

**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 sixth report to this body and my third as a member.
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 continue building bridges to further decrease distance between academics and athletics.
5. 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.
6. 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.

7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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. 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.
11. 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.
12. I also included a report that reveals how our student-athletes compete academically with our sister C-USA institutions. Please review the 2007-2008 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.
13. Student-athletes continue to graduate at higher rates than the student body. Of course, graduation is the goal. I will include on the website the most recent information about graduation rates for our student-athletes that won't be released to the public until October 14, 2008.

14. 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.
15. 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.
16. I do have some concerns:
 - I think we need to do a better job of screening students who receive Chancellor's Special Talent Waivers. That will happen this year with more faculty input. We need more information on both the academic potential and the commitment to academics of these individuals.
 - We need to continue efforts to improve the APR score of the men's basketball team to avoid the occasion-four historical penalty that would negatively affect the entire athletic program.
 - Although I am convinced that there are no systemic problems regarding academic integrity, I think cheating by individual students is a problem on this campus. Student-athletes probably cheat less than other students, but it is still a problem here as well as elsewhere. I saw a television show on how sophisticated cheating has become and how accepted it is in our society among young people. Student-athletes get tempted to take short cuts just like other students do. It is the faculty member's responsibility to do all that can be done to eliminate cheating and to respond to it when it happens. I do not believe that most faculty members know as much as they should about cheating. I would like for the Faculty Senate to sponsor a program on cheating.
17. Thanks for your attention. Now I would like to yield the remainder of my time to Professor Felts, chair of the University Athletics Committee to discuss the findings of the Gender Equity Subcommittee. Many improvements are in the planning stages to our facilities for female student-athletes.