FROM THE EDITOR

Many of us find ourselves well into the academic calendar and deep into the winter athletic season. The first round of exams and papers faces us, and our responsibilities as FAR’s surround us. Already we look for the moment to step back and regroup. Perhaps that is why this January issue of The Voice arrives in early February. I apologize for the tardiness; we will do our best to keep The Voice timely.

Some notes for the membership of FARA...
As FAR’s, we are all members of FARA and are entitled to all the benefits of membership, including voicing one’s opinion on a topic, presenting a best practice, or posing a question about, or comment on, a current issue or concern. The Voice serves as our monthly means of communication. The FARA Web site (www.farawebsite.org) provides much information about our association and is also a valuable communication tool. I encourage new and veteran FARs to check the site. Bob Ziegenfus, FARA Division II Vice-President, performed a great service in creating the Web site.

All division listservs for FARA will be available soon. The listservs will provide another communication tool for members, as do other listservs we may use. The listserv will not be a vehicle for disseminating personnel commentaries or position pieces to the membership. The Voice is the vehicle for such communication, and we encourage you to use The Voice as such. In this issue, for example, you will find pieces on the NCAA National Study on Collegiate Sports Wagering. I encourage you to read these pieces and respond if you would like to do so. Send your comments on this matter and others to me (catanese@anselm.edu).

You will also find in this issue remarks by FARA President Alan Hauser. Among his remarks, Alan cites Scott Kretchmar who in the February issue will have an article about The NCAA Scholarly Colloquium on College Sports and a new journal on college sports.

“Engaging The Faculty,” the theme of the 2007 FARA Annual Meeting and Symposium, drew interest and input from many of you. Division II FARs compiled a set of best practices which will be on the Web site soon. A session on “Engaging the Faculty” at the 2008 NCAA Convention drew a large audience and generated much discussion. If you have a successful practice for “Engaging the Faculty,” please forward it to me so we can share it with others. Many of you have initiated successful programs for engaging faculty, and these programs can benefit other FAR’s.

The FARA executive committee communicates monthly via conference call, so if you have an item you would like the committee to address, contact your division representative. The committee members are listed on the FARA Web site.

Your comments and suggestions are especially welcome as the FARA executive committee plans the 2008 Annual Meeting and Symposium. We will transition from the theme of “Engaging the Faculty” to a new but related theme to be determined in March. If you have suggestions for a theme or session topics, contact your representative.

Joe Catanese
FARA Executive Committee/FARA Voice Editor
Saint Anselm University
FROM THE FARA PRESIDENT

Dear Fellow FARs,

I enjoyed seeing many of you at the recent NCAA Convention in Nashville, and hope things are going well for you as you launch your spring semester. I want to follow up on a couple of items FARA discussed during the NCAA Convention, and also seek your input on another matter.

The first item is the governance restructuring in Division I. The Division I Board has approved this restructuring, and it will be implemented this coming fall. As Dr. Myles Brand has indicated in various contexts, a key benefit of this new structure is that it provides FARs more opportunities for involvement in the governance of Division I athletics, which will, in turn, help achieve Dr. Brand’s goal of better integrating intercollegiate athletics into the life of college and university campuses. Final decisions will soon be made concerning the membership on each of the Division I councils/cabinets. My thanks to each of you who volunteered to serve on one of these groups. This is an opportunity for increased faculty involvement in the governance of intercollegiate athletics that we do not want to miss.

The next item is the NCAA Scholarly Colloquium on College Sports, held for the first time January 10-11 at the NCAA Convention in Nashville. This colloquium brought together scholars from various disciplines to present and discuss scholarly approaches to the study of intercollegiate athletics. The theme of the sessions was “College Sports – A Legitimate Focus for Scholarly Inquiry?” The sessions were very lively and quite interesting. Many thanks to Scott Kretchmar and the others who worked diligently to make this a successful program. A new journal is being prepared to publish scholarly articles on college sports, and Scott announced that all FARs will receive an initial, complimentary subscription. Please consult Scott’s piece in the upcoming February issue of FARA Voice for more information on the colloquium and on the journal.

The last item is the current status of intercollegiate athletics. Several of you indicated to me in Nashville your concern about particular issues in intercollegiate athletics that need to be addressed. I found these discussions interesting, and very helpful to me in my role as President of FARA. I therefore ask each of you to send me your thoughts concerning issues that need to be addressed in intercollegiate athletics. If you have the time, I would appreciate receiving your comments in detail, including actions you believe might be taken to address these problems. If you are short on time, please at least send me your observations on the nature of the problem(s) that need(s) to be addressed. These could be problems that pertain only to one division, or problems that are present across the board in intercollegiate athletics. If you feel it would be helpful to have a session on one of these issues at our annual meeting and symposium next November in San Diego, please let me know, and I will share this with FARA’s executive committee.

All the best for a good spring semester,

Alan J. Hauser
FARA President
Appalachian State University
NCAA CONVENTION UPDATES

Division I

At the NCAA Convention, the primary activity for Division I was the consideration of the override of three proposals. The first of these was an override of Proposal 2006-40 that, if not overridden, would prevent text messaging. The override failed by a vote of 65 for, 240 against and one abstention.

The second was proposal 2006-87 that changed the number of dates of competition for golf. This override passed by a vote of 140 for, 95 against and 19 abstentions.

The third proposal was 2007-9, part of the baseball changes, that was divided into two parts (2007-9A and 2007-9B). Proposal 2007-9A established the minimum amount of aid to be received at 25% and a maximum number of scholarship recipients at 30 for the 2008-09 academic year and 27 for the 2009-10 academic year and thereafter. The override failed by a vote of 87 for, 200 against and 21 abstentions.

Proposal 2007-B established the squad size limit of 35 that must be declared prior to the first game of the championship season and cannot change after this date. The override failed by a vote of 69 for, 213 against and 23 abstentions.

Thomas W. Adair
FARA Division I Vice President
Texas A&M University

Division II

January is not only the start of a new year but also the path to new rules and regulations for athletic programs. This year, Division II had 21 proposals to consider at the NCAA convention. What follows is a brief summary of several proposals that will have direct impact on our responsibilities as FARs.

I will begin with two of the more controversial items. The skill instruction proposal had two major provisions. First, the number of student-athletes (SAs) will now be based on squad size. Individual sports and sports with a starting squad size of six or less will still be restricted to four SAs working with a coach at one time. New in 2008-2009 will be a provision whereby six SAs can participate at one time for sports where the starting squad size is seven or more. Second, and also new, will be the ability to have more than one group of SAs from the same team involved in skill instruction in the same facility or a different facility, provided each group is with a different coach. If in the same facility, there is to be no co-mingling between the groups. The FARA position was to oppose this legislation because: 1) it represents yet another in a long line of extensions to the concept of skill instruction; and 2) the co-mingling component will require significant additional monitoring.

A second proposal that originally was not considered controversial by FARs apparently became an issue on a few campuses. As passed, no countable athletically-related activities outside the playing season can occur from one week before final exams until the end of the exam period. Some athletics directors and coaches felt this would hinder skill instruction. The FARA position was to strongly support the legislation.

Other pertinent proposals were:
1. Male practice players for women’s teams will have to be certified in the same manner as female student-athletes. FARA’s position: Strongly Support.
2. Institutions will be required to submit Academic Performance Data or forfeit their enhancement funds. All FARs should note that the data for both 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 must be submitted in this first year. You may wish to speak to the relevant personnel on
your campus responsible for this submission to inform them of this new requirement. FARAs position: Support.  

3. Institutions will have to notify SAs within 14 calendar days if they decide to deny a request for transfer or when an athlete has had a reduction or non-renewal of financial aid. FARAs position was to strongly support this legislation while recognizing that it was incomplete because there still is no time limitation on the institution for notifying the SA of the decision after the appeal hearing has been held.  

4. A SA may be granted an additional season of competition if a coach’s interpretation of a regulation is incorrect. This only applies if the coach can document the misunderstanding. FARAs position was to support the proposal because of the impact on the SA. Nevertheless, there was concern expressed about why a coach would not clarify any interpretation of a rule prior to placing the SA in jeopardy of losing a season.  

A suggestion I offer is to discuss these six new rules, and the others as applicable, with your institutional SAAC. Perhaps an additional meeting with your athletics director may be in order to determine how the new skill instruction rules will impact his/her monitoring of same.

Robert C. Ziegenfus  
FARA Division II Vice President  
Kutztown University of Pennsylvania

Division III

For those of you unable to attend the convention, a summary of the actions taken on the convention floor is provided for you. There were 16 proposals brought to the convention floor.  

- Proposal 1 clarifies the NCAA’s Executive Committee’s authority to make decisions and implement policy, and needed to be supported by all three divisions. This proposal was voted on at the opening business session on Saturday and was adopted.  
- Proposal 2 was to allow prospects and athletics staff work at privately owned camps, as well as institutional camps, as long as the camps were open to the public. The proposal was adopted.  
- Proposal 3 was to allow admission’s offices to publicize visits of a prospective student-athlete in the same manner all prospects are publicized. This proposal was adopted.  
- Proposal 4 was to restrict text messaging to recruits, and only allow electronically transmitted e-mails and faxes. It was adopted.  
- Proposal 5 was to permit athletics departments to finance support services to student-athletes, provided those same services were available to all students. It was defeated (the vote was exactly tied), but then was brought during the window of reconsideration, and was adopted by a close vote.  
- Proposal 6 was to allow a conference to play a suspended (i.e. weather) postseason game that determines the conference champion and/or the automatic qualifier, even if the institutions involved did not have another day left in their season. It was adopted.  
- Proposal 7 was to specify that the first contest in basketball can be November 15. It was adopted.  
- Proposal 8 specifies restrictions on male practice players. It was adopted.  
- Proposal 9 was to specify that at least one individual trained in first aid, CPR, AED and emergency plan activation be present at each athletically-related activity. It was defeated.  
- Proposal 10 with Amendment 10-1 was to allow conferences to use members that were in provisional status to count towards the automatic qualifier count. The amendment was defeated, then proposal 10 was withdrawn.  
- Proposal 11 was withdrawn.  
- Proposal 12 was to allow institutions to use online courses for determining satisfactory progression and academic eligibility of student-athletes, if the institution has the policy for all students, regardless of whether the courses are taken at the certifying institution or another institution. It was adopted.  
- Proposal 13 was, in fall sports (except football), to eliminate the requirement to calculate the first permissible date of practice by counting practice opportunities from September 1, when the first scheduled contest occurs before September 1. It was adopted.  
- Proposal 14 was to specify that a strength and conditioning coach, who is also a coach, may
monitor voluntary workouts without those workouts being counted as athletically-related activities, provided they are open to all students using the facility at that time. It was adopted.

- Proposal 15 was to allow proposals submitted by July 15 to have only one conference or 10 member institutions as co-sponsors, with the required number of co-sponsors by September 1. It was adopted.
- Proposal 16 was withdrawn.

There were many interesting and educational programs available for all attendees, in addition to the Convention business sessions. The research colloquium was a nice addition, and should be a session of interest for all faculty attending. If you intend to attend the Convention next year, make time to come in early and attend this very informative day and a half of research presentations. There were also several opportunities, association-wide and specific to Division III, to discuss possible membership structure issues. It seems that there are many concerns, with no agreed upon direction at this point. STAY TUNED!!

Sandra Slabik
FARA Division III Vice President
Neumann College

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

While at the 2008 NCAA Convention in Nashville, some Faculty Athletics Representatives came together and shared some mutual concerns about the NCAA Gambling Survey that FARs have been asked to administer on our campuses. Dr. Dydia DeLyser, the FAR at Louisiana State University, spoke with some NCAA staff at the Convention, and also briefly addressed a group of FARs on Saturday afternoon. The following article from Dr. DeLyser outlines her, and others, concerns. A second article in this FARA Voice is from Dr. Jeffrey Derevensky who designed the survey. In his article, Dr. Derevensky responds to Dr. DeLyser’s concerns.

Dr. DeLyser presents some interesting points, however the FARA Executive Committee has taken no position on these issues. Furthermore, the FARA Executive Committee continues to fully support this study, and feels that each FAR must meet the needs and criteria of their institutions in the administration of this survey instrument, including following standard IRB protocols. Faculty Athletics Representatives are in a unique position to ensure confidential and safe administration of NCAA research surveys. The results are used to enhance the student-athlete experience, a prime principle of FARA.

In the interest of open dialogue, these two opinions are presented here.

Dennis Leighton
FARA Secretary-Treasurer/Past President
University of New England

NCAA Wagering Survey

Dear Fellow FARs,

I write to draw your attention to some issues around the NCAA Wagering survey which FARs were asked to undertake with student-athletes on our campuses. At the recent NCAA Convention some of the FARs present including Connie Dillon, Lori Franz and I raised some concerns about the survey and discussed these with NCAA staff. Our concerns (which many of you echoed at the FARA meeting during the Convention) included issues of reliability, validity, and confidentiality of the survey.

For example, since survey participants who claim they have not gambled may skip sections and will complete the survey early, we shared a concern that those who do gamble would be readily identified by their peers in the room. Issues like this, along with the questions asked by the survey, led us to ask NCAA staff if the survey had been pre-tested. In fact, though some NCAA interns took (or looked at) the survey, the survey in its full, current form, has not been pre-tested.
In response to Dr. DeLyser’s comments re: The 2007-2008 NCAA Wagering Survey

Let me try to address some of the concerns raised by several of the FARs regarding the proposed 2007-08 NCAA National Study on collegiate wagering. Much of these comments were forwarded to Connie Dillon as she had initially contacted me directly with many of the concerns and issues raised. I hope that these comments can be somewhat reassuring concerning the reliability, validity and importance of this study.

As a University Professor, I too am well aware of the time commitments for applications to IRBs let alone the administration to athletes who may not perceive the need for such a survey. Drs. DeLyser and Dillon and others have raised very legitimate concerns and appropriate responses may have not been well communicated to the FARs and for this I apologize. As a researcher and clinician actively involved in working with adolescents and young adults, gambling and excessive gambling has become a problem of concern not only amongst athletes but for non athletes as well on college campuses. There remains substantial research and general acceptance that the vast majority of college students have gambled prior to entry into college and that the prevalence rates of problem gambling amongst this age
population are generally higher than the adult population. The ease of accessibility, multiple venues and opportunities, their perceived invulnerability and social acceptance of gambling have all been cited as contributing factors.

The following background information might not have been readily available and may be helpful:

- The 2007-08 survey was substantially modified from the 2003-04 survey based on feedback from FARs, analyses of student-athlete responses, and concerns of the NCAA Research Committee, Data Analysis Research Network and NCAA RRB. This study was originally headed by Dr. Durand Jacobs (Loma Linda University), an internationally recognized psychologist and expert in the field of youth gambling. These modifications led to the deletion of a significant number of items from the original version and a substantial shortening of the questionnaire. I hope that those of you who may have had a negative experience in the past can now be reassured that many of the problematic issues raised relative to questions related to sexual practices, suicidal behaviors, illegal behaviors, etc. from the previous questionnaire have now been removed. While I was previously a consultant to this process, having done innumerable studies with high school and college age students, I too believe that much of the information collected was not pertinent to the primary aim of the study. In spite of this limitation, data was collected on 21,000 male and female student athletes, representing 2,003 individual sports teams at 1,032 NCAA member institutions. This represented the largest national sample of college students participating in any comprehensive gambling survey.

- This replication of the 2003-04 study was deemed important by the NCAA Sports Wagering Task Force (comprised of coaches, FARs, student-athletes, gambling experts and researchers, Directors of Athletics and headed by Father Mallory, who at the time was President, Notre Dame University) that reviewed the results of the first study and remained significantly concerned. The Task Force strongly recommended that this study be replicated to help determine (a) cohort changes in gambling attitudes and behaviors, and (b) the impact of recent educational initiatives undertaken by the NCAA. The results of the 2003-04 study were used by the Task Force to help shape policy at the NCAA and to promote many of its prevention initiatives.

- Based upon previous studies conducted nationally in the United States by the NCAA and NORC (National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago), there remains concerns with this age group with respect to their gambling behaviors amongst other potentially risky behaviors. My Centre has been involved in many of these studies nationally and internationally and we have testified before governmental bodies and agencies in numerous countries (e.g., U.S., Canada, U.K, South Africa, Norway, Singapore, Austria, Australia, and New Zealand) to help shape policy.

- This study remains a priority for Myles Brand and the NCAA Board of Directors. Because of its perceived importance additional funds have been allocated this year to survey game officials and athletics administrators.

- To ensure that the instrument meets its goals, its validity, as well as its acceptability to University Research Ethics Boards, the following groups have reviewed the final 2007-08 student-athlete sports wagering survey protocol:
  - The executive committee of the Faculty Athletics Representatives Association (FARA), which has endorsed and encouraged its FARs to actively participate.
  - The NCAA Research Review Board (NCAA RRB).
  - The NCAA Research Committee.
  - The NCAA Data Analysis Research Network (A group of independent research/statistical experts).
  - Colleagues in the field of youth gambling.

As the principal consultant for the current study let me try to assure all FARs that the NCAA staff and Task Force greatly appreciates the fact that many of you will be acting as the PI in your respective institutions and should have received some more detailed information concerning the procedures, reliability, validity and importance of this survey. The issues raised by Drs. DeLyser, Dillon and other FARs are vital and have been considered by the researchers, RRB and others involved in the creation of the study. We certainly will look to better communicate information regarding reliability,
validity, pre-testing, and importance of the research to everyone in the future.

A brief background of my qualifications as principal consultant for this project seems warranted. I am currently Professor and Clinical Director, School/Applied Child Psychology, Department of Educational and Counseling Psychology; Professor, Department of Psychiatry; and Professor, Department of Community Dentistry at McGill University. I am a clinical consultant to numerous hospitals, school boards, government agencies and corporations. I have published widely and am on the editorial board of numerous journals. I am the Co-Director of the McGill University Youth Gambling Research and Treatment Clinic and the International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors, and a member of the National Centre for Gambling Studies, University of Alberta; National Network on Gambling Issues and Research, Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse; an International Associate of the Centre for the Study of the Social Impact of Gambling, University of Plymouth, England, and on the Program Advisory Board, Institute for Research on Pathological Gambling and Related Disorders, Division on Addictions, Harvard Medical School. I have sat on numerous government, research and granting committees in the U.S. including NIH, NIMH, and internationally. I have been the recipient of numerous research grants from a wide variety of agencies. Additional information can be accessed at www.youthgambling.com

The NCAA remains very well aware that the findings from their surveys garner considerable press and attention. Reliability and validity issues remain of paramount importance. Surveys that appear to be suspiciously completed (e.g., all marking the first response, large amounts of missing data, comments in the margins, etc.) using item response theory (IRT) methods (used to identify odd patterns of response or item responses that do not match item responses in other portions of the survey) are discarded. We also have methods to detect insincere patterns of response and delete those observations where necessary. Low base-rate items that relate to illegal or troublesome behavior (e.g., accepting money) will prompt a full item analysis for sincerity. Several new items have also been added that incorporate defense mechanism strategies which shift the user from describing their own behavior to ascertaining whether others may be engaging in such a behavior. Such items have been found to be indicative of personal behaviors.

The previous 2003-04 study showed reliable results in spite of its considerable length. While there may be a response bias toward under-reporting problems in spite of the fact we try to ensure anonymity, these data shall be compared to other large college data sets. There are generally two standard practices in this field; a) general surveys through group instruction, or b) telephone interviews which reduces anonymity. Most of the items included are from well-researched, standardized scales and based upon standard survey development principles and practices. While there may be room for methodological improvements (e.g., incorporation of lie scales but this would require a much larger scale necessitating more time to complete the survey), the basic survey has been reviewed by a number of knowledgeable researchers and independent groups who remain comfortable with this instrument and the accompanying study procedures.

In previous discussions with Dr. Dillon, the readability of the survey and time to completion has also been raised. While I have not used a readability formula per se, all our surveys are pilot tested on a wide variety of college students to ensure its readability and understanding. The rate of reading, coupled with the types of questions, will likely not produce significant variability in response time. As such, students taking longer are not going to be perceived as having problems. The entire survey should take approximately 20-35 minutes to complete, reducing much variability. Rather than requiring students to do this individually, again confidentiality issues come about, group administration is the generally preferred methodology. Students are provided with the consent information in very clear language on the first page of the survey and orally by those administering the survey. FARs can certainly adjust the administration procedures to allow more protection (e.g., administration of survey to students in private carrels), provided anonymity is not compromised and student-athletes are aware that their participation is encouraged, but participation remains voluntary.

I understand that campus IRBs differ widely in how risky they perceive these questions and those in other studies as well. Many IRBs have already approved the study while a few have not. Because of the overall importance of this study, not just for athletes, but for the university communities as a whole, we are requesting that the FARs bring it to their IRBs. Unfortunately, the NCAA staff can not manage 1000+ IRB submissions. Nevertheless, the staff will provide assistance to FARs who request help in completing their IRB materials. The fact that it has already gone through several IRBs is generally reassuring to other university IRBs.
No survey of this nature involves no risk whatsoever. However, the risks are deemed to be minimal. It is hoped that anyone experiencing some difficulty with these questions may in fact reach out for help. The NCAA remains extremely concerned about the well being of the student body. Rather than a punitive approach a positive counseling approach is preferred. Such counseling/help service could come from a coach, not necessarily a student service department. My personal experience has been that while IRBs often require such a statement, few, if any individuals availed themselves of these services. I am currently working with several groups to try to develop a training program for counseling services and for the development of overall university-wide policy development on gambling.

While there was no formal large-scale pilot, the original instrument was piloted on recent graduate interns at the NCAA and undergraduates at McGill to ensure its readability, to determine whether or not questions were ambiguous or misleading and to ascertain time to completion.

Once all the results are compiled, a final report will be submitted to the NCAA, all FARs and member institutions. Before any public release of the results, multiple layers of informal peer review on all work in NCAA Research is conducted. The NCAA’s Data Analysis Research Network is the primary group responsible for this review process. While peer review is certainly not a foolproof guarantee, it is a check and balance system. The FARs should note that the 2003-04 study that portions of the data have appeared in two separate peer-reviewed journals, one is in press, and two are under review, attesting to its scientific merit and internal as well as external review processes.

In spite of the NCAA’s aggressive prevention campaigns against gambling the last survey seemed to suggest many athletes either were unaware of the policies or viewed gambling as a non problematic behavior.

Hopefully, I have assured you to the best of my knowledge that the NCAA survey is consistent with best practices in the field for ensuring reliability, validity and confidentiality. I sincerely hope that you will all find that the value of this survey outweighs the necessary time commitments.

I very much appreciate the concerns and interest by all the FARs and would welcome the opportunity to meet you all in the future.

Should you have any further questions please feel free to contact me or Roberto Vicente at the NCAA.

Jeffrey L. Derevensky
McGill University
jeffrey.derevensky@mcgill.ca

DATES TO REMEMBER

May 18–23, 2008
June 1–6, 2008
November 13–15, 2008
January 14–17, 2009
November 12–14, 2009
November 11–13, 2010
NCAA Regional Rules Compliance Seminar
NCAA Regional Rules Compliance Seminar
FARA Annual Meeting and Symposium
NCAA Convention
FARA Annual Meeting and Symposium
FARA Annual Meeting and Symposium
Boston
San Antonio
San Diego
Washington, DC
St. Louis
Baltimore

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.

http://www.farawebsite.org