

## Office of the President

### TO MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY:

#### ACTION ITEM

*For Meeting of May 11, 2016*

### ESTABLISHMENT OF POLICY ON STUDENT-ATHLETES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES TO ENHANCE STUDENT-ATHLETE WELFARE

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Regents are being asked to approve several policies and guiding principles related to enhancing student-athlete welfare.

Recent reforms related to student-athlete benefits adopted by the Pac-12 National Collegiate Athletic Association Athletic Conference have sparked interest in examining UC's current practices and policies regarding student-athletes. A systemwide working group of campus athletic directors and senior athletic department personnel was convened to discuss best practices and recommendations on how to enhance student-athlete welfare. The working group recommended the adoption of policies and guiding principles in the areas of administrative accountability, admissions, financial support, injury support, academic and career support, and student life.

#### RECOMMENDATION

1. The President of the University recommends that the Committee on Educational Policy recommend that the Regents:
  - A. Adopt the following Policy on Student-Athletes:

#### POLICY ON STUDENT-ATHLETES

- (1) Athletic directors at Division I and Division II campuses shall report directly to the Chancellor of their campus.
- (2) Because of the time required for travel and practice schedules, student-athletes shall receive priority registration through the established institutional priority registration process at each campus.
- (3) For those campuses that provide athletic scholarships, if a student sustains an incapacitating injury while participating in intercollegiate athletic

activities and is medically unable to continue his/her athletic commitments, the campus shall not revoke financial aid or scholarships, and shall provide the student-athlete with an equivalent grant or scholarship to finish his/her degree.

**B. Endorse the following guiding principles:**

- (1) Student-athlete academic performance should be considered a central element of annual performance evaluations for athletic directors and all athletic coaches.
- (2) During the recruitment and admissions process, Athletic Departments should work to identify those student-athletes who may need additional support to succeed academically at UC, and collaborate with other campus departments and available resources to mitigate obstacles to success.
- (3) Athletic Departments should help facilitate regular collaboration and communication between admissions personnel and athletic coaches in order to help identify student-athletes who are able to succeed at UC. Consistent with the faculty's governance over admissions policies, athletic coaches should continue to have no decision-making authority in the admissions of student-athletes.
- (4) For those students on athletic scholarships at Division I and II campuses, each campus should make publicly available the athletic scholarship appeals process to ensure student-athletes and their families are aware of their rights regarding athletic scholarship renewal.
- (5) As with the recruitment and admissions process, Athletic Departments should work to identify and support student-athletes once they have matriculated. Each Athletic Department should ensure that student-athletes have access to academic counselors who are integrated into university-wide academic and advising programs, and have been trained specifically to work with student-athletes.
- (6) Each Athletic Department should require those student-athletes who are identified as at-risk academically to meet with their academic counselors regularly and should encourage all student-athletes to meet with their academic counselors.
- (7) Athletic Departments should work in conjunction with campus career counselors to provide a comprehensive approach to addressing career

education and preparation as they pertain to the unique needs of student-athletes.

- (8) To continue providing a balanced academic and athletic environment for student-athletes, Athletic Departments should remain diligent in complying with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) rule limiting practice for student-athletes to the NCAA maximum (currently 20 hours) per week.
  - (9) Athletic Departments should offer a freshman/transfer orientation for student-athletes that communicates the academic and behavioral expectations of student-athletes as campus leaders and often highly visible members of the campus community. Additionally, this orientation should inform student-athletes of all available academic and career resources.
  - (10) Athletic Departments should either provide, or partner with other campus departments to provide, training and counseling services to address systemwide student issues such as sexual assault, campus climate, and mental health.
- C. Require the Office of the President to provide annual reports to the Regents on how the campuses have addressed the guiding principles and the implementation of the proposed policy changes, provided they are approved by the Regents.

### **BACKGROUND**

In 2014, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I Board of Directors passed a new governance model giving the five major conferences the authority to create legislation in specific areas of regulation. This autonomy allowed the Southeastern Conference, Atlantic Coast Conference, Big Ten, Pac-12, and Big 12 conferences (known collectively as the Power 5) to create their own rules in certain areas, including benefits for student-athletes. Prior to this reform, the Power 5 were subject to the same NCAA rules and regulations that affected all Division I schools, regardless of size or resources. The leaders of the Power 5 argued that they have the resources to provide more support to student-athletes and do not want to be limited to the rules governing student-athlete benefits that all other Division I schools are permitted to provide.

In response to the autonomy legislation that has been passed by the Power 5, the Pac-12 Conference, which includes UC Berkeley and UCLA, adopted reforms for student-athletes including guaranteed four-year athletic scholarships, continuing education, improved health care, liberalized transfer rules, and student-athlete representation.

The University of California system includes a range of athletic programs. (See Attachment 1 for a list of UC campuses by NCAA Division and by Conference.) Division I and II programs compete at the highest levels of collegiate athletics and provide scholarships for student-athletes, while Division III athletic programs tend to have fewer resources and be unable to provide athletic scholarships. Division I and II athletic programs at UC include membership in the Pac-12, Big West, Big Sky, Mountain Pacific Sports Federation, California Pacific Conference, and California Collegiate Athletic Association conferences. Outside of the Pac-12, funding for UC athletic programs is limited to what campuses are able to provide through fees, institutional support, and finite revenue streams. For example, Power 5 conferences have much greater access to income through media contracts, bowl revenue, and funds awarded to those conferences who participate in the NCAA basketball championship. For this reason, the other, lower-resourced conferences are often financially unable to provide the same level of student-athlete benefits available in conferences with higher levels of resources.

Despite the varied size, governance, and resources of the athletic programs at UC, the University's commitment to student-athlete welfare is high. For this reason, the Office of the President convened a working group of athletic directors and senior Athletic Department personnel to recommend policy changes and guiding principles to help campuses enhance and ensure student-athlete welfare. In addition to serving on the working group, each campus was asked to respond to a questionnaire about current policies, procedures, and benefits offered to student-athletes. Members of the working group included: H. Michael Williams, Athletic Director, UC Berkeley; Teresa Gould, Interim Athletic Director, UC Davis; Paula Smith, Deputy Athletic Director and Senior Woman Administrator, UC Irvine; Dan Guerrero, Athletic Director, UCLA; Janet Lucas, Executive Associate Director of Athletics, UC Riverside; and John McCutcheon, Athletic Director, UC Santa Barbara.

### ***Student-Athlete Working Group Findings***

Student-athletes at UC are presented with a unique set of circumstances and responsibilities during their tenure. They have an opportunity to represent the world's premier public research university system on the athletic field, in the classroom, and in various other academic and social settings. This responsibility necessitates stringent academic requirements and expectations of appropriate conduct.

In turn, the University of California has the important responsibility of supporting its student-athletes in both their academic and athletic endeavors. The vast majority of student-athletes at UC excel at both academics and athletics, graduating on time and serving as leaders on their campuses. Athletic programs at the University of California serve as a standard of excellence across the country.

To bolster existing efforts on campuses to improve student-athlete welfare, the working group proposed guiding principles and policy changes, based on campus best practices, to better prepare, advise, protect, and ensure the success and welfare of UC's student-athletes. These

proposals are in the areas of administrative accountability, admissions, financial and injury support, academic and career support, and student life.

#### Administrative Accountability

The working group discussed the importance of successfully integrating the athletic administration into campus leadership. Each campus represented spoke to the benefit of reporting directly to the Chancellor. This level of integration ensures that student-athlete welfare is considered in all aspects of campus and student life.

The working group also recommended that student-athlete academic performance should continue to be considered a central element of annual performance evaluations for athletic directors and all athletic coaches.

#### Admissions

The comprehensive and holistic admissions review for student-athletes was examined by the working group to determine if there were any areas in which the process could be improved. The process of comprehensive review in admissions, looking beyond test scores and grades to evaluate an applicant's achievements in light of the opportunities available to him or her and the capacity each student demonstrates to contribute to the intellectual life of the campus, is utilized when evaluating all applicants, including student-athletes. Within the framework of comprehensive review, a student can be considered for extraordinary talents or achievements in academics, visual or performing arts, athletics, intensive study or exploration of other cultures and languages, or other significant achievements that demonstrate the student's promise for contributing to the vitality of a campus.

To bolster this process and improve efforts to identify student-athletes who are capable of succeeding academically at UC, the working group proposed that, during the recruitment and admissions process, Athletic Departments should work to identify those student-athletes who can succeed academically at UC with additional support, including through facilitating regular collaboration and communication between admissions personnel and athletic coaches. Consistent with the faculty's governance over admissions policies, athletic coaches should continue to have no decision-making authority in the admission of student-athletes. The working group also recommended that, if the students are admitted, Athletic Departments and coaches should collaborate with other campus departments to provide resources to mitigate obstacles to these students' success (more below).

#### Financial and Injury Support

Recent reforms in the Pac-12 include the guarantee of four-year athletic scholarships to student-athletes. Most UC athletic programs are not funded through outside sources, such as revenue from media contracts, but instead rely upon student fees and institutional funding. For these

campuses, increasing scholarship guarantees or providing a cost of living stipend are not feasible. Athletic scholarships, available only at Division I and II schools, are currently awarded for the academic year and renewed annually. By providing students and their families with information about scholarship renewal and the scholarship appeals process, the University would afford families a better understanding of the possibilities for scholarship longevity. Therefore, the working group recommended that for those students on athletic scholarships at Division I and II campuses, each campus should make publicly available the athletic scholarship appeals process to ensure student-athletes and their families are aware of their rights regarding athletic scholarship renewal prior to accepting a scholarship.

The provision of health care for student-athletes is an important aspect of student-athlete welfare. Currently, all UC campuses' Athletic Departments provide primary or secondary insurance coverage to ensure that a student-athlete will not pay out-of-pocket expenses for injuries sustained while participating in intercollegiate athletic activity. In the case of an injury, to ensure student-athletes have the ability to finish their degree at UC, the working group recommended adoption of a policy stating that if a student sustains an incapacitating injury while participating in intercollegiate athletic activities and is medically unable to continue his/her athletic commitments, the campus shall not revoke financial aid or scholarships and shall provide the student-athlete with an equivalent grant or scholarship to finish his/her degree. This policy would apply only to those campuses that have Division I and II athletic programs, as NCAA regulations allow only those schools to provide athletic scholarships.

#### Academic and Career Support

As with the recruitment and admissions process, Athletic Departments should work to identify and support student-athletes once they have matriculated. This includes providing academic guidance in response to specific and individual needs of student-athletes. The working group recommends that each Athletic Department ensure that student-athletes have access to academic counselors who are integrated into campus-wide academic and advising programs, and who have been trained specifically to work with student-athletes. While the vast majority of student-athletes excel academically at UC, there are those student-athletes who need additional guidance to overcome obstacles in order to achieve academic and personal success. The working group recommended that those student-athletes deemed to be at risk academically be required to meet with their academic counselors regularly.

While UC has athletes of the highest caliber, the majority of student-athletes will not continue on to a career in professional sports. To help ensure these student-athletes are able to transition to a post-athletic phase of their lives, the working group recommended that Athletic Departments work in conjunction with campus career counselors to provide a comprehensive approach to addressing career education and preparation as they pertain to the unique needs of student-athletes.

Student-athletes are presented with constant, conflicting demands on their time. The challenge of balancing academic demands with athletic travel and training impacts all student-athletes. The working group recommended that, because of the time required for travel and practice schedules, student-athletes shall receive priority registration through the established institutional priority registration process at each campus. (Priority registration currently already exists for certain other student populations.) Additionally, to continue providing a balanced academic and athletic environment for student-athletes, Athletic Departments should remain diligent in complying with the NCAA rule limiting practice for student-athletes to the NCAA maximum (currently 20 hours) per week.

### Student Life

Student-athletes are representatives of the University both on and off campus. Because they are often viewed as campus leaders, student athletes are responsible for conducting themselves appropriately. The working group recommended that Athletic Departments offer a freshman/transfer orientation for student-athletes that communicates the academic and behavioral expectations of student-athletes as campus leaders and highly visible members of the campus community. Additionally, this orientation should inform student-athletes of all available academic and career resources.

Further, Athletic Departments should either provide, or partner with other campus departments to provide, training and counseling services to address systemwide student issues such as sexual assault, campus climate, and mental health.

In addition, the Office of the President will provide annual reports on how the campuses have addressed the guiding principles and the implementation of the proposed policy changes, provided they are approved by the Regents.

### **Key to Acronyms**

NCAA	National Collegiate Athletic Association
------	--

Attachment 1: UC Campuses by NCAA Division and by Conference

Attachment 1: UC Campuses by NCAA Division and by Conference

School	Division	Conference
UC Berkeley	NCAA Division I	Pac-12 Conference
UC Davis	NCAA Division I	Big West Conference, Big Sky Conference, Mountain Pacific Sports Federation
UC Irvine	NCAA Division I	Big West Conference, Mountain Pacific Sports Federation
UCLA	NCAA Division I	Pac-12 Conference
UC Merced	National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA)	California Pacific Conference
UC Riverside	NCAA Division I	Big West Conference
UC San Diego	NCAA Division II, NCAA Division I	Division II: California Collegiate Athletic Association Division I: Mountain Pacific Sports Federation
UC San Francisco	N/A	N/A
UC Santa Barbara	NCAA Division I	Big West Conference
UC Santa Cruz	NCAA Division III	Independent, Golden State Athletic Conference, Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference