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To: Faculty Senate

Re: Annual report on the activities of the Faculty Advisory Committee on Athletics and Physical Education.

Date: June 14, 2011

From: Susan P. Ashdown 

An initiative is underway to review Physical Education requirements and the swim test required for all undergraduate students. Tom Brenna completed a report on these topics, which he is prepared to present to the committee. Due to over commitment on my part and lack of pressing issues, I did not hold a meeting of the FACAPE committee this year.

I plan to investigate and develop a proposal for increasing student knowledge of mental health benefits associated with exercise as part of all physical education classes. I also plan to investigate and propose methods of addressing the safety of our students in water beyond swimming ability by teaching an understanding of the power of water in the situations that our students fall victim to in Ithaca as in the recent tragedy. I will explore these issues and develop proposals, have a preliminary discussion with Andrea Duchter, and then meet with the committee to present these ideas.

As chair, I reviewed all of the travel schedules and leave times for the varsity teams. Travel issues arose with the women's softball team late in the spring semester, due to weather related field conditions which disrupted their original schedule. Anita Brenner and Susan Murphy both were committed to addressing this issue for the future, and partly due to their efforts the Ivy Policy Committee that governs this league made adjustments to scheduling, both for the softball divisional playoff and for makeup games. This adjustment should mitigate, and hopefully prevent, the situation that this team faced this year.

The Petition Review Committee (myself, Tom Brenna, and Jim Maas) reviewed and acted on petitions from students requesting exemption from the PE requirement and the swim test. An alternative requirement has been put in place with two different options for students who are physically unable to complete the swim test, which should simplify the petition process for students.

Challenges to the committee include continued review of support for athletics and physical education to ensure that our students are served in the best and most efficient manner in this time of limited resources. The committee will meet in fall of 2011 for an introduction of new members and discussion of the finalization of the review of physical education classes and the swim test with recommendations.