Report 9-15-10
Approved 9-15-10

Athletic Board
Wednesday, June 16, 2010
Holmes Student Center Room #306, 2:00 p.m.

Present: Terry Bishop (chair), Ken Zehnder, Leanne Vandecreek, Paul Bauer, Todd Latham, Tim Aurand, Jan Rintala, Jeff Compher, Earl Hansen, Steve Sliga, Marcia Dick.

Guests: Dee Abrahamson, Sr. Assoc AD/Internal; Shelley Binegar, Assoc AD/Development and Marketing; Debra Boughton, Assoc. AD/Business Affairs; Robert Collins, Deputy Director of Athletics; Christian Spears, Sr. Assoc AD/Administration.

I. Call to Order – T. Bishop (2:03pm)

II. Approval of April 21, 2010 Meeting Minutes

E. Hansen made a motion to approve the April 21, 2010. Motion was seconded by J. Rintala. Having no additions or corrections, motion was carried unanimously.

III. Faculty Athletics Representative – J. Rintala

A. In the process of hearing about Academic All-MAC recognition for the spring sports. Javier Bernabe, Men’s Tennis and Carly Norton, Softball, were NIU student-athletes receiving such recognition. Baseball and Track are still being voted on.

B. Want to share some of what happened in the faculty rep meetings at the recent MAC Spring meetings. Jeff will share from the administrators’ side.

1. Received updates on new legislation and where they are in the process. Of particular note is an annual limit on NLIs which Football can offer. That number is currently 28.

2. One of the big national issues is that in academic scholarships, student-athletes cannot accept scholarships having nothing to do with athletics because they are countable aid. Now they can accept them without having them count against dollar limits.

3. Another is related to the requirement that athletes be tested for sickle cell trait. Testing must now be done unless an individual signs a form stating that they do not want to be tested. It creates a financial burden to have to run those tests, however. J. Compher added that six to seven student-athletes on our teams have been identified as having the trait. Will be teaching coaches and staff guidelines for working with those student-athletes in their training so they don’t over-exert themselves.

4. There is a requirement from the faculty athletics representatives to review the Men’s Basketball schedule for missed classes prior to each trip. J. Rintala will be doing so but it’s difficult when schedules are already set.

5. Lots of legislation regarding transfers. There are concerns about whether a significant amount of what they are transferring in is really preparatory. Some correspondence courses are being eliminated. Still working on some of the fine points but there must be significant interaction between a faculty member and the student. E. Hansen mentioned that at the IBHE Faculty Advisory Committee meeting a question came up regarding 40-60-80 and earning a degree online. A proposal came forth regarding offering a Bachelor’s of Professional Studies major.
6. Another national issue discussed was the increasing concern with mental and emotional issues of the student-athletes. One of the MAC schools administered a survey about those issues among athletes. It was perhaps more of a needs assessment in order to push for a full- or part-time person with counseling or psychology degree to be housed within Athletics. Seems to target the need for a well-understood process for the athletes to get some help. Student-athletes don’t want to have psychological services housed within the Athletics Department but, interestingly, the place where athletes most wanted it to be was in Athletics so they could access it more easily. We have been given permission to utilize the survey so perhaps our Student-Athlete Wellbeing subcommittee could take this on next year.

7. Within the last week or so, saw an article from USA Today about the degree to which athletics are subsidized by an institution. 27 schools in the FBS receive over half of athletics operational support from the institutions. Seven of those schools are within the MAC.

8. Pushing new legislation regarding progress toward degree. One of the outcomes from the 40-60-80 is that it is difficult to change majors, especially in the seventh semester. Many institutions have been looking at the process. Legislation was being proposed to address that and make it possible for the student to be eligible based on the major they have been in knowing that they are changing majors. Faculty reps are supporting the concept but the way the legislation was written seemed that any course applied to any degree program could be counted toward 40-60-80. There needs to be a way to write it to clearly explain why we would want to do that. Subcommittee of FARs are working on writing that legislation.

9. Has given the coaches’ NCAA certification exam and everyone has passed. Our student-athletes are doing the most recent APR data which was released in late May or early June. No teams are under the 925 score so no penalties will be assessed. None of our teams are even close to that number. The MAC is at or above the national average in the eight identified sports. NIU is above the MAC in all eight of those sports. Jeff added that Football’s APR rate is 10th highest nationally.

IV. Subcommittees

A. Equity/Diversity – T. Bishop
   No report.

B. Budget – P. Bauer
   Will be handled under New Business.

C. Student-Athlete Wellbeing – M. Streb
   No report.

D. External Affairs – T. Latham
   No report.

P. Bauer mentioned that the new budget and Fourth Quarter Report are not ready yet. Because we do not know what the budget is from the State, this information probably will not be presented until the first meeting in the fall.
V. **New Business**

A. **Revised 2010 Football Comp Ticket Policy**
   D. Boughton provided a description of the revisions to the 2010 Football Comp Ticket Policy. These changes should help clean up numbers for the audit.

J. Rintala made a motion to approve the **Revised 2010 Football Comp Ticket Policy**. K. Zehnder seconded the motion. Having no questions or discussion, motion was carried unanimously.

B. **Revised 2010 Football Ticket Prices**
   D. Boughton provided an overview of the revisions to the 2010 Football Ticket Prices. There are occasionally some chairback and benchbacks available for single game sale. Those are included within this revision.

J. Rintala made a motion to approve the **Revised 2010 Football Ticket Prices**. E. Hansen seconded the motion. Having no questions or discussion, motion was carried unanimously.

C. **FY11 Volleyball, Wrestling and Gymnastics Ticket Prices**
   D. Boughton reported there are no changes to these prices from the 2009 prices. Last year the Watch Dog pass was added for regular season volleyball, men’s basketball, women’s basketball, wrestling or gymnastics events and it will be offered again this year.

P. Bauer made a motion to approve the **FY11 Volleyball, Wrestling and Gymnastics Ticket Prices**. K. Zehnder seconded the motion. Having no questions or discussion, motion was carried unanimously.

D. **Title IX Seminar – D. Abrahamson**
   Attended two seminars recently – one held by the Office for Civil Rights and the other by the NCAA Gender Equity committee. Will have some impact for us because we have said we meet Title IX based on the third prong (interests and abilities of the underrepresented gender). This will change how we do business and in September, we need to look at meeting the new standards and have a discussion about that. It expands the survey considerably and we need data for the targets. Female intramural teams will be included as well. The frequency of the survey will also change as will the addition of a financial aid piece. Athletics grants-in-aid need to be within 1% of the male and female student population and we are not close but she does not think we are the only school in that situation. Solutions for that will have to be identified as well. The Obama administration is more interested in discussion and investigation so we will need to focus on this. Institutions that use prong 3 to meet Title IX would have to administer the survey. More information will be forthcoming and we will be expected to comply. J. Rintala asked if there was any discussion of surveying high schools in the service region. D. Abrahamson responded that there was. T. Bishop pointed out that we will need to identify a new chair for the Equity/Diversity subcommittee in the fall. P. Bauer asked how this is monitored or what is our responsibility to report? D. Abrahamson responded that the old standard was administering a survey every five
years but the new interpretation is a big more vague based on the kind of results an institution received. For those who got low results, five years might be too long. T. Bishop said if there are challenges or complaints would probably be a factor. D. Abrahamson said NIU still has one unresolved issue. OCR changes its expectations periodically which makes it a bit frustrating trying to figure out what we need to do to demonstrate compliance.

E. Athletics Update – J. Compher
1. MAC Meetings
   The ADs discussed Football scheduling parameters – further into the future, the conference will allow us to schedule and hold dates for Homecoming and other things. If a school schedules a non-conference game outside the first five weeks of the season, the guarantee on dates from the MAC is no longer valid. It is very difficult to schedule but there are still some opportunities schools may want to take. In general, our non-conference schools are scheduled in the first five weeks but we do have a game in 2013 that will be outside that timeframe. If schools want to schedule a I-AA school, it cannot be a road game for them. It can only be a home game.

   Received a very good update from Dr. Laing Kennedy (AD at Kent State University who will be retiring at the end of June) regarding the Men’s Basketball tournament expansion. It went to 68 teams rather than 96. CBS and TBS are working together to hold the rights to the tournament. Trying to stay away from a play-in game concept. It is yet to be decided as to what is happening with the NIT which is owned by the NCAA.

   Discussion also held about conference television. We are trying to build MAC TV which would guarantee a certain number of exposures per team per year but still working that out. There are several independent stations that we are trying to get to agree to do some of those games but it does take money to do that. There is currently money to buy time on Fox-Ohio but that agreement concludes after this year.

   There is ongoing discussion of an intra-conference transfer rule for student-athletes. The idea is to not allow intra-conference transfers. There would be additional restrictions based on agreement within the MAC membership. The conference is working on this rule and there may be something to review at the meetings coming up at the end of July. J. Rintala mentioned that the faculty representatives discussed the proposal as well but they do not like such a rule. The faculty don’t feel it is fair to hold students at an institution but they do understand the intent. J. Compher said NIU Athletics is putting such a rule into place for our student-athletes this fall that we will not release them to another conference school. It will be included in the student-athlete handbook. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, which would be taken into account, in general, they will not be released to another conference school.

   Regarding the Basketball tournament, voted in favor of continuing the eight men's/eight women's format to go to Cleveland. First round would be played on the higher-seeded team's home court. Heard this was also approved by the presidents. This would be pending negotiations with Quicken Loans Arena in Cleveland.

   Some discussion is ongoing about conference realignment. This is the last year that Temple will be a Football-only member in the MAC so we are watching what will happen there. The MAC
presidents have met and action is forthcoming regarding this issue but there is nothing to share yet. Lots of interesting activity nationally so we will continue to watch that. The Big 12 loses the football championship at the end of the year because they now have ten schools but it shows what it means to have football and TV together. For us, had it come down to four mega-conferences it might have affected scheduling but, right now, there is little to no effect.

2. Recently have done some reorganization within the department. With R. Collins’ upcoming departure, have four people on the executive team in attendance today, all of whom have sport responsibilities. Will ask J. Mickey to pass along the new organization chart.

VI. Announcements/Adjournment
A. As mentioned, R. Collins’ retirement party is coming up on Thursday, June 24, from 4pm to 7pm at the Yordon Center.
B. Thanks to everyone for your service on the Athletic Board this year.

J. Rintala made a motion to adjourn the meeting. K. Zehnder seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 2:55pm.