UPDATE: Given the extension until November 28, 2011, please strive to submit committee responses as normal. PREVIOUS: Chancellor Katehi enlisted the assistance of a consultant to develop the UC Davis Athletics Strategic Audit 2011 (also known as the Dempsey Report). The report is intended to guide campus review of the issues surrounding athletics at UC Davis. Each committee is asked to post the report on its whiteboard and solicit feedback from individual committee members. Committees are not being asked to compile individual responses into a formal committee response given the short turn around allocated for review. However, please gather feedback through the use of the whiteboard comments feature to enable Senate Office staff to gather comments quickly for Divisional Chair Bisson's review as she prepares to represent the Davis Division's perspective on the issues addressed.
Academic Freedom & Responsibility

November 5, 2011 1:16 PM

No response at this time.
Dear Professor Bisson,

The L&S Executive Committee has reviewed the UC Davis Athletics Strategic Audit 2011 report and various associated materials. The committee strongly suggests that the Athletics Administrative Advisory Committee (AAAC), as well as the Task Force to be established by the Davis Division of the Academic Senate to review campus athletics, consider and respond to some obvious questions that arise regarding the transformation of UCD's athletic program in light of the Knight Commission Report on intercollegiate athletics (http://www.knightcommission.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=491&Itemid=167).

In particular, the Knight Commission seems to put to rest the idea that the kind of program apparently envisioned in the Athletics Strategic Audit necessarily would be financially beneficial to the University. As one Executive Committee member aptly put it: "I can understand compromising our principles to make money, but why are we proposing to compromise our principles to lose money?"

Some additional comments by the committee include:

- Whatever is proposed must be demonstrably financially sound. For example, it appears that the present intercollegiate athletics budget is dependent to a considerable degree on funds from a voluntary student levy initiated at the time of the initial move from Division II to Division I. Would even the current, modest (in the eyes of the Audit’s authors) athletics program be viable in the event that students rescinded that fee during these financially difficult times? The business plan for any new model should anticipate such possibilities and should be available for review.

- The Athletics Strategic Audit adopts a business model. Any business model should attempt to assess market demand. Financially successful collegiate athletic programs (of which there are few) typically have a strong fan base within the community to support ticket and merchandise sales. The extent to which the local community is supportive of the expansion of the UCD athletics program is unclear. Davis, and even Sacramento, do not represent significant markets for sports, and certainly not at the level required to underwrite increased investment.

- If there is a genuine problem with the athletics program as it stands, then all solutions, even apparently extreme ones, should be on the table. These might include:
  1. Canceling high-cost teams (like the football team); this could help both with the budget and with Title IX compliance.
  2. Moving back to Division II.

- We recommend that all faculty vote on any substantial changes in the current athletics program.

- We reaffirm our support for the eight core principles, even those that have already been violated. We place particular emphasis on principle number 8: "The athletics department at UC Davis must maintain a formal connection to the mission of the university, including preserving the current teacher/coach role."

- The Academic Senate should consider requiring that the number of student-athletes admitted "by exception" remain at its current level (less than about 10 per year). Admission of students is within the purview of the faculty and such a requirement would ensure that UCD retains its "student-athlete" model.

The move to Division I was overwhelmingly opposed by the faculty at UCD; the administration proceeded in the teeth of that opposition. No further steps down the path to sports stardom should be taken without faculty approval.

Sincerely,

Abigail Thompson, Chair
Executive Committee
College of Letters and Science
Admissions & Enrollment

January 18, 2012 10:44 AM

Input from the A&E Committee regarding the ICA Review

The A&E committee is not opposed to a new model for UC Davis' move into Division I, but we believe that it should both retain UC Davis' principles regarding athletics and academics (the so called "Davis Way") and pursue top-tier Division I success. We believe that the way in which the latter option is discussed in the report calls into question the value of that kind of success. That is, as Cedric Dempsey, former president of the NCAA, puts it, "the Division I top-tier level moved away from the 'educational model' of athletics toward the 'business model,'" and UCD must follow suit if it is to pursue success at the Division I level. Though his report breaks Division I success into three tiers, the report suggests that competing at any of these levels will require a break from UCD's past commitment to what Dempsey calls "noble amateurism" in favor of a more "contemporary model." He details these changes in the summary of his report.

We are concerned with the philosophy expressed by both Cedric Dempsey and Chancellor Katehi (in her "Charge Letter"). Namely, that the pursuit of Division I success is central to the university's future. We understand why creating a national brand would really help raise revenue on its own and increase out-of-state applications to create more out of state student fees. But, according to the report, this goal must be achieved by creating a second set of conditions for athletic programs and athletes. This is the business model (both explicitly in the sense that athletics at the university become "self-sufficient" and implicitly, in that it calls for a reduction in the amount of student-athletes for the sake of better funding their sports), and it undermines the idea of the university that is expressed in its eight core principles.

The question that should be asked is not how we can shift our principles to fit a model of competitiveness but how we can develop a better model. Although we don't know what that new model might be at this point we believe that this should be the focus of discussion, rather than accepting the idea that the eight principles originally outlined and adopted during our transition to Division I do not align with a successful Division I Athletics program in today’s environment. Indeed, Cedric Dempsey writes in his report that the majority of these principles “represent an impediment to increased competitiveness in Division I,” and recommends among other things that UC Davis “evaluate and adjust the eight principles to more closely coincide with NCAA Division I’ philosophies and practices.” This appears to be a cynical approach to the issue, and one that relies on ignoring the ethical problems of using the "business model" in the first place. Those ethical problems--the incredibly slippery slope towards corruption, the exploitation of unpaid athletes as a significant revenue stream, the culture of exceptionalism it creates around student-athletes, to name a few--are bigger than our current discussion but should always be in our view when thinking about how to contribute to this process.

Finally, we agree with John Owens' concerns and recommend that any hire should be one with experience at an institution that has maintained selective admissions, who can promote and implement at UC Davis the best practices proven effective at other Division I institutions that enroll academically competitive student athletes.
Affirmative Action & Diversity

November 9, 2011 9:41 AM

No response at this time.
CERJ has reviewed the 2011 UC Davis Athletics Strategic Audit. It has a serious concern about the practice of “Admit-by-Exception” (ABE) for student-athletes who do not meet the UC admissions requirement. Standing Order of the Regents 105.2 (Duties, Powers, and Privileges of the Academic Senate), Section (a) states the following: “The Academic Senate, subject to the approval of the Board, shall determine the conditions for admission, for certificates, and for degrees other than honorary degrees.” Therefore, the Senate, rather than the administration, has been given by the Regents authority over undergraduate admissions. All policy regarding ABEs is subject to Academic Senate approval. CERJ suggests that to avoid any infringement upon its admission authority, the Senate Committee on Admissions and Enrollment mandate that all Admit-by-Exception requests be reviewed and approved by the committee. It might be argued that the charge of the Admissions and Enrollment Committee in Bylaw 50(B) does not support the kind of authority CERJ is attributing to the committee. It states: “The duties of the committee shall be to consider matters involving admission and enrollment at Davis.” CERJ recommends that the committee consider revising its Bylaw to assert directly what authority the committee has over the admissions process.
Response continued on next page.
Submitted on behalf of the 2011-12 Faculty Welfare Committee Chair Stuart Hill.

The Faculty Welfare Committee was given the option of responding to the UC Davis Athletics Strategic Audit, but a response was not formally requested. Because a minority of our members felt very strongly about this issue we have chosen to submit a brief response.

The Audit identifies new sports options that would generate troubling changes for UC, Davis. Students at Davis currently participate in many different sports at varying levels of skill and commitment. This broad, inclusive approach has served Davis well over the years. As the visibility and stature of UCD has risen, the pressure to change our athletic program has grown resulting in the recent move of the campus to Division I. Because Davis no longer dominates in this new, more competitive environment it is not surprising that proponents of building a high profile sports program at Davis support the more demanding options in the strategic Audit.

If Davis is to be competitive among the top-ranked teams in its current conference or to move to the far more challenging PAC-12, it must change, according to the Audit, to the business model for its sports' programs. New resources must be invested to fund full scholarships and build facilities commensurate with a more visible sports program. The large resource demands of this commitment in a time of scarcity would inevitably cause Davis to reduce substantially the current number of sports it supports and the breadth of student participation across the campus. It would also likely direct resources away from academic interests at a time when we are facing the elimination of academic majors and programs of study and unprecedented rate increases in student tuition and fees. The members of our committee who backed weighing in on the strategic audit strongly believe that this move would not be in the best interests of the campus.
Information Technology

November 21, 2011 1:45 PM

No response at this time.
Planning & Budget

January 17, 2012 12:08 PM

CPB has reviewed the UC Davis Strategic Audit 2011. We recommend:

1) As a starting point for an evaluation, a complete and transparent accounting of the current budget for athletics must be made available to the Senate task force and to CPB.

2) CPB unanimously feels that the campus should not subsidize intercollegiate athletics. CPB would be willing to consider whether the teacher-coach system is in the interest of the campus.

3) Since student fees represent a significant portion of the support for the athletics program, the students must be consulted. We understand that there are budget constraints, there is only a choice between possible changes, and that 'nothing changes' cannot be an option. Within these practical constraints, we recommend that any significant changes to the athletic program be voted on by the students. CPB also unanimously recommends that any future student votes for taxing student fees for athletic program support require that the funding increases be immediate, that is, affect the students voting, not be taxes on future generations of students only.

Updated CPB Response based on additional information received 1/6/2012

CPB has reviewed the available budget information for the athletics program. It is clear from this information that the current program is neither affordable nor sustainable. The increasing amount of student aid mandated by the NCAA, due to the recent sharp increases in tuition, far outstrips any source of income. CPB strongly feels that general funds should not support the athletics program. The campus cannot afford the program now, and clearly cannot afford the increasing costs shown in the projected budget. CPB feels that a more 'non-professional' program that allows access to most students should be the goal, even if this requires the dismantling of, for example, the football team. However, since student fees are the main support for the program, the students should be allowed to make such decisions within the budget constraints. Such votes should not be allowed to increase fees on future classes and not on current students.
Response continued on next page.
The Committee on Research discussed the UC Davis Athletics Strategic Audit report. The report presents an absolutely damning indictment of many financial costs and negative cultural changes that would be required for UCD to be competitive in Division I. Historically, UC Davis has provided a great example of the positive aspects of the scholar athlete. COR agrees that it would be a shame to give up this model in order to boost the profile of Football and men’s basketball at the expense of the other sports. UCD should attempt to maintain a competitive athletic program that benefits the greatest number of students. Not only does this “revenue center” approach contradict the purposes of a research university, but the emphasis on “income” and “recognition” producing sports actually limits the student participation in intercollegiate sports, because it eliminates less popular teams. In addition, the recommendations on page 6 and 7 appear to initiate a plan for a move away from the “educational” to the “business” model of student athletics in which educational standards and investment in intramural athletics are relaxed in order to increase success in Division I basketball and football. COR does not agree with these recommendations as they move UC Davis away from its mission as a teaching and research institution. From the perspective of many disciplines, the impact of students’ current sports commitments is already significant, and the campus should be cautious about this situation worsening. In conclusion, UC Davis has so much more to offer than a winning football and basketball team and increasing the resources spent on Division I football is not worth the sacrifice.

Finally, COR has the following research policy concerns regarding the UC Davis Athletics Strategic Audit report:

- The report did not indicate where the additional funding would come from. Would indirect cost return from federal and state grants be used?
- What guarantees are in place that this will not affect research facilities, graduate students, or infrastructure funds?
- Will general funding for research facilities be used for the new football stadium?
- Is there evidence that more students will come to UCD if the campus increases funding on Division I football?
Undergraduate Council

December 6, 2011 8:55 AM

In response to the Athletics Strategic Audit the Undergraduate Council of the Academic Senate strongly supports and re-affirms the first two core principles that have guided the development of athletics at UC Davis:

1. UC Davis must offer a program that does not compromise the University’s focus on the academic integrity of student-athletes.

2. Admissions and graduation standards must in no way be specially altered or amended for student-athletes.