

To: Faculty Senate

Re: Annual report on the activities of the Faculty Advisory Committee on Athletics and Physical Education (FACAPE)

Date: June 30, 2021

From: Frank S. Rossi, Ph.D., Chair
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The Faculty Advisory Committee on Athletics and Physical Education (FACAPE) remains engaged with the Department of Athletics and Physical Education (A&PE) as a means of continuous review and support of the department's overall alignment with the University's educational objectives.

As was true for the University as a whole, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly and profoundly impacted athletics and physical education operations during the 2020/2021 academic year. With the exception of minimal competition occurring toward the end of the spring semester, no intercollegiate competition was allowed and practice opportunities were extremely restricted by distancing, masking, and group size requirements. Physical education classes were similarly restricted and further hampered by space and instructor limitations. Like all staff and faculty, efforts of FACAPE members and athletics and physical education staff were focused on providing a safe, supportive, effective, and engaging learning environment in ways unlike ever before. It is important to understand this unprecedented context in review of this report.

Summary of meetings and attendees

Given the focus on providing safe and completely reimaged academic operations, the need for faculty and students to adjust to a new academic calendar and teaching and learning modes, the strain on resources to support the overall well-being of the campus community, and athletic competition essentially canceled for the duration of the academic year, once per semester FACAPE meetings did not occur as would normally be scheduled.

Consultation between the department with the Chair and with the Faculty Athletics Representative occurred on an as needed basis. Regular meetings should resume this upcoming academic year as overall operations are expected to return to normal, pre-pandemic status and we look to emerge from crisis mode.

Intercollegiate Athletics

As previously noted, intercollegiate competition did not occur (excepting some rowing and track competitions in early May) and practice and training opportunities were significantly restricted. Given the expected academic and athletic experience on campus, some student-athletes' chose to take all or part of the year off. As believed to be consistent with the undergraduate population as a whole, the impact of the disruption of the typical academic path on future years is as yet unknown as we expect to see an increase in students here beyond their typical 4 years. Approximately 60-70 students are expected to return as 5th years this upcoming year (ie, enrolling in a 5th year since original matriculation) in order to complete degree requirements and compete in their sport. This number usually varies year to year, but normally does not exceed ten. Further, while participation is yet to be confirmed, we expect approximately ten student-athletes to return and participate as graduate students, a limited exception advocated for by the student-athletes themselves and agreed to by the Ivy Presidents for the first time ever given extenuating circumstances. Although it was made clear that this was a one-time exception, there is sentiment and hope that graduate participation could continue to be allowed, if not as a permanent change, at least for those who missed a season of competition due to the pandemic.

Academic performance of student-athletes remains strong. The below chart summarizes overall academic performance of student-athletes in the semester prior to the pandemic, as the pandemic hit, and the first full hybrid semester. Spring 2021 grade data is still being analyzed.

	Fall 2019	Spring 2020*	Fall 2020
GPA 4.0 or greater	100	361	160
GPA 2.0 or lower	36	8	21
Sem GPA (all teams, all years)	3.337	3.756	3.513
Cum GPA (all teams all years)	3.253	3.360	3.413

*Please note: Students with a 0.00 GPA were removed from calculations (students who took all classes S/U). Given changes and flexibility in grading policy, there was a significant increase in students at or above a 4.0 and a significant decrease in those at 2.0 or lower.

Throughout the year, student-athletes remained committed to activism and community service in areas that will continue to be a focus moving forward. This again reflects appropriate engagement and involvement in a higher education environment. Student-athletes organized a Black Lives Matter march on-campus during the fall semester. The event was a student-led and department sponsored effort to take a stand against racial injustice and pledge to better the experiences of black student-athletes. With loss of sport and identity further complicating the general impacts of the pandemic, mental health for student-athletes was also a salient concern. The Cornell Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) partnered with the National Alliance

on Mental Illness (NAMI) for a department-wide Virtual Mental Health Awareness Challenge from May 1-8 as part of Mental Health Awareness Month.

Physical Education

No part of the student experience went untouched by the pandemic, but physical education remained an area where in-person learning opportunities, albeit limited, thrived and provided safe, supervised, consistent opportunity for much needed physical activity for students. The below chart summarizes participation information for Fall 2020 and Spring 2021. In comparison to past years, less than ½ of total classes typically offered were made available to the student population given restrictions relative to contact, shared equipment, distancing (resulting in capacity and space limitations) and transportation.

	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Typical year
Total number of classes offered	221	239	About 500 classes a semester
In-person classes	196	214	All
Virtual classes	25	25	
Students enrolled	2889	3397	11,500 total

- As many in-person classes as possible were offered, but lack of facility space and instructors willing to teach in person limited availability. OUR would agree that PE was a large portion of non-lab classes taught in-person.
- To help meet needs, PE increased the number of courses in areas that could offer in-person instruction while still respecting COVID precautions in effect —examples include yoga, meditation, bowling, tennis, and outdoor bootcamp.
- Due to supervision requirements, increased monitored PE activity could occur in some spaces normally reserved for open recreation. Bowling for example, went from offering 16 sections to 21 and Bootcamp went from two sections to 12. PE could also offer 45-60 minute advanced classes for students in the pool, climbing wall or other facilities not open for general use.
- PE became the activity on campus where students knew they could meet in person and get out of their rooms. It provided a much needed outlet to promote physical, emotional, and mental health.

- A tremendous amount of positive feedback from students was received, and it is anticipated that PE will be in even more demand than prior to the pandemic.

Conclusion

As of date of this report, the University expects to allow all physical education and intercollegiate athletic activity to return in Fall 2021 without restriction. Just as adjustment was needed with the transition into pandemic life, we expect challenges in with the return of full services and experiences. FACAPE remains committed to the review and support of these challenges, and to the celebration of the return of athletic activity as an integral part of campus life and the contributions made to the University's mission. To that end, regular meetings and conversation, including attention to topics that are new or were interrupted (ie, NCAA amateurism and Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) rules, University missed class time and accommodations, etc) are expected to resume with an intended fall semester meeting.

Appendix:**Future meetings and Membership**

Membership for the 21.22 academic year is expected as follows:

Faculty Advisory Committee on Athletics and Physical Education (FACAPE) 3 year term

	Term	Dept	College
Gary Evans	2023	DEA	CHE
Katie Keranen (sabbatical spring '20)	2021	Earth Atmospheric Sciences	COE/CALS
Frank Rossi Chair	2021	Horticulture	CALS
Rosemary Avery	2021	PAM	CHE
Brad Anton	2021	Chem Biomolecular Eng	COE
Dexter Kozen	2021	Computer Science	COE
Andrea Simitch	2022	Arch	AAP
Brad Bell	2022	Human Resources Studies	ILR
Marvin Pritts	2022	Horticulture	CALS

Dean of the Faculty, ex officio (does not attend meetings)

Associate Dean and Secretary of the Faculty, ex officio (does not attend meetings)

Andy Noel, Director of Athletics, attends meetings

Amy Foster, Athletic Specialist, attends meetings

John Sipple, Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR), ex officio, attends meetings

Jen Gudaz, PE representation, ex officio, attends meetings

TBD, University Ivy League Eligibility Officer, ex officio, does not attend meetings

Student positions TBD