

## NCAA Recertification Self-Study Public Sessions Summary Note: February 7, 2007

[www.wmich.edu/poapa/NCAAcertification/](http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/NCAAcertification/)

**Attending:** Carrick Craig (Legal Affairs and General Counsel), Eileen Evans, steering committee chair (Institutional Effectiveness), Keith Hearit (Lee Honors College), Jonathan Pugh (Institutional Effectiveness), Cindee Quake-Rapp (Occupational Therapy), Cheryl Roland (University Relations)

Evans called the back-to-back public sessions to order at noon.

### 1. **Overview** (Evans):

- Today's sessions are to solicit comment on the subcommittees' draft reports and on the NCAA self-study as a whole.
- Two further public comment sessions will take place in middle to late March.
- Evans introduced the subcommittee chairs:
  - The three subcommittees address the NCAA's three areas of focus.
  - Each area of focus has two to three Operating Principles.
- NCAA prescribes the questions the subcommittees must answer, and requires WMU to develop plans for improvement if the self-study identifies deficiencies.

### 2. Comments from **George G. Dales**, professor emeritus, president of International Track and Field Coaches Association\*:

- My main concern is that Title IX's goal of bolstering women's sports is being used as an excuse to drop men's sports, when the reason is actually funding priorities. In truth—and this is happening throughout the conferences—universities are cutting the Olympic sports to save money for football, basketball, etc.
- As we continue to professionalize football and basketball at the intercollegiate level, it's the so-called "amateur" sports that suffer. To date, more than 500 men's sports programs have been dropped (wrestling has been badly affected, for example).
- It's a mad cycle as institutions like WMU try to move up and compete with the big time.
- WMU doesn't earn big bowl money like Notre Dame, etc.
- Football coaches receive bonuses if their teams go to bowls. This becomes a major issue when an institution is suffering budget cuts.
- The so-called revenue-producing sports invariably spend more money than they bring in.
- The NCAA adopted the tier system. Track and field is usually tier two, because it can be a revenue-generator. In fact, track athletes bring in money at little cost (very few scholarships).
- No university is in complete compliance with Title IX, actually—and it's largely because of football. Institutions can't enroll a proportionate/comparative number of women to match a sport that has more than 100 athletes.
- Solving these problems begins with the conference commissioners. I would like to see them meet with the NCAA, the U.S. Olympic Committee, and the Federation.

### **Committee's Questions:**

Q. Your complaint is that the Olympic sports are being marginalized. Is this a recruitment and retention issue?

A. Track would bring in around 50 students and they'd stay for four years. The program would pay for itself, too. Another key point is that the track athletes have always been strong academically.

Q. Do you have a "before and after" picture of Title IX's implementation on this campus?

A. WMU and Kathy Beauregard in particular have done a great job of implementing Title IX and supporting women's sports. Women's track is now competing at a high level.

Q. Which individuals might the equity subcommittee engage for input?

A. Steve Gorsalitz, Russ Gabler, Chris Lampen-Crowell (Gazelle Sports), Tom Coyne, Hal Bates.

3. Comments from **Thomas E. Coyne**, alumnus and retiree\*:

- I think that WMU, like many other institutions, is developing an imbalanced athletics program as it tries to free up money for the “big” sports. The tail is beginning to wag the dog.
- WMU has sacrificed Olympic sports in the name of Title IX, the purpose of which was never to eliminate men’s athletics programs.
- Nationwide, these cuts have also affected wrestling and swimming, and the conferences have acquiesced. The NCAA and the U.S. Olympic Committee should be very concerned about this trend, not least because these are the student-athletes who represent the country in World Cup competitions. The NCAA needs to take measures to protect a variety of athletics programs.
- In terms of intercollegiate athletics, I’m worried that we are creating a generation of fans, not participants. Students who participate in sports receive an education that benefits them for the rest of their lives.
- We need to ask whether the tuition-paying general student population is getting its fair share of WMU’s athletics facilities.
- In regard to the so-called “revenue sports,” people think schools make a lot of money when they go to bowl games, but that’s not the case. It cost WMU a quarter of a million dollars to go to Toronto. By comparison, the Olympic sports are very cost-effective.
- Areas of focus:
  - I think WMU has performed well in terms of rules compliance and academic integrity.
  - The area of equity needs work, however (e.g., non-athlete students’ access to special scheduling).

**Committee’s Questions:**

Q. Your thoughts on how WMU might improve recruitment and retention?

A. Certain sports, such as track and field, work particularly well for recruitment. Track has only a handful of scholarships, too, so most of these students pay tuition.

Q. Your thoughts on the registrar’s involvement in athletics?

A. The registrar needs to be intimately involved, so that games, tournaments, and trips don’t come into conflict with student-athletes’ academic life. The registrar has to stay right on top of that.

Q. Should the role of the registrar’s office be that of consultant or leader?

A. I think the registrar’s office should have more of a leadership role. Our job as a University is to make sure that these athletes get their degrees.

Q. Has WMU always accommodated student-athletes in the area of class scheduling?

A. I believe so, and that’s okay. We just have to make sure that other student groups (fine arts performers, etc.) are accommodated, too. As I say, our job is to ensure that every student is able to complete his or her degree in a timely fashion.

Q. You’ve said that the DIA runs a clean program in terms of rules compliance. Is this something that pervades WMU as a whole?

A. I think we’ve been one of the better universities when it comes to rules compliance.

Q. Your thoughts on the faculty athletics representative’s job description?

A. It’s very important that faculty athletics representatives don’t become part of the program they’re monitoring. I would recommend making the position a term appointment, with the representative having to report back to Faculty Senate.

Q. Other specific recommendations?

A. I think the self-study needs to ask whether WMU is meeting its responsibility to give the general student body equal access to on-campus recreational activities and club sports. The institution as a whole really needs to be concerned with that.

Evans adjourned the public sessions at 1:54 P.M.

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