

**FACULTY ATHLETICS REPRESENTATIVE
REPORT TO THE FACULTY SENATE**

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1. By way of introduction, let me say that I am a professor of Marriage and Family Therapy in the Department of Child Development and Family Relations in the College of Human Ecology. We offer an M.S. degree in Marriage and Family Therapy and a Ph.D. in Medical Family Therapy. I have been the Faculty Athletics representative since July 1st of 2003.

2. For those of you who may not know, the faculty athletics representative or FAR provides oversight and advice in the administration of the athletics program and plays a strategic role to ensure academic integrity, institutional control of intercollegiate athletics, and enhancement of the student-athlete experience.

The FAR is appointed by the Chancellor for a three-year term, and I am in the second year of my second three-year term. As the FAR, my immediate supervisor is Provost Sheerer. The position is provided with 50% release from teaching duties. So I teach half-time and do FAR duties half time.

Most importantly, I want to make clear that I **DO NOT** work for the department of athletics. I am a faculty member and am paid by academic affairs. I represent the Chancellor, the Provost, and I represent you as I oversee what goes on in athletics and work to improve the connection between academics and athletics. You can review my report of activities that is on the Faculty Senate web page to see what I do as FAR.

3. This is my fifth report to this body and my second as a member of this body.

4. In all my reports so far I have asked for faculty members, this body, and the University Athletics Committee to become more active in overseeing what goes on in athletics, ensuring institutional control of athletics, ensuring academic integrity, and better integrating athletics into the educational mission of this university. We need to build bridges and decrease distance.

5. Recently nearly every group involved in any way with reforming intercollegiate athletics including the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA), the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, The Faculty Athletics Representatives Association (FARA), the Division IA Faculty Athletics Representatives, and the NCAA have called for greater faculty involvement.

6. For example, on October 15th the Knight Commission is holding a faculty summit on faculty perceptions of intercollegiate athletics. I will be watching a webcast of this event and encourage others to do so. The results of their survey are available later today on their website (www.knightcommission.org) and will be discussed during the summit in addition to strategies for increasing the role of faculty members. According to their website the results will include the following:

In a national survey of more than 2,000 faculty members at universities with the country's most visible athletic programs, a striking number of professors say they don't know about and are disconnected from issues facing college sports. More than a third say they don't know about many athletics program policies and practices, including the financial underpinnings of their campuses' athletics programs. Furthermore, more than a third have no opinion about concerns raised by national faculty athletics reform groups. The largest portion of faculty (41 percent) believe faculty governance roles on campus associated with the oversight of intercollegiate athletics are ill defined, and most believe those roles are not particularly meaningful. On other issues, faculty are often equally divided between those who are satisfied with the conduct of their institution's intercollegiate athletics programs and those who are not.

7. Getting more faculty involvement here is my message again today. All faculty and certainly members of this body need to be informed about what is going on in athletics. Please be curious and get involved.
8. I think most faculty members support efforts toward reform in intercollegiate athletics, the more complete integration of athletics into the overall educational mission of the university, and institutional control of athletics. But what can faculty members do to further these efforts? How can we build a better bridge between athletics and academics?
9. If athletics is part of the overall educational mission of this university, and it should be, then faculty members cannot ignore athletics or worse yet see athletics as the enemy.
10. Faculty members must recognize that they have a **crucial role** in overseeing athletics. Faculty members must have a **voice** and claim that voice, faculty members must have **influence** and use that influence responsibly for the good of the university and our students, faculty members must have **access** to information so that

they can be part of the decision-making and oversight processes, and finally, faculty members must accept **ownership** of the responsibility for overseeing athletics.

11. As we consider: *Institutional control, reform of intercollegiate athletics, academic integrity in athletics*, and other such concepts, what do they mean for us as faculty members at ECU? What is our role in promoting these desired outcomes?
12. Our involvement is through this body and one of its committees: the University Athletics Committee (UAC). The Faculty Senate through the UAC has oversight responsibility for what goes on in athletics. Members of the UAC represent this body and all faculty members and join me as the Faculty Athletics Representative in working to ensure that academic integrity, rules compliance, and welfare of student-athletes are maintained in athletics. Please review the Annual Report of the UAC to see what this committee did last year.
13. I am impressed with the membership of the UAC this year and its leadership with Professor Felts. I think the UAC will do a good job representing this body and the faculty.
14. Most importantly, as faculty members we cannot contribute to the separation of athletics from academics. Each of you has a role to play. Please communicate your concerns and questions to your representatives on the university athletics committee or to me. Building the bridge has to be a collaborative effort.
15. Please also ensure that within your unit student-athletes are treated the same as other students: no better and **certainly no worse**. This is the essence of academic integrity: fairness for all.
16. I believe that with all things considered, we are in good shape here with our athletics program. We have in place a process whereby faculty can and should have sufficient input into and oversight of athletics. We already have in place a structure that closely approximates what reformers of athletics across the country are calling for. We just need to keep working to make sure this process works.
17. I want to conclude my report today with a quick review of how our student-athletes are doing academically. They do well for the most part, but they could do better.
18. Many of you may have read about the Academic Performance Rate (APR) problems with our basketball team. These concerns are serious and are being dealt with. At our last meeting the UAC took a close look at APR scores and reviewed the academic improvement plans that are in place. We will continue to work on

correcting the problems that got basketball in trouble, but it will take some time. I am convinced that our current coaches are doing the right things and that improvement will be forthcoming. The APR results are before you for review and on the web page.

19. However, the APR is only one measure. I want you to have a broader perspective on how our student-athletes are doing academically so I have provided three other perspectives.
20. A quick review of the report from the Academic Integrity Subcommittee, which is before you and on the Faculty Senate website, reveals that as compared to the overall student body at ECU our student-athletes are doing well. Please review that report for specifics. Please note that I included similar data from two previous years for comparison. Let me draw your attention to Part III of this report – Selected additional recognition for academic achievements.
21. I also included a report that reveals how our student-athletes compete academically with our sister C-USA institutions. Please review the 2006-2007 academic ranking of squads in C-USA. I think you will agree that we compete well, especially given the strong academic rating of C-USA.
22. Finally, I included the most recent federal graduation rate report for student-athletes. The report for 2005-2006 will be published later in October. Again, these results are encouraging.
23. This academic success can be attributed first to the student-athletes, the vast majority of whom are committed to being the best students they can be, and second to Ms. Nita Boyce and her staff in the student development office, who do an impressive job providing academic support to student-athletes.
24. Finally, there have been no major problems regarding academic integrity or rules compliance and the welfare of student-athletes has been maintained. But as faculty we need to continue our vigilance, involvement, and concern. We all have an essential role to play in the continued successful integration of athletics into the overall educational mission of this university.
25. Thanks for your attention. Are there any questions?