Motion: To approve the philosophy statement on intercollegiate athletics for UWM recommended by the UWM Athletic Board.

Rationale: The philosophy statement arose from a need identified by the Athletic Board during its analysis of the move from the NCAA Division III to Division II. The statement will serve as a guide to the Athletic Board in developing policies and procedures for the Athletic Department.

Athletic Board
Kathleen Cowles
Verne Cutler
Susan Fields
Scott Gray, ex-officio
Cynthia Hasbrook
Paul Haubrich
Daryl Leonard, ex-officio
David Mulroy, Chair
Robert Probst
Walter Trattner
Carmen Witt, ex-officio
Students: William Anderson
Karen Lehman
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Statement of Philosophy of Intercollegiate Athletics
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Preamble

"Athletics as education can be understood as a set of key contributions to the individual, to the institution, and to society at large. Among these contributions are the development of discipline, teamwork, and the self-confidence of individuals who participate in athletics; the improvement and sustenance of institutional reputations and morale, and the heightening of visibility that demonstrably aids in recruitment of students and financial contributions. Varsity athletics provide a stimulus to the development of broad based physical education and intramural athletic programs that contribute to the physical well-being of students. College athletics also have a public service role in satisfying the need or desire for spectator sports expressed by the general public in the stadiums and gymnasiums of colleges and universities across the nation. Recent studies of the sociological, psychological, and cultural role of sports make clear its importance to our society" (1).

OVERVIEW

Intercollegiate athletics at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee was conceived and developed with the conviction that, when appropriately administered, intercollegiate sports competition provides intellectual, physical and social harmony for the students, faculty, staff, and the Milwaukee community. Intercollegiate athletics seeks to complement and enhance the instructional, research, and service activities of the University and shall therefore operate within the framework of the overall goals and objectives of the University without compromise.

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's primary objective is to provide a challenging educational experience for both participants and spectators. In keeping with the stated mission of the University, the Athletic Department seeks to maintain a sports program of high quality, designed to meet the needs and interests of urban populations. As with all departments, the Athletic Department is committed to seek national stature in the excellence of its program.
Further, the Department seeks to enhance the personal growth and development of participants and spectators by offering them the opportunity to physically, emotionally and intellectually participate in the activities offered by the Department. The Athletic Department views itself as an integral and legitimate part of the University, and as such, allows no program within the department to jeopardize the academic mission or the reputation of the University, or to interfere with the academic goals of its student-athletes.

PURPOSE

Fundamentally, the athletic program provides highly skilled student-athletes with an opportunity to participate in sports and allows them to evaluate their performance in a highly competitive environment. Concurrently, however, the program also serves as an extension of the general education process. The understanding of and commitment to, democratic ideals, self-control, perseverance, integrity, and fair play helps students achieve balance between formal education and the athletic program and thus prepares the individual for societal participation.

The following are fundamental to the value and mission of the Department of Athletics at UW-Milwaukee: (1) participation, (2) accomplishment, (3) responsibility, (4) enjoyment. The Department acknowledges its responsibility to ensure that these component values exist in each sport program.

PARTICIPATION

Any and all students attending the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee are encouraged to take part in the sports programs commensurate with their level of athletic ability. Students choosing to participate, and willing to expend the time and energy necessary, should reasonably expect the University and the Athletic Department to provide them with equal and appropriate participation opportunities.

The University provides a diverse and highly competitive, well-organized, well-coached program in both, women's and men's intercollegiate sports. Club, intramural and recreational activities are available to those students seeking a less competitive sport activity. Thus the benefits of participation are readily available to all UWM students seeking such experiences. Such benefits include: the opportunity to appreciate and enjoy competition as a form of physical, emotional, and sociological expression; the opportunity to develop physiological and psychological fitness levels commensurate with their innate abilities; the opportunity to mature and grow in their ability to cooperate, as a team member and as an individual to achieve set goals; the opportunity to learn self-control and self-discipline while working in a structured, group situation; and the opportunity to foster and put into practice values such as leadership, self-discipline, teamwork, and the ability to deal equally well with winning and losing.
RESPONSIBILITY

The student-athlete and the Athletic Department commit themselves to a mutual responsibility—each being a significant partner in the potential success of the other. The Department’s responsibilities reside in the overall welfare of the individual student-athlete through the provision of those elements mentioned elsewhere, that are necessary to provide the student-athlete with every possible opportunity to mature in their athletic and total human development.

The student-athlete's responsibilities center around the commitment to, both (1) develop their intellectual and athletic skills; and (2) utilize to the best of their ability the opportunities provided by the athletic department and the University. These responsibilities include dedication, hardwork, and discipline.

The Athletic Department is responsible for the provision of competitive opportunity; the student-athlete assumes responsibility for the use of these opportunities.

ACCOMPLISHMENT

Accomplishment implies achievement and improvement and is further defined as an important goal of the university, through the educational experience and program participation. It is important that the student-athlete both understand this goal and be provided with any and all means necessary to allow for its fulfillment. As such, it is inherently understood that all student-athletes will be provided with opportunities in such areas as: competition, coaching, and participation experiences. Further, each student-athlete will be provided with opportunity for accurate and appropriate assessment of their progress as individual athletes.

The Athletic Department will make every effort to challenge, support and sustain the personal achievement goals of each student-athlete. Care will be taken to ensure that goals are reasonably set, with consideration given to the student-athlete's academic commitments. The department will strive to balance such factors as length of season, practice schedules, length of practices, number of contests etc., with the academic demands placed on the student-athlete. The departmental philosophy affirms that the student-athlete be considered a student first and foremost.

In keeping with this awareness, each student-athlete will be expected to achieve, and be mutually responsible for, their individual degree completion. As such, all student-athletes are to be familiar with governance rules concerning "normal-progress" and expected to complete their degree within a 5-year period.
It is probable that the student-athlete will initially develop expertise in their chosen sport area through participation for enjoyment. The athletic department philosophy is one that participants' enjoyment grows as the student reaches greater levels of achievement and develops more as a mature person. Although the caliber of competition is admittedly high, the competitive experience should be integrated into the student-athletes' total lives to provide a sense of wholeness and well-being.

In conclusion, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee re-affirms its commitment to the philosophy, ideals and goals expressed within this document. As the Preamble states: "Athletics as education can be understood as a set of key contributions to the individual, to the institution, and to society at large." The athletic department dedicates itself to attaining these "key contributions".

(1) From: A Policy Statement of the Interassociation President's Committee on College Athletics; June 1984