Athletic Board  
Wednesday, October 20, 2010  
Holmes Student Center Room #406, 1pm

**Present:** Terry Bishop (Chair), TJ Lusher, Paul Bauer, Todd Latham, Don Tidrick, Jan Rintala, Jeff Compher, Earl Hansen, David Taylor, Steve Sliga, Matt Streb, Meaghan Bennett, Joshua Venaas.

**Guests:** Dee Abrahamson, Sr. Assoc AD/Internal; Shelley Binegar, Assoc AD/Development and Marketing; Debra Boughton, Assoc AD/Business Affairs; Christian Spears, Sr. Assoc AD/Administration.

I. **Call to Order – T. Bishop (1:05pm)**

II. **Approval of September 15, 2010 Meeting Minutes**

J. Rintala made a motion to approve the September 15, 2010, minutes as presented.
T. Lusher seconded the motion.

Having no corrections, additions or deletions, the motion was carried unanimously.

III. **Introduction of New Athletics Department Staff Member**

A. Mark Muhlhauser, Assoc AD/Major Gifts Officer for Athletics

J. Compher began by stating that Mark is a new member of Athletics’ executive team. He comes to NIU from Penn State University where he was a major gifts officer for the last three years. Before that, he was at the University of Washington where he and Jeff spent a short time together. Mark is a graduate of Ohio University, as are several other members of the Athletics Department staff. His wife and two sons are now here in DeKalb.

Mark said he is in the midst of the Football season and also very quickly getting up-to-speed. He is very excited to be here and work with Jeff and his staff. His is a joint appointment with John Bass in the Foundation and also Jeff Compher in Athletics. He is part of the central development team and has lots of contact with people for the purpose of moving them forward in the giving process.

J. Compher stated that when Tim McMurray was here, he had additional sport responsibilities but Mark is focusing more on major gifts.

IV. **Faculty Athletics Representative – J. Rintala**

A. Have successfully completed an audit of the academic information for Athletics.
B. Was planning to report the GSR score today but the NCAA is holding that release for now. When it is available, that information will be shared with this group.
C. Athletics has been through the first round of grade checks. There was an approximate 50% response rate which helps SAASS (Student-Athlete Academic Support Services) in their work with the student-athletes.
D. Just recently attended the Division IA Faculty Athletics Representatives meeting in Dallas where there were several major topics of conversation.
1. Best practices discussion of how to provide necessary information to the President. J. Rintala feels very fortunate to have President Peters leading NIU. He is very aware of major collegiate athletics. Other faculty athletics representatives are not as fortunate. In light of several major infractions around the country, there was also discussion relative to the importance of faculty athletics representatives and compliance staffs sitting down staffs to discuss measures in place to be sure such violations do not occur at their respective institutions. J. Rintala is confident such discussions already take place here. As the faculty athletics representative, the role is important and the need to reinforce that is also important.

2. Discussed the changing roles of the faculty athletics representatives on campuses and also within the NCAA. The new conference structures take decisions out of the institutions and places them at the conference level. The influence at the NCAA level is certainly less. J. Rintala is now on several committees with a more academic focus.

3. Moved into discussion of agents and advisors and how to work with the student-athletes for whom professional sports is an opportunity. Question within the presentation arose as to where student-athletes can get neutral advice on that. J. Rintala and C. Spears have discussed a bit about getting a more formal committee together to work with athletes who may have some potential. Also had a presentation from the chancellor at Nebraska talking about the commercialization of sports. All of the concern is about money and financing of athletics and the inability to support Athletics without it. He also talked about cost cutting and the arms’ race in athletics facilities. The question of value-based decision making was also discussed. When making decisions, are the student-athletes considered first and can our decisions be justified on that basis? J. Rintala offered, for those interested, to share the presentations.

4. There was very interesting research presented on concussions. This topic has received lots of press over the last couple of weeks nationally.

5. Discussion has taken place at the NCAA level regarding corporate sponsorships. Some of the corporate sponsors are selling products which contain banned substances so the faculty athletics representatives are asking the individuals negotiating those sponsorships to consider the mixed messages.

6. There is continuing discussion on intra-conference transfers and tightening that up some more. Discussion regarding financial aid and exempting need-based aid state aid from counting on teams’ maximum numbers. That would be important for the equivalency sports.

V. Committees

A. Equity-Diversity – D. Tidrick
   T. Bishop stated that the subcommittee lists will be shared by mid-week next week so committees can begin to meet.

B. Budget – P. Bauer
   No report.

C. Student-Athlete Wellbeing – M. Streb
   No report but C. Spears reported that though the university does not have an official policy on missed classes, Dave Chagnon is working on one relative to students who are representing the institution in sponsored activities and outlining accommodations by faculty
members for those students. We are in the process of collecting policies from other MAC and Illinois public institutions and will forward them to D. Chagnon.

D. External Relations – T. Latham
No report.

VI. New Business

A. Faculty Senate Presentation – J. Compher

Jeff began the presentation by stating that each NCAA member institution is required, each year, to provide two different revenue and expense reports. The EADA (Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act) report comes through the Office for Civil Rights and the other report is the NCAA’s financial report. There are very defined ways to track expenses and revenues. As those reports come out, they are made public. The Faculty Senate at Ohio University saw those reports and the large amount of direct university support for the athletics program on its campus. A letter from them went out to every faculty senate in the country suggesting they look into their own athletics program funding. J. Rintala was at the Faculty Senate meeting at which the letter was received and our Faculty Senate chair asked J. Compher to meet with the group to discuss NIU Athletics’ funding information. It was a good opportunity to talk to them about some of the good things happening in the department and with the student-athletes.

E. Hansen said J. Rintala has done a very good job in presenting information to Faculty Senate. The presentation J. Compher did was outstanding. T. Bishop echoed the sentiment that the transparency is important and very much appreciated. The Faculty Senate was pleased to learn that the student services available to the student-athletes are the same as those available to all students. D. Boughton provided additional information which J. Mickey will forward to the Athletic Board members.

J. Rintala said that Jeff may not be completely finished with the process. The Resource, Space and Budget committee has e-mailed her stating they are going to be meeting soon at which point they would be looking into more information. T. Latham stated he was at the committee meeting and there are no further requests for information from J. Compher.

T. Latham added that at the Resource, Space and Budget committee meeting it was acknowledged that Athletics attracts students to the institution but one question was how much money from donors does Athletics attract. E. Hansen said alumni do come back to the university and serve on departmental committees but it would be interesting to see where people donate their time as well as their money. J. Compher feels that figure might be difficult to pull together because people come back for Athletics events but only give back to their college. T. Bishop said another question is whether donors to the Athletics Department come back to athletics events. J. Compher responded that development officers often find ways to reconnect alums with the institution such as speaking to classes, attending athletics events, etc.
VII. Announcements

A. MAC has passed an intra-conference transfer policy this week. It will go into effect next academic year. The national letters of intent that will be going out shortly have included the clause indicating if student-athletes transfer to another conference institution, they will receive no athletically-related aid, they will have to sit out one year, and they cannot participate in their sport. The MAC is one of two conferences nationally that did not have such a policy. There is a waiver option included in the policy, as well.

B. Our Women’s Soccer team has an important match this coming Friday at 2pm and then Sunday at 1pm.

C. The Athletics Department is beginning some very preliminary bowl discussions. The bowls affiliated with the MAC are the GMAC Bowl, which is now the GoDaddy.com Bowl, the Little Caesar’s Pizza Bowl and the uDrove Humanitarian Bowl. There is also the Dallas Football Classic and the Birmingham Bowl.

VIII. Adjournment

T. Latham made a motion to adjourn the meeting. P. Bauer seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 2:10pm.

The next meeting of the Athletic Board is Wednesday, November 17, 2010, at 1pm in Holmes Student Center room #406. The executive committee will meet on Wednesday, November 3, 2010, at 1:30pm in the Athletics Administration Conference Room in Convocation Center #200.