Greetings to all. The academic year prepares to March on, despite my efforts to pause it as I am accustomed to doing while watching a film from Netflix. (Speaking of films, I thoroughly enjoyed Slumdog Millionaire.)

“Time manages itself; it does not need our assistance.” I often share this observation with students, particularly student-athletes, encouraging them to do their best to keep up with Time. “The challenge,” I add, “is to manage ourselves within our allotted periods of Time.”

January is but a memory—an exciting one, granted—and February serves as the ring for the first round of exams and the precursor to March Madness and the spring sports season.

In this issue, FARA President Roger Caves provides his thoughts on the 2009 NCAA Convention; Ralph Bertrand, Division III FARA Vice President offers his comments on maintaining athletics programs in difficult financial times; Alex Tiseo, Division II National SAAC President, summarizes activities of the Division II SAAC at the convention, and the editor puts forth some thoughts for your consideration.

Take care. Stay well.

Joe Catanese
Editor
Saint Anselm College

Our thoughts and prayers go out to
President Myles Brand as he continues his medical treatment.

Thoughts on the 2009 NCAA Convention

The 2009 NCAA Convention held in Washington, DC is now over. FARA’s attention will now turn to preparing for our 2009 Annual Meeting and Symposium to be held in St. Louis, Missouri, November, 2009. We will be developing a strong program that reflects the needs and interests of our membership. We have requested ideas on potential panel topics from FARs from all divisions for division-specific panels, and for panels that transcend all divisions.
In future issues of the VOICE, we will identify topics for various panels and ask for individuals that would like to participate on specific panels. It is our hope that we can increase the number of FARs participating in our activities.

At the Convention, FARA was fortunate to have four panels. We hope to continue with at least this many panels next year. The remaining paragraphs of this section provide some highlights of the various panels.

Our first panel covered the topic of “Celebrating the Student-Athlete on Campus.” Roger Caves, San Diego State University FAR and FARA President, moderated the panel. Panel participants were Becky Ahlgren-Bedics, Associate Director of Education Services, NCAA; David Clough, University of Colorado, Boulder, FAR; Stevi Korczyk, Division II SAAC member, Georgia; Scott Krapf, Division I SAAC member, Illinois State University, and Erin Wojtkun, Division III SAAC member, Christopher Newport University. Over 300 attendees heard a wealth of ideas on how we can celebrate student-athletes on our campuses. Ideas ranged from student-athlete banquets, team awards for community service, student-athletes walking through campus to get an appreciation of the campus and its history, posting articles on community service done by student-athletes in newspapers, awarding postgraduate scholarships, placing academic and athletic awards on school Web site, celebrating National Student-Athlete Day and wearing a sash at graduation identifying the graduate as a student-athlete. We would like to thank all of the participants and especially the Divisions I, II and III SAACs for their assistance in putting together this very informative panel.

“Helping Faculty Understand the Value of Integrating Athletics” was one of two concurrent panels sponsored by the Faculty Athletics Representatives Association and presented at the NCAA Convention. The panel was moderated by Michael Miranda, FAR at the State University of New York-Plattsburgh and President-Elect of FARA. Panelists included Brenda Cates of Mount Olive College, a Division II institution in North Carolina; Jean Perry of the Division I University of Nevada Reno, and Sandra Slabik of Division III Neumann College in Pennsylvania. The panelists discussed strategies for engaging the faculty in athletics and helping to develop a broader understanding among the faculty as to the value that athletics brings both to the student-athlete and to the institution. Suggestions ranging from regular reporting to the faculty senate and other faculty governance bodies to a development of a faculty mentoring program involving individual teams being mentored by faculty were described. The key concept of continued and open communication among and between the faculty and the athletics program, and the key role that FARs can play in that communication was well received by the audience in the packed meeting room of over 300 attendees.

The first FARA general session at the NCAA Convention was held Saturday morning, January 17. The session was well-attended, especially when considering that many Convention attendees were either leaving Washington on the last day of the Convention or attending competing Division II and Division III business sessions.

Nicole Bracken, NCAA assistant director of research, moderated the session which was focused on the upcoming NCAA National Study of Substance Use Habits of College Student-Athletes and on Institutional Review Board (IRB) and survey disbursement experiences. Serving on the panel with Nicole were FARs Kurt Beron, University of Texas at Dallas; Jim Morgan, California State University, Chico, and Connie Dillon, University of Oklahoma.

Nicole briefed attendees about the NCAA National Study of Substance Use Habits of College Student-Athletes, which is to be conducted this year. Survey materials have already been disseminated to FARs, who have been asked to administer them to their identified teams. The completed surveys are to be returned to the NCAA no later than May 1.

Although the study has been approved by the NCAA Research Review Board (RRB), the panel recognized that institutional IRBs vary in their treatments of such studies. Each panelist offered insights about how best to work with local IRBs to facilitate completion of the study. In summary, panelists recommended meeting with the institution’s IRB chair and sharing the survey materials in the package. Attendees were advised to be sure the chair has their contact information, as well as the NCAA contact information. Finally, attendees were advised to determine whether the IRB review will be full, expedited, or other. Ideally, an expedited review would be obtained.
The NCAA and FARA have partnered for the past several years on studies such as the current one. FARs can obtain needed assistance from Nicole Bracken of the NCAA staff at nmbracken@ncaa.org.

The second general session was devoted to a discussion on how FARs can get involved in the NCAA governance structure on various NCAA committees and cabinets. Sharon Tufano, NCAA Committee Coordinator, led the discussion. She distributed a handout titled “All you need to know about NCAA Committee Service”. The handout contained information on the NCAA organization structure along with charts for Divisions I, II and III, and an association-wide chart. Among the items discussed were committee appointment processes, timelines for filling vacancies and travel policies. FARs can contact Sharon at stufano@ncaa.org for additional information.

Roger Caves
President, FARA
San Diego State University

Cecil Carter
Vice President, FARA
Florida Gulf Coast University

Michael Miranda
President Elect, FARA
Plattsburgh State University

FARA Committees and Looking for a Few Good FARs

I believe it to be important that our members recognize that FARA has four primary committees. The Nominating Committee is comprised of the President, President-Elect, and Past President. This committee is charged with coming up with a slate of candidates for President-Elect (one-year term), Vice Presidents for Divisions I, II and III (one-year term) and representatives for the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision, Division I Football Championship Subdivision, Division I, Division II and Division III (two-year term). The Program Committee is chaired by the President-Elect. The President-Elect is assisted by the President and the Vice Presidents for Divisions I, II and III.

One item that I would like to accomplish during my term as FARA President is to increase the number of FARs that participate in FARA activities. This means several things. First, I would like increase the number of FARs that participate on our Professional Development Committee, chaired by Patrick Devine, Kennesaw State University, and our Communications Committee, chaired by Dennis Leighton, University of New England. The former develops ways we can better educate FARs on the roles of the FAR and how to prepare the FAR for various leadership roles on our campuses, conferences, and at the NCAA level. The latter committee is responsible for updating the FARA Web site, listservs for each division, the FARA Voice and updating our FARA Handbook. Individuals interested in participating in these committees should contact Patrick Devine at pdevine@kennesaw.edu or Dennis Leighton at dleighton@une.edu.

Roger Caves
President, FARA
San Diego State University
A year ago, the Division I Committee on Academic Performance agreed to forgive the retention point in the Academic Progress Rate calculation for transfers who leave eligible and have at least a 2.6 grade-point average.

Seen as a concession by some, others say the 2.6 benchmark is unrealistic, thus fueling what has become an ongoing debate for CAP members and other reformers – how to accommodate transfers fairly without compromising academic integrity.

For now, the CAP has decided not to budge on its 2.6 GPA decree, though the topic will continue to be reviewed periodically as more data become available, primarily because of steady pressure from coaches and administrators who believe that if a student-athlete is eligible at the time of transfer and earns a 2.0 GPA, he or she should receive the adjustment.

At its most recent meeting in October, CAP members examined options for tinkering with the adjustment, but decided to stand firm, in keeping with a longstanding policy to allow data to guide decisions. Because the transfer adjustment was approved in January 2008, its impact will not be known until the 2007-08 APR is released in the spring.

Beyond that premise, CAP members also pointed to the Division I Board of Directors’ advice to keep exceptions narrow. “We have a clear directive from the Board to be careful about anything that would depart from the current standards,” said CAP member Jack Evans, faculty athletics representative at North Carolina.

Available data support the committee’s decision to stand firm. In general, transfer student-athletes are less likely to graduate than those who stay put for their entire academic careers.

Research data show that transfers who earn a 2.6 GPA experience similar academic success as those with a 2.0 GPA who remain at the same institution for their entire academic career. And student-athletes who earn below a 2.6 GPA are not as academically successful after transferring, taking longer to graduate, if they get a degree at all.

According to Academic Performance Program data, a primary reason for the dip in academic performance appears to be related to transferrable credits – many from student-athletes who earn below the 2.6 GPA aren’t accepted at the new institution.

Another key point for the committee was the correlation of the APR with the Graduation Success Rate. The expectation has always been that a team’s APR should be strongly predictive of its eventual graduation rate. In other words, teams with high GSRs should have similarly high APRs and vice versa.

Analyses indicated that moving the grade-point average criteria below 2.6 for transfer student-athletes would mean that the APR would not be as good a predictor of eventual graduation success as it is currently. That is, there would be more high GSR squads with relatively low APRs and more low GSR squads with relatively high APRs. While the full impact of the transfer adjustment under the current standard is not yet known, the possibility of lowering the relative comparability of the two rates beyond the current standard was unacceptable to the committee and statistical consultants.

“We’re concerned about the link between the APR and the GSR, and if we adopt anything that is more lenient, we would be doing more damage (to that relationship),” Evans said. “And it’s only been (a year) since we put in the 2.6 relief. We favor seeing some time pass before making any more changes.”

The next frontier for the committee is how to account for two-year transfers in the rate. At its last meeting in October, the group commissioned a study of the academic success of two-year transfer student-athletes with the hopes of producing a list of the academic characteristics of successful two-year transfers, including the types of credits earned and transferred, GPA and nontraditional coursework.

The Role of the FAR on the Division I Progress-Toward-Degree Waiver Committee

The NCAA Web site lists, as the general duties of this committee, to “review and decide progress-toward-degree waivers,” and, indeed, this is what we do. Usually at the beginning of each semester we meet several weeks in a row to decide on numerous cases, as student-athletes are seeking reinstatement for an upcoming season of competition. Our deliberations are informed by hefty files that include letters from coaches, administrators, and the student-athletes themselves. Supporting materials always include transcripts, and often include medical records, counseling records, advising records, and the like. Primarily we hear waiver requests from student-athletes who did not pass in a semester or academic year the minimum number of academic credits necessary, or who did not meet minimum GPA requirements for continued eligibility for competition.

NCAA staff members patiently explain to us the details of the rules and regulations as they guide us through each case. Our committee mixes FARs, student-athlete academic advisors, compliance officers, and other AD and conference personnel. While it is hard to generalize, clearly we look for strong, extenuating circumstances to justify granting the waiver. We are a caring, humane, and collegial group that nonetheless is hesitant to allow student-athletes to veer from progress-toward-degree requirements, as all of us are committed to improving the academic success of student-athletes.

For additional information, contact: Todd Diacon, FAR, University of Tennessee, 5th Floor Andy Holt Tower, Knoxville, Tennessee 37996, ttdiacon@utk.edu

The Role of the FAR on the Student-Athlete Reinstatement Committee

As stated in our Policies and Procedures statement, the Student-Athlete Reinstatement Committee exists to provide “for the evaluation of institutional self-reports submitted on behalf of student-athletes/prospective student-athletes who have been involved in a violation of NCAA regulations that affect their eligibility in order to assess the student-athlete(s)/prospective student-athlete(s)’ responsibility and to determine appropriate conditions for reinstatement of eligibility.” We also provide “for review of institutional requests for various waivers...” These waivers (in Division II) often involve the 10-semester or the hardship rule.

Typically, the initial decision is made by the staff following guidelines that have been established either by the membership or by the committee. These decisions are then reviewed at our semiannual meetings. The committee then discusses whether or not changes are appropriate for committee-designated guidelines. We also act as the appellate body for those institutions or student-athlete(s) wishing to appeal the initial staff decision. These appeals may either be written (most common) or, in unusual circumstances, be heard via telephone conference call.

The committee is unique in that we still meet as a common body (Division I, II and III representatives), although separate divisional breakouts are held as well. This works well, and helps to ensure that similar procedures are being followed in all three divisions, even when different penalties or conditions for reinstatement may apply.

Committee membership is fairly well distributed among the various valued roles. D-I has one associate commissioner, two associate AD’s, and one FAR. D-II has two FARs, one commissioner, one AD, and one SWA/compliance coordinator; D-III has 1 commissioner, 2 compliance coordinators, and one head coach (the compliance coordinators also have coaching responsibilities).

For further information on this Committee, contact Paul Engelmann, FAR, University of Central Missouri, engelmann@ucmo.edu.
Role of the FAR on the DIII Financial Aid Committee

The role of the Division III Financial Aid Committee is to interpret and enforce the Division III bylaws on financial aid. Those bylaws state that "a member institution shall not consider athletics ability as a criterion in the formulation of the financial aid package and that the financial aid procedures used for a student-athlete are the same as the existing official financial aid policies of the institution."

My role in the committee is to attend two meetings a year (and sit it on an occasional conference call), where we look at possible violations of the DIII policies. We look at lots of data and use fairly sophisticated statistical concepts and models to draw our conclusions about whether a school might be in violation of the policy. As an economist, I find that the work I do on the committee is a very practical application of economic analysis. I really enjoy the opportunity to apply economics to college sports.

One message I would like to communicate to other FARs is that they have lots of expertise and perspective on issues that are most often dealt with by ADs and professional NCAA staffers. We always speak of the balanced triangle of NCAA governance - FARs, Ads and presidents. To keep the triangle in its proper balance, we need to get more FARs involved. So make an effort to volunteer for NCAA committee work by going through the self nomination process. It will be good for you, your institution and for the Association.

For additional information, contact: Jeff Ankrom, Ph. D, FAR, Assistant Provost for Institutional Research and Planning, Professor of Economics, Wittenberg University Springfield Ohio 45501, 937 327 6142 (office); 937 327 7522 (fax)

Maintaining Athletics Programs in the Time of Subprime

The economic downturn has started to take its toll on colleges and universities around the country and athletics programs are feeling the pressure. Over the last decade, small liberal arts schools that make up a large portion of DIII, have financed their operations by increased tuition, increased fees, and returns from their endowment investments. The economic downturn has resulted in fewer college applicants, and the falling stock market has resulted in up to 30% losses in endowments. Schools must find ways to maintain the integrity of both the academic and athletic programs on a much lower budget. To face these challenges athletic departments are considering a variety of alternatives.

Some examples: trying to schedule late afternoon football games (reducing the use of lights for night games); working with travel partners when teams go to the same venue and both teams can fit on a single bus; trying to schedule all men's and women's basketball games together (not just conference games); trying to work as a consortium with area colleges to competitively bid hotel rooms; reduce the size of travel squads (fewer student-athletes and staff); reduce the number of competitions to conference only contests across all sports, or limit non conference competition to local travel only; cut the number of sponsored sports programs to the minimum; cut recruiting costs by recruiting locally, recruiting electronically, and reduce or eliminate funds for student prospects to visit campus; reduce or eliminate non-traditional seasons; evaluate conference affiliation (are schedules, travel, etc. most cost effective); evaluate current insurance plans (are there better more cost effective policies); evaluate sponsored sports (are there sports that would be more cost effective).
Many of these examples are extreme while others may make sense for a limited number of programs. FAR’s, AD’s and SAAC representatives should meet with administrators to discuss how cuts can be made without compromising the integrity of the athletic programs (intramural, recreational, club, and varsity). It is important to stress that athletics are an integral part of the academic mission. The philosophy of developing both mind and body must remain a central theme of any discussions.

Ralph Bertrand
Faculty Athletics Representative
Colorado College

2009 NCAA Convention – Division II SAAC Update

The NCAA Division II SAAC arrived at the 2009 NCAA Convention prepared for six days of hard work with the hope to better the student-athlete experience for each of the 80,000 Division II student-athletes in which we represent. The primary points of emphasis on this January’s agenda included: finalizing SAAC’s stance on each of the 13 Division II legislative proposals, beginning preparations to revise the Division II SAAC strategic plan to better align with the newly revised Division II strategic plan, and drafting an informational memo to accompany the Division II SAAC educational DVD.

As always, one of the main highlights of each year’s convention is for SAAC to have the opportunity to share the student-athlete response to proposed legislation on convention floor. In preparation for that occasion, Division II SAACers worked extremely hard to revise speeches that were created in November, practice, revise some more, and practice yet again in order to adequately convey the opinions of Division II student-athletes. Although this year’s business session did not provide much controversy, SAAC members spoke eloquently on several proposals and the student-athlete voice was well received from the Division II membership.

Another initiative that Division II SAAC elected to take on was to revise our current strategic plan to better mirror the format of the newly revised Division II strategic plan that was released this past November. This format will allow us to outline the goals of our committee and delegate priorities specific to each goal to the appropriate subcommittee within our Division II SAAC structure. Our hope is that the completion of each priority will then lead to us accomplishing that goal as a full committee.

For the past year and a half, Division II SAAC has been working diligently to produce an informative SAAC DVD to the membership. Since the DVD is now a reality, Division II SAAC has drafted a memo to accompany the DVD as it is sent out to each institution. The memo highlights the purpose of the DVD, why it was created, and how the resource can be used on each individual campus. The DVD is set to be released to the membership following the completion of the upcoming Division II Leadership Academy on February 6th-8th in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Convention was truly a fitting environment for the SAACs within each division to showcase what the collective time and effort of student-athletes is able to accomplish. SAAC members were included on more panel discussions than ever before and we are grateful for the opportunities that we have had to represent the student-athletes of the NCAA. On behalf of the Division II SAAC, I would like to thank FARAs for the continued opportunities to attend your annual convention. The student-athletes that have attended the convention have stated that they have never had their input feel so well received. We greatly value the relationship that SAAC has with FARAs and look to build on that in the future.

Alex Tiseo
Division II SAAC Chair
FARA Executive Committee Spring Retreat

The FARA Executive Committee will meet in April to plan, among other activities, the fall 2009 Annual Meeting and Symposium. Thanks go out to all who attended in 2008 and submitted suggestions for panels and themes.

The FARA Executive Committee also communicates regularly via email and monthly conference calls. Contact your division vice-president or representatives to add an item to the agenda.

Musings from the Editor

- Wondering if any FAR has a response to the December 12, 2008 article in the Chronicle Review (B20), An Ugly Game: Small Colleges Prey on Student-Athletes Varsity Dreams?

- Thinking that we should lobby for permissive legislation for a split reason in baseball for many conferences. Given the short spring season in many parts of the country, playing a portion of the baseball schedule in the fall makes sense. Although I am a Red Sox fan, I know whose name follows the moniker, “Mr. October.” Baseball is played in the fall, contrary to the belief of many coaches. A number of the Athletic Directors in our conference (Northeast 10, DII) support the concept. Any FARs have an opinion?

- Having attended our conference SAAC meeting February 13th and 14th in Newport, Rhode Island, I can comfortably say that SAACs play a vital role in shaping the future of college sports. When asked their opinion on the best way to reduce costs in the athletic department, they unanimously agreed that keeping the maximum number of games in the championship segment is the priority and that reducing or eliminating the non-championship segment should be the direction to take. Perhaps economics will serve to restore the balance between academics and athletics, reestablishing the collegiate model that Dr. Brand has championed for years.

- Registration for the NCAA Regional Rules Seminar is now open. Have you registered?

- In its sports section (February 16th), USA Today featured an interview with Dr. Brand. Read and learn that the NCAA has an outstanding person as its president. Dr. Brand has enhanced the role of the FAR on campuses, conferences, and the NCAA. As a result, FARA has a strong voice on issues affecting the experiences of student-athletes.
## DATES TO REMEMBER

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<td>FARA Annual Meeting</td>
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**Tell Us How We Are Doing!**

We would love to hear from you regarding the FARA Voice. If you have any comments, questions, or ideas for future articles, please direct them to **Karen Cooper at FARA@ncaa.org**.

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http://www.farawebsite.org