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Memo to: Professor George Exner  
Chair of CoI

From: Gary Sojka  
Chair of Committee on Athletics

Subject: Committee on Athletics Response to the "Marsh Motion"

Enclosed you will find the report of the Committee on Athletics (CoAt) response to the Marsh Motion that was remanded to us last year. Deliberations related to that motion and development of the report has occupied the CoAt for most of this year. It should be noted that as a result of having to deal with the "Marsh Motion" the CoAt has been dealing with essentially the same subject for three years and the university has had committees at work on this issue on and off since 1984.

The attached appendices are a collection of a significant number of documents related to the issues raised by the "Marsh Motion". If nothing else, our efforts this year have brought all these documents into one place for the first time.

The submission of this response was delayed yet one more week as a result of your pending motion concerning the "four o'clock rule". Since the attached report deals in part with some of the substance of your motion we had to spend parts of two meetings and exchange a number of electronic messages to decide whether or not we should amend our response in an effort to incorporate a response to your pending motion. In the end, the CoAt felt that it would make most sense to send you our response, which was essentially completed before your motion appeared on the agenda for the faculty meeting. Thus, we would not be complicating the matter still further by responding to a motion that might yet be withdrawn, modified or defeated.

With regard to your motion, you should know that we have begun a search of the University Archives to see if we can find any evidence of a document or documents that establish a fixed time for the scheduling of practices and skill sessions in athletics. It could be that we are not dealing with a genuine policy, but rather a kind of "folk lore" that has developed over the years. If there is a policy, then it is possible that much of your motion would be redundant to that policy. If there is no official policy, the CoAt feels that it might be useful to have the essence of your proposal debated in a faculty meeting, though the membership of the CoAt is not at all certain that the faculty, through its governance system, has complete authority over this issue. The related issues in the "Marsh Motion" and your pending motion underscore what the CoAt feels is essential to this complex discussion, that being a clear statement from the central administration or the Board of Trustees concerning the Bucknell's commitment to Division I athletic

competition and what that means to the culture of the university. Absent that statement, it is not clear that we will ever stop what appears to be an almost endless need to respond to individual faculty concerns about the particulars of the role of intercollegiate athletics at Bucknell.

George, please know that the response that is attached is the work of the entire committee and that the members of the committee have "signed off" on the text. That is not the case with this covering memo. The CoAt asked me to append a memo of this type covering the items that I have covered, but they have not seen or approved this memo. I hope I have accurately conveyed the sense of their deliberations. Should you wish to discuss with me the response to the "Marsh Motion" or the CoAt's comments related to your pending motion I would be pleased to talk with you about them.

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## Response to Marsh Motion

In academic year 2001-2002, Professor Ben Marsh introduced a motion relating to the management of conflicts that arise as a result of students missing classes in order to attend athletic contests or practices. After some informal discussion Professor Marsh remanded the motion to the Committee on Athletics (CoA) for further study with the understanding that the Committee on Athletics would issue a report of its findings, deliberations and recommendations. The CoA was pleased to accept that assignment and spent several months researching the documentation related to the situation, gathering anecdotal material relating to missed classes as a result of athletics activities, interviewing student athletes, coaches, faculty members and academic administrators. This report emanates from the information gathered in those activities and the ensuing discussions within the Committee.

**Introduction:** Bucknell has long been proud of the academic achievement of its student athletes. The university has been in recent times among the national elites with regard to graduation rates of athletes, academic All Americans and athletic conference outstanding scholar athletes. Yet, for many years there has been a concern expressed by some members of the faculty that our student athletes are missing too much class time in order to attend athletic contests and practices. This matter received formal faculty attention in the early 1990's in the form of a policy aimed at resolving conflicts that might arise between regularly scheduled classes and extra-curricular or co-curricular activities. Though that policy remains in effect, there has been a growing perception among some members of the faculty that the situation is becoming worse in that more students are missing more class time as a result of scheduling conflicts. At the same time there seems to be a growing perception among some student athletes and their parents that the university is not adequately supporting the interests of our student athletes who, rightly or wrongly, gained the impression during the admission process that Bucknell is a place where a talented and serious student can "do it all", that is excel both academically and athletically. It is to this situation of competing perceptions that the Committee's report is addressed.

**History:** As mentioned above, the faculty adopted, in March of 1984, a policy aimed at resolving scheduling conflicts. That policy (see appendix A) which is still in effect, deals with all activities that conflict with regularly scheduled classes, not simply athletics. The policy states clearly and emphatically that students are expected to attend regularly scheduled classes and that said classes must be given priority over other activities when resolving scheduling conflicts. The adoption of the policy in 1994 did not eliminate problems in the area of scheduling-conflict resolution, however, and thus, in the fall of 2000, the Committee on Instruction (CoI) requested that the CoA, one of CoI's sub-committees, study the question of "schedule conflicts between academic and athletic events". Specifically CoI asked CoA to identify the university's policies that pertain to avoiding or resolving such conflicts, and to determine recent patterns and the present

level of conflicts between academic and athletic activities. The CoA, under the leadership of Professor Martha Verbrugge, responded to that request by submitting a report to the CoI on April 5, 2001. The complete report is presented in Appendix B. The principal conclusions of that report were that our students are overscheduled and that schedule conflicts leading to missed class time are to be expected. Athletics is a contributor to that problem, but may not be the primary cause of missed classes. There are procedures in place to deal with scheduling conflicts involving athletics. Those policies and practices appear, by and large to be effective. The report states: "CoA has concluded that, in most instances, our current practice of direct, individual resolution is both wise and effective. We do not believe that any major change in policy or practice is warranted. Draconian reforms in scheduling or administrative procedures are not necessary or desirable; occasionally, however, more formal mechanisms might seem useful."

Interestingly, the semester following the submission and wide distribution of the CoA report, was a particularly difficult one with regard to missed class time due to athletic events. Scheduling problems surrounding a junior varsity football game resulted in a number of students missing classes due to a game played at an unusual time. These problems were followed by a difficult case involving a member of the women's basketball team. This case drew attention sufficient to cause Professor Marsh to make a motion for a more thorough study of this problem complete with recommendations for improving if not completely resolving it. The CoA has agreed to undertake the study called for and as a result, Dr. Marsh withdrew his motion and it was remanded in substance, to the CoA.

**CoA discussions and procedures:** The CoA began its efforts to develop a response to the Marsh motion by discussing with members of the Athletics Department administration the methods, practices and procedures currently being used by the Athletics Department in helping resolve the sort of conflict that resulted in the Marsh motion. The committee was presented with copies of a document entitled "Academic-Athletic Conflict" which the committee was told is essentially reproduced in both coach's manuals and in student athlete handbooks at Bucknell. This document (see Appendix C) draws on the Bucknell "Policy on Conflicts" (Appendix A) and the Bucknell Student Handbook. It appears to be in full agreement with the university's stated policies in this area, but also contains additional material such as detailed instructions to students regarding communication with faculty concerning potential conflicts, instructions to coaches on the specifics of dealing with potential conflicts and generalized advice to students on how to most effectively organize their time and focus their efforts to attain academic success. Appendix D contains materials from the Patriot League Policy and Practices Manual relevant to athletic event scheduling and related travel.

The CoA next arranged a series of interviews with university and Department of Athletics administrators, academic deans, coaches and student athletes to discuss with them their experiences with schedule conflict and with the resolution of these problems. Brief summaries of the topics covered and the points made in each of those interview groups are presented below:

**University Administrators:** The committee's discussion with university administrators dealt more with the overall mission of the university with regard to athletics than with the specifics of conflict resolution. The committee was not able to glean from these conversations a clear statement of the role of athletics in the larger scheme of things at Bucknell. That point will be revisited later in this report.

**Academic Deans:** The academic deans provided responses to the committee's questions that were quite consistent with the comments attributed to this group in the earlier CoI report referred to above (Appendix B). The deans noted that our students are often very overscheduled. This is leading to an increased number of conflicts that is causing unhappiness and concern among both students and faculty. The deans pointed out that this is not solely an athletic problem. Classes are frequently missed because of field trips, professional school interviews, special lectures, unscheduled classes or labs, required film viewings, athletic competitions and practices and student choices. They noted heterogeneity among faculty with regard to resolving such conflicts. What may seem reasonable or acceptable to one faculty member may not seem so to another. Their suggestion for improvement was more personalized interaction between students and faculty on these issues and better communication of the university's policies and procedures in these areas to all concerned parties.

**Faculty:** The faculty members that were interviewed by the committee focused the discussion on three major areas. The first was the general perception that coaches disregard the academic mission and make demands on students that are intrusive on their academic life and contradictory of stated university policy. The second point addressed by all those faculty persons interviewed was a perception that there is an expanding emphasis on athletics at Bucknell and that may be adversely affecting student choices in a variety of ways. Finally, there was an expression of hope that there could be more direct and meaningful faculty input into the operation of the athletic program. That would not be limited to discussions of the prominence and visibility of the athletics program, but would also include more and better opportunities to advise and mentor our student athletes.

**Coaches:** The coaches interviewed by the committee all claimed to subscribe to the philosophy that student's academic lives had to come before athletic opportunities. To a person, these coaches agreed that the lives of today's student athletes are more complex and demanding than they have historically been at Bucknell. Today's student athletes have more choices but also face higher expectations than did many of their predecessors at this university. Several of the coaches noted a tendency for students to become overscheduled. Their solution to this dilemma was to suggest that practice times should be more flexible. That is, rather than adhere slavishly to the "4 o'clock" rule, they suggested tailoring practices and skill sessions to student's academic schedules whenever possible.

**Student Athletes:** The student athletes interviewed by the committee all gave similar responses to questions relating to why they chose to come to Bucknell. All

indicated that they limited their serious choices of college to places with high academic standing and that the ability to gain an outstanding education was their first requirement. However, they all pointed out that there are a number of schools in that category and to a person these students all said that their final decision on where to matriculate rested on the quality of the Division I athletic opportunities they would have in addition to the quality of the academic programs they would access. Several of the student-athletes expressed frustration about the registration and scheduling practices at Bucknell. These students asked why incoming, first year students couldn't have more input into the building of their schedules. They pointed out that after they got past the arbitrary scheduling of the first year they learned how to better arrange their academic and athletic obligations and opportunities. When asked if coaches influenced their decisions concerning which courses and professors to take the committee received a somewhat mixed response. Some students flatly denied that there was any influence exerted by coaches in this area. Others said that coaches did not tell them what to take, but did make it clear that they were expected to try to develop schedules that would not conflict with practices and contests. Others alluded to a "culture" that seemed to pervade some teams and implied that there was a fair amount of student-to-student peer counseling available on some teams.

**Deliberations, observations and recommendations:** The membership of the CoA changed significantly between the spring semester of 2002 when the above-described interviews were conducted and the fall semester of 2002 when the report was compiled. The committee had some difficulty getting a final official roster from the governance system and then struggled for a number of weeks trying to find a meeting time that would fit the schedules of the members. (It should be noted that student athletes are not the only persons overscheduled.) As a result, this report is the work of essentially two committees with some overlapping membership.

It is the general feeling of the committee that the university has in place reasonable policies and procedures for dealing with scheduling conflict. Some minor changes to the policy dealing mostly with emphasis and nuance will be offered, but at first blush it would seem that our official policies need little if any work. Yet the problems will not go away as the result of the filing of yet one more report. Rather, some significant changes to our culture must be affected if any progress is to be made in this important area.

The initial task that must be addressed before any real progress is made must be a clear statement, binding on all parties concerned, on the official role of intercollegiate athletics at Bucknell. This statement should include a rationale for why Bucknell has chosen the route of Division I athletics and what that decision means to the university community. It is felt that such a statement is necessary because the circumstances surrounding athletics have changed, due primarily to events and decisions outside the control of the university. Membership in the original Patriot league, with its like-minded members sharing common goals and histories and a unifying set of policies and procedures, made a clear statement about the role and status of athletics in the university. However, the membership and the ethos of the league have now changed. The committee feels it is

now time to readdress this issue and restate what the role of athletics should be at Bucknell. Until that is done, it will be difficult to properly address this and other issues related to the operation of the program in intercollegiate athletics.

The committee also feels that it is much more efficacious to avoid conflicts than to try to resolve them. Consequently, the committee would like to recommend that the office of academic affairs give serious thought to ways in which the schedules of all incoming students could be better tailored to their individual needs. The committee also feels it would be useful to make an even greater effort to educate student-athletes, coaches and faculty members with regard to the university's policies governing conflict resolution. In this way, student-athletes and coaches might do a better job of working their programs around existing academic schedules thus avoiding conflict.

The committee heard a number of individuals laud the performance of informal, faculty advisors who take it upon themselves to mentor and counsel the participants in a given sport. The committee would like to recommend a pilot program establishing a faculty advisor for all our intercollegiate teams. These advisors would serve as mentors and function as "ombudspersons" for the team to which they are assigned. They would not replace the student-athlete's official academic advisors, but they could help to build a more academically supportive culture within and around each of our teams. The committee recommends that this program be established as quickly as possible and that the academic deans review it after two years. If it does not improve the climate on campus with regard to athletics it can be dismantled at that time.

Finally, the committee would like to recommend a subtle change in emphasis within the existing university policy on schedule conflicts. In that document, there is a statement buried near the end, which states, "Since students are ultimately responsible for their education at Bucknell, they must be the ones to weigh the consequences of missing classes or other activities, and make their choices accordingly." The committee feels that this is the most important statement in the document. This concept is the principal justification for any and all extra curricular activities undertaken by any student at this university. The most important lesson we can ultimately teach in a liberal arts, residential setting is how to make such choices in life and how to deal with the consequences. The committee would like to reemphasize that we should be a student-centered institution. The university and its various programs and facilities exist primarily for the students and it is those students that must learn that there are consequences and prices associated with all decisions. The committee feels that the need to deal with time demands, and division of effort is an important value-added item that all students engaged in extra curricular activities of any kind receive. This value-added component is optimized when the student is made to bear the ultimate responsibility for her or his choices.

Respectfully submitted by the Committee on Athletics

Date. 5 December, 2002

Associate Dean Kari Conrad  
Professor Leslie Patrick

Professor Carl Milofsky  
John Hardt, Athletic Director  
Amanda Backus, Senior Women's Athletic Director  
Professor Alexander Richman  
Omar Zalatimo, student representative (2003)  
Tim Pavlechko, Associate Athletic Director  
Professor Gary Sojka, NCAA faculty representative and Chair

## **Appendix A**

## *Policy on Conflicts Between Regularly Scheduled Classes and Other Activities*

### Principles

The academic goals and achievements of individual students are the University's primary purpose. The University also recognizes the significant contribution of other activities to the academic and personal development of Bucknell students. It is inevitable that conflicts will arise between the pursuit of extra-curricular activities and students' academic schedules. With the emphasis on active learning in the College of Engineering and the Common Learning Agenda of the College of Arts and Sciences, class attendance has taken an even more vital role in the instructional goals of the University.

It is desirable, when conflicts do occur, that students have a policy available to guide their decisions concerning class attendance. The present policy states the expectations placed on faculty members, students, and extra-curricular advisers, so that students may know their options and the ramifications of their choices.

### Policy

- I. Responsibilities about class attendance:
  - A. Students are expected to attend the regularly scheduled meetings of the courses for which they are enrolled.
  - B. Classes scheduled during regular class hours should be given priority over other activities. "No student who participates in an extra-curricular event, team, or program can be penalized solely for missing such extra-curricular activities when they are scheduled in conflict with regularly scheduled meeting times of the student's courses." (Action of the faculty, October 1993)
  - C. Faculty should provide, on the first day of classes, a clear statement of:
    1. scheduled time commitments outside of class, and
    2. the consequences of any absences.
  - D. Students should not be required to attend extra or rescheduled academic events that conflict with other classes or other important commitments.
- II. Responsibilities about non-class activities:
  - A. Extra-curricular advisers should, during the first week of classes, inform students of those dates upon which they will be asked to miss a class due to an extra-curricular activity.
  - B. Students should give faculty as much advanced warning of a class absence as possible.
  - C. University units regularly sponsoring extra-curricular activities are urged to develop guidelines about the appropriate level of demands to place upon student participants with respect to missing class.
- III. General responsibilities:
  - A. Since students are ultimately responsible for their education at Bucknell, they must be the ones to weigh the consequences of missing classes or other activities, and make their choices accordingly.
  - B. Both faculty and advisers of extra-curricular activities are encouraged to be as flexible as possible in addressing attendance requirements.

Students and faculty may seek advice in these matters from their College Dean.

Adopted by Committee on Instruction and Committee on Complimentary Activities; reported to University faculty, March, 1994.

## **Appendix B**

## COMMITTEE ON ATHLETICS

### Report to the Committee on Instruction: Schedule Conflicts between Academic and Athletic Activities

In Fall 2000, the Committee on Instruction requested that the Committee on Athletics (one of CoI's sub-committees) study the question of schedule conflicts between academic and athletic events. Specifically, CoI asked CoA to identify the university's policies that pertain to avoiding or resolving such conflicts, and to determine recent patterns and the present level of conflicts between academic and athletic activities. After some preliminary discussions, CoA concluded that focusing on current practices related to schedule conflicts (rather than crude incidence data) would yield a report more useful to all concerned - namely, student-athletes, faculty, athletic staff, and academic administrators. Following correspondence between the two committees, CoA set out with a somewhat modified charge: to identify the university's current attendance policies and the documents in which they appear; to gather representative examples of schedule conflicts and a qualitative measure of their extent and nature; to sample the opinions of relevant constituencies; and to review current practices and mechanisms for preventing or managing schedule conflicts.

#### Overall Perspective and Conclusions

At the outset, CoA would like to note that schedule conflicts take many forms and that student absences (excused or unexcused) occur for many reasons. On occasion, student-athletes may elect to miss part or all of a class session or laboratory because of an athletic activity (practice, game, meet, etc.). On other occasions, student-athletes face other types of conflicts: for instance, late afternoon academic activities ("legal" or otherwise, scheduled or ad hoc) that overlap with team practices or events. More generally, a variety of conflicts arise for all students (both athletes and non-athletes). For example, academic activities (field trips, guest speakers, special recitations or reviews, etc.) may conflict with other classes or co-curricular activities; that is especially true when the academic activity is inserted into the schedule late and, thus, was not anticipated. Conversely, students may discover that their co-curricular or personal activities overlap with scheduled academic activities. Finally, all students and faculty are aware of cases in which students choose to skip class or professors cancel a class - due to illness or other reasons. In short, the question of attendance and schedule conflicts is by no means confined to athletic events conflicting with scheduled classes; those incidents are but one version of a much larger phenomenon. CoA hopes that CoI will initiate a broader study of attendance and schedule conflicts that will address the true range of problems and issues in this area.

Overall, CoA has concluded that schedule conflicts between academic and athletic events vary widely in their type and extent. Some student-athletes experience relatively few problems; others have recurrent conflicts when, for instance, their sport is in-season and their afternoon lab overlaps with team practice. CoA also believes that occasional schedule conflicts are, for many reasons, inevitable. The university sponsors a busy calendar of academic and co-curricular activities; there is no perfect mechanism that would prevent each and every instance of schedule conflict. Finally, CoA concludes that

current practices for avoiding and resolving schedule conflicts between academic and athletic activities work quite well. Usually, the relevant parties -- student-athletes, athletic staff, faculty, and academic administrators -- rely on communication, mutual respect, and good sense to handle conflicts and, ideally, they do so well in advance of the anticipated conflict. Certainly, there are less-than-ideal situations. For instance, a student-athlete may wait too long to speak with his/her instructor or may simply announce that he/she "has to miss class"; on occasion, a faculty member or coach might be unclear about his/her expectations or be inflexible about making accommodations. Overall, however, CoA believes that current approaches are quite effective; they could be improved somewhat, but no drastic overhaul of policy or practice is warranted.

### Process, Findings, and Discussion

During 2000-2001, CoA took various steps to fulfill its charge from CoI. We collected documents in which the University and various sub-units (e.g., the Department of Athletics and Recreation) announce official attendance policies. We held several discussions with John Hardt (Director of Athletics and Recreation) and his senior staff. We met with the associate deans of both colleges (Arts & Sciences, and Engineering). We solicited the opinions of coaches and faculty via e-mail surveys: 14 of 20 head coaches replied; 60 faculty submitted responses. Finally, two members of CoA attended the March 27 meeting of the Student-Athlete Advisory Council.

We began, of course, by studying Bucknell's "Policy on Conflicts Between Regularly Scheduled Classes and Other Activities." This official policy was drafted by the Committee on Instruction and the Committee on Complementary Activities in Spring, 1993, and was adopted by the faculty in Spring, 1994. (A copy is attached.) The statement outlines fundamental principles: namely, that the "academic goals and achievements of individual students are the University's primary purpose. The University also recognizes the significant contribution of other activities to the academic and personal development of Bucknell students." The document also states policy: namely, that "[s]tudents are expected to attend the regularly scheduled meetings of the courses for which they are enrolled," and that students may not be penalized for missing a co-curricular activity solely because it conflicts with a regularly scheduled class session. The statement clearly places the responsibility for making decisions about attendance and for resolving conflicts on the shoulders of students (be they athletes or non-athletes). The policy also strongly encourages faculty to clarify their individual policies and practices related to class attendance, and it urges faculty and staff alike to be "as flexible as possible in addressing attendance requirements."

The university's "Policy on Conflicts" appears in numerous places: the Student Handbook documents; an annual letter to faculty from the Vice President for Academic Affairs; the Department of Athletics and Recreation's handbook "Academic Enhancement Program," issued to first-year student-athletes; the University catalogue; and the website version of Bucknell's student handbook. Thus, the policy is readily available to all parties concerned. Of course, CoA cannot vouch that all students, staff, and faculty have read, understood, or abided by the policy in all circumstances.

However, CoA did seek to learn what various groups on campus think about schedule conflicts between academic and athletic activities, and how they handle such problems. As noted above, we consulted athletic and academic administrators, student-athletes, coaches, and faculty. We received fairly uniform responses both within and between these groups. Specifically, most respondents acknowledged that problems do arise. They believed that conflicts vary widely in type and severity. They expressed no consistent opinion about recent trends (i.e., whether conflicts have increased, decreased, or remained steady). They believed that informal, personal means of resolving conflicts usually worked, and that direct negotiation between individuals was preferable to a rigid administrative or structural solution. Finally, although some respondents recommended specific reforms, they typically felt that current mechanisms simply needed to be clarified and reinforced.

Rather than transmitting all of its original data, CoA here summarizes the opinions and input of various groups:

- **Student-athletes:** It is evident that student-athletes are serious about both academics and sports. The number of schedule conflicts depends on their major, sport, and the time of year. They try to resolve conflicts by working directly with their coach and instructor(s). It is their perception that the ease or difficulty with which conflicts are resolved depends primarily on their instructors' flexibility.
- **Coaches:** Coaches subscribe to Bucknell's philosophy that academics should be a student's main priority. They urge student-athletes to resolve schedule conflicts early in a semester and directly with professors. In general, coaches find most faculty members to be helpful in resolving conflicts (with some exceptions).
- **Faculty:** Most professors prefer to handle (and do handle) conflicts on a case-by-case basis with individual students; occasionally, they contact a coach directly to verify schedules or resolve problems. Most faculty expressed a willingness to accommodate the schedules of student-athletes (within reason).
- **Academic and athletic administrators:** As do other groups, they recognize that schedule conflicts occur and are virtually inevitable. They noted that most conflicts between athletic and academic activities are managed directly and effectively. Moreover, they have experienced strong cooperation and communication between the academic and athletic units at Bucknell. And they urge all parties to remember that all of us are members of the same institution with similar goals and expectations. Finally, it is significant to note that, according to one academic administrator, schedule conflicts between activities not related to athletics occur more frequently than do conflicts related to athletics.

A minority of respondents in each group expressed considerable frustration. This did not surprise us -- as some student-athletes, faculty, and coaches may see their activities in rather proprietary terms. Some student-athletes and coaches, for instance,

recommended that student-athletes be allowed to register for courses before other students do; some faculty reported on-going problems with particular students and/or coaches, and felt that no accommodation or exceptions should be allowed.

### Recommendations

The Committee on Athletics is convinced that schedule conflicts between academic and athletic events will always occur. In fact, the university's own "Policy on Conflicts" acknowledges that conflicts between various types of activities are "inevitable." CoA has concluded that, in most instances, our current practice of direct, individual resolution is both wise and effective. We do not believe that any major change in policy or practice is warranted. Draconian reforms in scheduling or administrative procedures are not necessary or desirable; occasionally, however, more formal mechanisms might seem useful.

A good example of informal-and-formal "conflict resolution" is this semester's experiment for student-athletes involved in the Patriot League championships for Track & Field, which occur during final exams. The current plan calls for direct, personal negotiation between students and faculty; in some cases, if no solution can be crafted, then a more formal procedure will be used (namely, a faculty proctor will administer exams to some students during the meet). On paper at least, the plan fits Bucknell's general approach to managing schedule conflicts - namely, cooperation and flexibility.

In general, CoA recommends that such an approach be continued. CoA urges all parties to be informed about current policy and practice, and to follow these agreed-upon rules more responsibly and consistently. Student-athletes, coaches, faculty, and staff should be aware of Bucknell's "Policy on Conflicts Between Regularly Scheduled Classes and Other Activities." We hope that all parties will attempt to avoid or resolve schedule conflicts cooperatively, through communication that is direct, early, clear, and complete. For everyone involved, the governing principles should be mutual respect, cooperation, flexibility, and consistency. More specifically, we recommend that:

- Coaches distribute a team's schedule of practices and competitions early in the semester, and repeatedly reinforce the university's policies about class attendance and schedule conflicts.
- Student-athletes acknowledge the responsibilities that Bucknell has assigned them, and work directly and early with their instructors and coaches in resolving anticipated conflicts.
- Faculty members specify their policies and practices about attendance both in class and in their syllabi; announce (to the extent possible) any commitments that will occur outside of scheduled class time; and work with student-athletes and their coaches to resolve conflicts in a fair and flexible manner.
- Academic and athletic administrators continue the current practice of open communication and cooperation between their offices.

Respectfully submitted by the Committee on Athletics

Date: 25 April 2001

Associate Dean Ruth Burnham, Dean of Students representative

Athletic Director John Hardt

Professor Dan Hoffman, faculty representative

Marsha Lewis (2002), student member

Professor Carl Milofsky, faculty representative

Larry Scheetz (2002), student member

Professor Tim Sweeney, faculty athletic representative to the NCAA

Professor Martha H. Verbrugge, Chair and faculty representative

## *Policy on Conflicts Between Regularly Scheduled Classes and Other Activities*

### Principles

The academic goals and achievements of individual students are the University's primary purpose. The University also recognizes the significant contribution of other activities to the academic and personal development of Bucknell students. It is inevitable that conflicts will arise between the pursuit of extra-curricular activities and students' academic schedules. With the emphasis on active learning in the College of Engineering and the Common Learning Agenda of the College of Arts and Sciences, class attendance has taken an even more vital role in the instructional goals of the University.

It is desirable, when conflicts do occur, that students have a policy available to guide their decisions concerning class attendance. The present policy states the expectations placed on faculty members, students, and extra-curricular advisers, so that students may know their options and the ramifications of their choices.

### Policy

#### I. Responsibilities about class attendance:

- A. Students are expected to attend the regularly scheduled meetings of the courses for which they are enrolled.
- B. Classes scheduled during regular class hours should be given priority over other activities. "No student who participates in an extra-curricular event, team, or program can be penalized solely for missing such extra-curricular activities when they are scheduled in conflict with regularly scheduled meeting times of the student's courses." (Action of the faculty, October 1993)
- C. Faculty should provide, on the first day of classes, a clear statement of:
  1. scheduled time commitments outside of class, and
  2. the consequences of any absences.
- D. Students should not be required to attend extra or rescheduled academic events that conflict with other classes or other important commitments.

#### II. Responsibilities about non-class activities:

- A. Extra-curricular advisers should, during the first week of classes, inform students of those dates upon which they will be asked to miss a class due to an extra-curricular activity.
- B. Students should give faculty as much advanced warning of a class absence as possible.
- C. University units regularly sponsoring extra-curricular activities are urged to develop guidelines about the appropriate level of demands to place upon student participants with respect to missing class.

#### III. General responsibilities:

- A. Since students are ultimately responsible for their education at Bucknell, they must be the ones to weigh the consequences of missing classes or other activities, and make their choices accordingly.
- B. Both faculty and advisers of extra-curricular activities are encouraged to be as flexible as possible in addressing attendance requirements.

Students and faculty may seek advice in these matters from their College Dean.

Adopted by Committee on Instruction and Committee on Complimentary Activities; reported to University faculty, March, 1994.

## **Appendix C**

# ACADEMIC – ATHLETIC CONFLICT

## **PHILOSOPHY ON ACADEMIC AND ATHLETIC CONFLICT**

It is the philosophy of the Department of Athletics that at no time is the academic welfare of the student-athletes intentionally jeopardized or compromised in the pursuit of athletic excellence. It is also recognized that unavoidable conflicts may arise between the academic commitments and athletic expectations of our student-athlete population. Considering this, the Department of Athletics has undertaken the following parameters as a means of minimizing any potential conflict and recognizing the priority rests with the academic responsibilities of our student-athletes.

## **STUDENT-ATHLETES' CLASS ATTENDANCE**

The Department of Athletics endorses fully the following expectations for student-athlete class attendance as reprinted from the Bucknell University Student Handbook.

"The academic goals and achievements of individual students are the university's primary purpose. The university also recognizes the significant contribution of other activities to the academic and personal development of Bucknell students. It is inevitable that conflicts will arise between the pursuit of extracurricular activities and students' academic schedules. With the emphasis on active learning in the College of Engineering and the Common Learning Agenda of the College of Arts and Sciences, class attendance has taken an even more vital role in the instructional goals of the university. It is desirable, when conflicts do occur, that students have a policy available to guide their decisions concerning class attendance. The present policy states the expectations placed on faculty members, students, and extracurricular advisers, so that students may know their options and the ramifications of their choices.

## **POLICY**

### **Responsibilities about class attendance**

1. Students are expected to attend the regularly scheduled meetings of the courses for which they are enrolled.
2. Classes scheduled during class hours should be given priority over other activities. "No student who participates in an extracurricular event, team, or program can be penalized solely for missing such extracurricular activities when they are scheduled in conflict with regularly scheduled meeting times of the student's courses." (Action of the faculty, September 1993)
3. Faculty should provide, on the first day of classes, a clear statement of
  1. scheduled time commitments outside of class, and
  2. the consequences of any absences.
4. Students should not be required to attend extra or rescheduled academic events that conflict with other classes or other important commitments.

### **Responsibilities about non-class activities**

1. Extracurricular advisers should, during the first week of classes, inform students of those dates upon which they will be asked to miss a class due to extracurricular activity.
2. Students should give faculty as much advanced warning of class absence as possible.
3. University units regularly sponsoring extracurricular activities are urged to develop guidelines about the appropriate level of demands to place upon student participants with respect to missing class.

**Academic Responsibility**  
**(as cited in the Bucknell University Student Handbook)**

Bucknell students are responsible for the preparation and presentation of work representing their own efforts. Acceptance of this responsibility is essential to the educational process and must be considered as an expression of mutual trust, the foundation upon which creative scholarship rests. Students are directed to use great care when preparing all written work and to acknowledge fully the source of all ideas and language other than their own.

In cases of alleged academic dishonesty, procedures involving the student, the instructor, the department chair, the appropriate dean, and a Board of Review on Academic Responsibility have been established to assess the facts and determine appropriate penalties, which range from a grade of F on the work to permanent dismissal from the university. Refer to the Student Handbook or Faculty Adviser Handbook for more detailed information.

Certain cases of academic fraud may give rise to potential NCAA rules violations. If an NCAA violation is found, it could threaten the eligibility of the student-athlete.

## ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Academic achievement is central to your Bucknell experience. You have entered a community of teaching and learning where we hope you discover that education is a process we work through together. It is a cooperative effort: much depends upon your commitment, openness and desire to learn. We offer a few "tips" for success.

**Student-Professor Relations**

1. Your professors will not bite. Frequent their offices so they get to know your name. Don't be intimidated by them. You will find that most are extremely helpful if you don't understand a concept or point. They should be your first source of help.
2. Teaching assistants and graduate assistants are invaluable people who are willing to help you. Take advantage of their knowledge at additional study sessions.
3. Biology, Calculus, Chemistry and Computer Science can be difficult even if you took these classes in high school. A large percentage of first-year students have difficulty in these courses, so don't think you are the only one.
4. Ask for help before it is too late. A tutor in one or more courses is a good idea, but not one day before your exam.
5. If you have a question – ASK!

**Academic Success**

1. Set realistic goals and priorities for course work.
2. Attend class regularly. Class attendance is expected.
3. Make a schedule for yourself. You are expected to study at least 40 hours a week (3 or more hours for each hour spent in class). Use the time between classes. Do not put all your studying off until the evening or the day before a test. Make a detailed schedule each semester and allow blocks of time for studying specific subjects. Keep only one calendar with all relevant dates, assignments, and appointments. Do not try to keep a schedule in your head.
4. Sit toward the front of the classroom to maximize your contact and to

reduce distractions.

5. Review your written notes as soon as possible after class to refresh your memory and to fill in any gaps.
6. Estimate how long a given class assignment will take, generally planning on three hours outside of class for every hour in class. Build in study breaks; fatigue is a big time waster.
7. If you learn better by listening to others and then discussing what you have learned, start a study group.
8. Make notes of any questions you might have so that they can be answered before the next exam.
9. If you are having trouble or feel overwhelmed, talk with the professor immediately. Do not hesitate to seek help. It is critical that you link-up with campus supports before you fall behind in your work.
10. Seek a good place to study. A quiet place, free from distractions, is necessary for concentration. Find a place to study that best suits your needs. Consider using the library, an unused classroom in Vaughan Literature Building or Coleman Hall (open until approximately 11:00 PM) or study lounges in Harris, Vedder, and Smith. Find a place where you will not be disturbed and can return to on a regular basis.

## DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS & RECREATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR ACADEMIC-ATHLETIC CONFLICTS

The University maintains a policy on *Conflicts Between Regularly Scheduled Classes and Other Activities*. As such, the Department of Athletics and Recreation has fully endorsed this policy and adopted supporting policies and procedures in both our athletics staff manual and student-athlete handbook. Below are some important policy provisions that impact the operation of each of our athletics programs.

Specifically,

- Academic commitments take priority over all external activities.
- Coaches should not influence a student-athlete to rearrange their academic schedule in order to attend practices.
- Student-athletes should attend all of their classes.
- Student-athletes should never miss a class due to an athletics practice.
- Student-athletes should never be penalized for missing or arriving late to a practice due to a class or lab.
- Student-athletes should notify professors of all competitions that affect class attendance prior to their contest.
- If a scheduling conflict occurs, student-athletes should work together with their professors to address the situation. If the conflict cannot be worked out, the student-athlete should not only contact their academic dean and coach, but also the athletic academic liaison.
- In general, mandatory athletically related activities as defined by the NCAA (including meetings, film sessions, chalk talks etc.) shall not commence prior to 4:00 p.m. during any academic calendar day. However, it shall be permissible for coaches to accommodate individual student-athletes as well as teams, who do not have academic obligations, in providing individualized skill instruction and/or team practice opportunities at times throughout the calendar day.

Maintaining academic priorities and supporting the education of our student-athletes is paramount to your responsibly as a coach in our Bison athletics program. Should you, your staff or your student-athletes have any additional questions, please contact the athletic academic liaison.

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## **Appendix D**

## GENERAL SPORT REGULATIONS - REGULAR SEASON

3. Additional scheduling regulations are as follows:
  - a. The home team has sole authority to make decisions regarding the cancellation of scheduled competition due to inclement weather.
  - b. Each contest is scheduled to accommodate the visiting team and facilitate the play of the contest.
  - c. If there is a transportation problem on the way to a scheduled contest, contact should be made with the host institution.

### C. TRAVEL AND SCHEDULING POLICY

Patriot League principles and policies dictate that concerns for student-athlete academic welfare will always be paramount in designing athletic schedules and resolving scheduling conflicts. Care will be exercised to minimize time missed from academic obligations due to athletic participation and sensitivity to student-athlete academic welfare shall be the obvious priority in all scheduling and/or travel decisions.

In accordance with this philosophy, the following scheduling guidelines are embraced:

1. Awareness of member institution final examination periods shall normally preclude any scheduling of competition within twenty-four hours of such periods.
2. Normally, no class time shall be missed for practice activities except when a team is traveling to an away-from-home contest, and the practice is in conjunction with the contest.
3. Normally, daylight permitting, weekday athletic contests will not start prior to 3:00 p.m.
4. Scheduling will normally require student-athletes to miss no more than one day of classes per away athletic contest, and less whenever possible.
5. Every effort will be made to limit, in original scheduling, the number of mid-week (Monday-Thursday) away contests scheduled per week in any sport to one.
6. Normally, no more than two opponents shall be scheduled for competition during a single away trip, although obvious exceptions would include multi-team competitions and tournaments.
7. Whenever possible and reasonable, departure for a contest on a subsequent day shall not be prior to the end of that day's classes.
8. Teams will normally return to campus following athletic competition.
9. League competition will be given priority in establishing and refining athletic schedules, wherever possible.
10. Exceptions will be made under established institutional policy.

## GENERAL SPORT REGULATIONS - REGULAR SEASON

### D. RESCHEDULING

1. The rescheduling of a Patriot League date requires the agreement of both institutions. If conflicts occur, they should be brought to the attention of the respective athletic directors. Any conflicts which cannot be resolved at the institutional level will be brought to the attention of the Executive Director. [June 1994]
2. In sports where round-robin competition determines the selection and seeding of teams for the Patriot League Championship, all scheduled and rescheduled Patriot League contests must be played no later than the Monday prior to the Patriot League Championship. Patriot League competition must take precedence over non-League contests should it be necessary to reschedule a contest. An institution may request a waiver from the Executive Director due to extenuating circumstances or if the game or match has no bearing on final regular-season standings and, therefore, on the selection and seeding of teams for the Championship. Should a waiver be granted, the involved institutions' win/loss percentage in Patriot League games or matches will be used for selection and seeding purposes in lieu of final League records. Should a contest fail to be rescheduled and should a waiver not be granted, the Executive Director will issue a forfeit if deemed appropriate. [June 2002]

### E. SITE-CHANGE POLICY

For spring sports, the following site change policy is to be in effect:

1. If, by mutual agreement of the institutions involved, a site is changed due to bad weather, the originally-scheduled "away" institution shall bear the cost of the originally-scheduled "home" institution's travel.
2. This amount would not exceed the amount that the originally-scheduled "away" institution had budgeted for their travel once all home game management costs had been covered. [June 1994]

### F. ADMINISTRATIVE ACCOMPANIMENT

Either a coach or administrator must accompany any institutional team that plays away from its home campus.