for Duke; there also was concern that the remedial rationale for reinstating the rule would stigmatize athletes of color.

On March 25, 2015, the Academic Committee of the Council (faculty members) met with Lee D. Baker, Dean of Academic Affairs, for our annual comprehensive report of the academic progress of student athletes. In addition to the committee, the Provost also attended. There were no issues of significant concern.

The Council will hold its spring meeting on April 17, 2015. The agenda for the meeting includes a discussion of the freshman eligibility rule, led by Martha Putallaz, and a report on the Department's academic support of student-athletes followed by a tour of the Coach K Center for Academic and Athletic Excellence. Mitch Moser also will present his annual report on the Department's proposed budget.

James E. Coleman, Jr.  
Chair, for The Athletic Council

cc: Martha Putallaz