January 6, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: Executive Committee of Academic Council

FROM: Jacqueline Wright
Secretary for Academic Governance

SUBJECT: Athletic Council - Summary of Concerns Expressed

Per our discussion at ECAC on November 8, 2005, a summary of concerns expressed by a number of you with regard to Athletics and Athletic Council Procedures has been compiled. On Tuesday, January 10th we will be reviewing the attached summary of concerns in preparation for our meeting on February 7, 2006 with President Simon, Athletic Director Ron Mason and Michael Kasavana, Chairperson of Athletic Council.

Please take a few minutes to look over the attached summary and be prepared sort out which questions you would like to see answered by the group when we meet in February.

Thank you.
ATHLETICS AND ATHLETIC COUNCIL PROCEDURES

SUMMARY OF CONCERNS EXPRESSED

• Functioning of Athletic Council should be described and explained.
• What kinds of issues do they deal with?
• How much bearing on the academic side of their operations?
• Why would they not be a part of Academic Council, for example, with a report as all the other standing committees?
• COGS, ASMSU and the Council of Deans are represented in academic governance but are not subsets of academic governance. I think there's a reasonably strong argument that Athletic Council should be represented in governance, but I’m not (yet) seeing an argument why it should be part of (subject to the whims of?) governance.
• We could ask what criteria are used to select members of the Athletic Council.
• What is the justification for keeping the Athletic Council out of the Academic Governance system?
• How can the faculty influence the academic aspects of Intercollegiate Athletics?
• What can be done to more effectively bridge the Academic Community to the Intercollegiate Athletic Program?
• I note that the Council really doesn’t get to make decisions in most cases, it just gets informed on what has been decided, or so I’m told by former members. I doubt that the athletic department is going to willingly give up its autonomy, but it never hurts to question what is going on.
• How can we move the Athletic Council into Academic Governance and what, if any, are the pros and cons of such a move?
• Why can’t we have a member of the Athletic Council attend every meeting of Faculty Council and give reports just as the other committees do?
• Are the minutes of Athletic Council now on line so they can be viewed by the Faculty?
• Ought there to be greater contact between the faculty representative to the Big 10 and Academic Governance?
• Is there a way for faculty to have more direct input to the Athletic Council by being able to raise issues, ask questions and have questions answered?
• There has been a tremendous amount of negative publicity coming out of decisions reached by the Athletic Department over the past several years (some relating to seating policies for students, some relating to access to elevators in the football stadium by those who are not permanently disabled but have trouble walking, some relating to the Izzone, etc.). Would there be less controversy if the Athletic Department were better integrated into the governance system and thus got more input from a wider variety of students and faculty? If so, what sort of structure might serve the Department best?
• Is there sufficient transparency related to the current Athletic Council (in terms of the decision-making processes and decisions)?
• Should there be a discussion of the Athletic Council’s report to the Academic Council?
• Should there be a link to Athletic Council’s website or minutes on the Academic Governance website?
• Should the State News governance reporters be encouraged to cover meetings of the Council, etc.?