

NCAA Recertification Self-Study Public Sessions April 5 and 6, 2007

Summary of Comments and Suggestions *

www.wmich.edu/poapa/NCAACertification/

April 5 public session was called to order at 11:33 A.M. and adjourned at 12:47 P.M.

Attendees: Dennis Corbin (intercollegiate athletics), Carrick Craig (legal affairs and general counsel), George G. Dales (professor emeritus, president of International Track and Field Coaches Association), Paul DeVries (intercollegiate athletics), Eileen Evans, steering committee chair (institutional effectiveness), Keith Hearit (Lee Honors College), Monty Porter (intercollegiate athletics), Richard Pryor (alumnus, former athlete), Jonathan Pugh (institutional effectiveness), Cindee Quake-Rapp (occupational therapy), Cheryl Roland (university relations), Fred Sitkins (industrial and manufacturing engineering), Jeff Stone (intercollegiate athletics)

April 6 public session was called to order at 11:36 A.M. and adjourned at 12:30 P.M.

Attendees: Dennis Corbin (intercollegiate athletics), Thomas E. Coyne (alumnus and retiree), Carrick Craig (legal affairs and general counsel), Paul DeVries (intercollegiate athletics), Eileen Evans, steering committee chair (institutional effectiveness), Keith Hearit (Lee Honors College), Monty Porter (intercollegiate athletics), Jonathan Pugh (institutional effectiveness), Cindee Quake-Rapp (occupational therapy), Jeff Stone (intercollegiate athletics)

Comments:

1. Title IX has been misinterpreted and misapplied. Its purpose was to improve women's sports, but not at the expense of men's programs.
2. Many alumni signed insurances and annuities to the WMU Foundation, which wasn't considered when the University dropped the sports in which those alumni participated.
3. The NCAA's decision to lower the Division I minimum of men's sports to six has been destructive, especially in the Mid-American Conference. If any more of WMU's peer institutions drop track and field, the sport will cease to exist in the MAC.
4. The NCAA demands a large commitment of money and time from its membership. However, the association also has a responsibility to do more *for* intercollegiate athletics.
5. In 2003, budgetary constraints were cited as the reason for dropping academic as well as sporting programs, and yet the University lost more money than it saved.
6. Football's skewing of participation figures means that few universities are able to comply fully in regard to proportionality.
7. Intercollegiate athletics at WMU is well run.
8. Coaches and student-athletes who volunteer and mentor in the community are to be commended.

Suggestions:

1. Public input is important:
 - a. The activities of the NCAA Recertification Self-Study Steering Committee, as well as the public's opportunity to comment, need to be better publicized.

- b. Participation by the general student body, not just alumni, is needed.
 - c. Announcements of public comment periods must also appear in print media, in particular the *Western Herald* and the *Kalamazoo Gazette*.
 - d. Open meetings during the peer-review team's visit should be held at 7 P.M. to encourage community participation.
2. The self-study report should focus on graduation rates.
3. The self-study report should acknowledge the valuable contribution of coaches and student-athletes who volunteer and mentor in the community (and WMU's role in encouraging such activities).
4. The NCAA's role should include support for universities:
 - a. The NCAA (as well as the US Olympic Committee and the Federation) needs to do much more to help universities preserve a wide variety of sports programs.
 - b. The scope of athletic opportunity is sharply diminishing within the NCAA, not just within the MAC. As the association continues to emphasize sports with large fan bases and high economic costs, all-sports awards such as the Reese Trophy and Jacoby Trophy become more and more marginalized.
5. Olympic sports contribute to WMU's recruitment and retention goals:
 - a. Track and field at WMU had a high ratio of African-Americans. It was an effective recruiting tool, especially in regard to diversity.
 - b. Track would bring in a significant number of students who'd stay for four years.
 - c. Coaches are excellent recruiters.
 - d. Track athletes perform well academically.
 - e. As a result of the Kalamazoo Promise, WMU is in a strong position to attract track and field athletes at little cost.

** Text of contributors' comments and suggestions is not verbatim*