

**THE FACULTY ATHLETICS REPRESENTATIVE:
A SURVEY OF THE MEMBERSHIP**

**FACULTY ATHLETICS REPRESENTATIVES
ASSOCIATION (FARA) REPORT**

Prepared by: Daniel L. Fulks, Ph.D., CPA
Transylvania University
Lexington, KY

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The Faculty Athletics Representative: A Survey of the Membership

Faculty Athletics Representatives Association (FARA) Report Spring 2008

**Prepared by Daniel L. Fulks, Ph.D., CPA
Transylvania University, Lexington, KY**

I. Introduction

This study replicates and updates the report of the same name published by FARA and the NCAA in 2002. Both reports present results of surveys administered to Faculty Athletics Representatives (FARs) of all NCAA member institutions. The methodology of the data collection and the format of reporting the results are similar, if not identical. As before, the overriding objectives of this study are to (1) assist readers in understanding the role of the FAR and (2) provide FARs with information relevant to defining their own roles on their respective campuses and comparing the environment in which they serve to those of other FARs.

The survey sought data related to the role of the FAR, the resources provided by his or her institution, terms and conditions of assignment, and the overall commitment of the institution. Demographic data were also collected, as were data concerning the FARs' personal profiles.

II. Executive Summary

The Survey

Data were collected via electronic survey during the Fall of 2005. The survey was distributed to all FARs included on the FARA mailing list, which is believed to be a virtually complete coverage of NCAA institutions. A copy of the survey document is provided in an appendix of this report. Results were tabulated and are presented both by total membership and by subdivision. Data collected from Divisions II and III are further divided by those who sponsor football and those who do not. Thus, tables present data for seven subdivisions and total responses.

Response Rates

Response rates for four of the subdivisions exceeded forty percent. The Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) rate was 42%; the Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) was 43%; Division I without Football was 37%. The FBS is the former Division I-A, and the FCS is the former Division I-AA.

Division II with Football responses were 47% of the subdivision; the Division II without Football rate was 42%; the Division III with Football rate was 33%; and the Division III without Football was 25%. The resulting overall rate was 37%.

Thus, the highest rate was among the DII with Football schools, and the two lowest rates were among the DIII subdivision. All rates are considered statistically valid, although the DIII without Football is marginally so.

Results and Observations

In short, we as FARs are entirely too white and too male. We are also aging, are highly educated, apparently overworked and underpaid, and rather diverse in our academic disciplines. We have also been successful in ascending the professorial ladder.

I. Institutional Information.

This initial portion of the survey collected data concerning the nature of the institutions that comprise the FAR's working environment. Fifty percent of the total responses came from public schools, and fifty percent from private. The FBS responses are heavily skewed toward public schools (94%), as is the membership. And accordingly, DIII responses are predominantly from private schools (close to 80%.) The mean undergraduate enrollment moves from 23,000 in the FBS to 3,000 in DIII. The DII mean is approximately 5,000, and the overall mean is 7,600.

II. Personal Profile.

These questions were formulated to provide the demographics of FARs and to describe the typical person who holds the position. In all subdivisions, FARs are mostly male. Only DI without Football (88%), the FCS (62%), and DIII without Football (58%) stray substantially from the overall 72% for all responses.

Our mean age is in the mid to upper fifties across the board, and we are over ninety percent White/Non-Hispanic. DII without Football is slightly lower, at 84 percent.

Between 75 (DII with Football) and 98 (FBS) percent of us have terminal degrees, and approximately ninety percent of us are either associate or full professors. The exception to the latter is 75 percent in DIII without Football. Almost all are either tenured (84%) or not currently in a tenure-track position (10%.)

Business and Economics has a fairly substantial lead (23%) across the board in the academic discipline of FARs, with Math/Physical Science, Social Science/History, and Humanities following. DIII without Football is the exception, where Social Science/History is the leader and Business/Economics second.

We all generally spend close to two thirds of our time teaching, and very few (almost none) of us hold administrative positions, although some are department or division chairs.

We have been at our present institution for approximately twenty years and have served as FAR an average of six years. There are no significant differences among the subdivisions, with the exception of the DIII schools, where the average years at present institution is a bit less than the overall average.

III. Position Profile.

This section of the survey sought to frame the definition of the typical FAR position. Seventy to eighty percent of us are appointed by our CEO, with the exception of the FBS, where faculty nomination with CEO approval is significant (30%.)

Very few of us have term limits, with the exception of the FBS at 21 percent and DI without Football at eighteen percent. Of those of us with term limits, almost all are renewable.

With the exception of the two DIII subdivisions (55% and 54%), the vast majority of us (69 to 92 percent) report directly to our CEO. Those not reporting to the CEO report to a variety of administrators. Of note is the rather large number of DIII without Football FARs who report to the athletics director (22%.)

An alarmingly high number of FARs do not have a written position description. Only 63% of FBS, 62% of FCS, 62% of DI without Football, 52% of DII with Football, 64% of DII without Football, 35% of DIII with Football and 41% of DIII without Football have such documents. This is of concern to FARA Executive Committee members and should be addressed.

IV. Institutional Support.

This section of the survey measures the extent to which FARs are supported by their respective institutions, as well as perceived benefits received as a result of their position. Although almost none of us get the benefit of full-time secretarial/clerical support, a few of us do receive part-time support.

Most of us, however, do receive monetary or release compensation. Forty five percent receive a stipend, ranging from 30% in the FBS to 75% of DIII without Football FARs. Almost half of us (44%) get release from academic duties – 25% in DIII without Football to 57% in DI without Football. Some, although not many (7%), receive release from service duties.

Surprisingly, very few of us (13%) have a separate budget for FAR activities -- only two percent of DIII without Football up to 21 percent of FBS. Travel expenses (100%) and conference attendance are the most common line items covered by those who are given separate budgets.

For most FARs, the monetary support comes from the institution's CEO – 57% overall, as high as 70% for DII without football, and as low as 50% for DIII with football. For those whose funding does not come from the CEO, it comes primarily from Athletics – 34% overall, 50% for the FCS, and as low as none for DI without football.

Fully one-third of FARs, and almost half of DIII FARs, report receiving no benefits as a result of our position. For the remainder of us who do report some benefits, the most commonly received are banquets and social events (42%), season tickets in DI, clothing for all of us (22%), spouse and family tickets (18%), and post-season basketball tickets (mostly limited to DI.) The DIII FARs reported receiving the least benefits of all FARs.

V. FAR Duties and Activities.

This section sought information concerning how FARs spend their time fulfilling their duties. For the entire group, over eighty percent of us spend between one and ten hours per week on FAR tasks. DI and II FARs report more total hours spent on FAR duties, with fifty percent (DI without football) and 42 percent DII without football reporting between six and ten hours.

Tasks related to academics consumed the most FAR time across all divisions, ranging from 28% in the FBS to 45% in DIII without Football and an overall average of 37 percent. Administrative duties were ranked second in most divisions, although the FBS respondents identified Compliance matters as second most time-consuming (28%) and DIII without Football reported Student athlete Wellbeing second (28%.)

Respondents were also asked to indicate in what specific tasks within each category they participated. As is indicated in Section V of this report, significant differences were noted among the subdivisions.

VI. The Role of the FAR.

This section sought to determine FAR opinion concerning the role the position should fill, as well as their satisfaction with the support they receive from their institutions, FARA, and the NCAA.

The general level of satisfaction is relatively high and is fairly consistent across the subdivisions, although the DII respondents reported negative results for sufficient release time and support staff. The highest level of agreement among all respondents is that the FAR is able to fulfill the role of ensuring the academic integrity of the athletic program. There is also excellent satisfaction if the recognition and empowerment given the FARs by their CEO and their athletics personnel. Interestingly, there is much less satisfaction with the recognition and empowerment given by their faculty.

VII. The Role of FARA.

With the exception of DII with Football (56%) and DII without Football (71%), fewer than half of the respondents regularly attend the FARA Fall Meeting and Symposium. Scheduling and the timing of the meeting is the only significant deterrent reported. Results were even worse for attendance at the FARA sessions during the NCAA annual convention. Scheduling and timing are, again, the major deterrents, although many respondents also reported problems with funding.

Respondents were also asked what they find rewarding about their role as FAR, as well as what obstacles they feel in performing their duties. Across all subdivisions, most (between 76% and 91%) find the athletics-academic link to be rewarding and between 67% and 87% find the interaction with student athletes rewarding. The role of maintaining the integrity of the athletics program also ranked high. Although none of the specific obstacles listed received high response rates, the most common ones are unclear authority (less than half) and lack of time (also less than half.)

Much to the disappointment of the FARA leadership, respondents do not find FARA to be particularly useful. The most commonly marked item was help with the athletics-academic link at between 38% and 56%. Almost all (close to 90%), however, agree that it would be helpful for FARA to provide sample position descriptions, as well as an ongoing forum for sharing best practices.

III. Tabulated Survey Results

(Insert Tables.)

IV. History of Faculty Involvement in Intercollegiate Athletics (See Note)

Shortly after the birth of collegiate athletics in 1852, college and university faculty members attempted to exert influence over collegiate athletics events. Concerned by the failure of student-athletes to control their increasingly visible and powerful athletics programs, faculty members began to express their desire to become involved in this quickly evolving institution.

In the 1870's, the tremendous growth of intercollegiate athletics became a major source of pride for students on campuses, and, in the minds of some members of the faculty, the enthusiasm of student-athletes for their academic pursuits. Faculty began to take steps to engineer a greater degree of control over athletics, as student-controlled athletics began to disrupt academic pursuits. In 1874, a quarter-century after the first intercollegiate athletics event and a full 32 years before the formation of the NCAA, President McCosh of Princeton University reported the problems that pervaded intercollegiate athletics to the Princeton Board of Trustees (Smith, 372). "It is a nice question," stated McCosh, "whether

evils may not arise from sports in no way under control of the College authorities.” (Smith, 372)

The formation of the faculty athletics committees was a direct result of the vast amount of time faculty found themselves devoting to the discussion of issues regarding intercollegiate athletics. Faculty athletics committees were a practical system for addressing emerging athletics problems such as the number of days student-athletes were spending away from campus, the use of professional athletes in contests, and betting by athletes on their own games. The development of faculty athletics committees led to the introduction of the position of faculty athletics representative.

Before the turn of the century, nearly every institution had formed an independent athletics committee comprised of faculty members. At the time, some faculty members thought it frivolous to be involved in the effective administration of intercollegiate athletics. “Busy faculties have neither the time nor the inclination to form and hold a consistent policy in regard to athletics,” wrote Harvard historian Albert Bushnell Hart in 1890 (Hart, 69). Most athletics committees were comprised solely of faculty, but committees at a small number of institutions, such as Yale, were staffed by current student-athletes and alumni. These committees were formed to respond to any issue directly involving the athletics department. But the varying rules imposed by the various faculty athletics committees began to give significant advantages to some institutions, signaling a trend toward inter-institutional regulation of collegiate athletics. Despite the reforms, there had been no initiatives to create an institutional policy applicable to each of the leading Eastern colleges.

But this was not the belief of Harvard President Charles W. Eliot, who had voiced his support of the inter-institutional control of athletics in a letter to other New England college presidents in 1882. Yale faculty responded by continuing their tradition of inaction, maintaining the structure and administration of their powerful collegiate athletics program. The Harvard Athletic Committee, largely in response to Yale’s efforts to resist inter-institutional control, called to order a meeting in December of 1883 to be attended by the faculty athletics representatives of eight institutions: Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Columbia, Penn, Trinity, Wesleyan, and Williams. The faculty athletics representatives who attended developed eight specific resolutions, as schools still favored self-control of their own departments. “The management of athletic sports might widely be left to the students,” said Yale’s E.L. Richards, summarizing the views of many faculty (Richards, 1).

As “professional” coaches began to be hired and student-athletes continued to accept various forms of payment for their services, the faculty, alumni and students of several colleges met yet again in February of 1898 in an attempt to address a myriad of concerns. The seven present-day members of the Ivy League, minus Yale, met in Providence, Rhode Island, for the Brown Conference of 1898.

A Brown professor, Wilfred Munro, chaired a faculty committee formed during this conference. This committee met several times throughout the spring of 1898, publishing the 1898 Report on Intercollegiate Sports (Smith, 378). However, the 20 suggested proposals of the Brown Conference were not accepted by the vast majority of schools across the nation, nor were there suggestions of yearly conferences to debate the issue.

The proposals from the Brown Conference met opposition from many faculty who viewed athletics as activities that should be left to the students' control. But in December of 1905, facing a disturbing increase in the number of serious injuries and deaths resulting from student-led football contests, Chancellor Henry McCracken of New York University called a meeting of faculty athletics representatives from Eastern colleges. Though his first attempt proved unsuccessful, McCracken called a second meeting on December 28, 1905, that drew representatives from 68 universities. The group voted to form a national athletics body called the Intercollegiate Athletic Association of the United States (IAAUS). Seven years later in 1912, the name was changed to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), and the goal of a national governing body for intercollegiate athletics was realized.

The formation of the NCAA and the founding of numerous faculty-led athletics conferences marked a high point for faculty control in intercollegiate athletics, as the organizations served as a call to action for faculty to correct widespread abuses of power. "The number of conferences and associations increased rapidly after 1906 And the power of the NCAA grew steadily because of the injection of a kind of crusading spirit directed to the spreading of the gospel of "faculty control,"" wrote Howard J. Savage in the 1929 Carnegie Report on "American College Athletics" (Savage, 31)

In the period between 1895 and 1914, eight major conferences or athletics associations were formed, including the precursors to the modern-day Big Ten, Southeastern, Missouri Valley, and Western Athletic Conferences (Savage, 200). The conferences were comprised of the faculty athletics representatives from member institutions. The representatives met, discussed how to better govern themselves, and passed legislation that bound the institutions by rules passed for the betterment of intercollegiate athletics. "Gradually the central offices acquired powers to enforce regulations by the imposition of penalties and assumed certain of the functions of investigating agencies," wrote Savage (200).

The faculty athletics conferences were driving forces for faculty control of athletics. A requirement of admittance into the Big Ten was that "only institutions having full and complete faculty control of athletics may hold membership in the Conference" (Marco, 423). The faculty athletics representative could not be anyone who received pay for serving in any position directly related to the athletics department. The Rocky Mountain Conference (now Western Athletic Conference) also stipulated that membership in the conference was excluded for anyone "whose duties include those of a coach or

manager” (Savage, 201). The Southern Conference (now Southeastern Conference) also insisted that “faculty members of the athletics committees in the different institutions of the Conference must assume the full responsibility for carrying out the eligibility rules of the Conference” (Savage, 201)

But forces were already wresting control away from the faculty athletics representatives. Institutions began to hire directors of physical education, the precursor to the position of director of athletics. These directors were responsible for the school’s athletics department and the department of physical education, which often included many student-athletes. In 1922, the Directors Conference was formed by athletics directors and coaches to help unite them in their fight to gain control of their athletics programs (Savage, 201). The directors immediately began assuming duties that were expressly stipulated in the conference handbooks to be the responsibility of faculty athletics representatives. “Directors and coaches have taken upon themselves some of the duties and prerogatives of the academic members,” wrote Savage in 1929 (201). Presidents were designated as bastions of power by the faculty athletics representatives in each conference, but the presidents were divided and unorganized and failed to unite as a group. The Directors Conference provided the structure that the coaches and directors needed to unite and seize control of major duties and activities related to the conferences and their individual institutions. “Academic teachers, although vouchsafed theoretical control, do not actually control the athletics of their institutions,” Savage reported (201).

Faculty athletics representatives remained a diverse group, while organizations such as the College Football Coaches Association helped to unify coaches and athletics administrators. The position of faculty athletics representative e was still loosely defined by a wide variety of job descriptions penned by institutions and conferences with varying sets of expectations. There ws no formalized handbook or national organization for faculty athletics representatives, nor was the position defined specifically on a national level. Faced with these challenges, former NCAA President Earl Ramer initiated a national study to gather information about the position of faculty athletics representative and the role of the athletics committees in intercollegiate athletics. The aforementioned study, begun in 1977, was endorsed by the NCAA Research and Executive Committees, and had hoped to shed some light on the nature of the position of faculty athletics representative, including the position’s inherent functions, activities, and problems. The two-year study, in the words or Ramer, “originated in the feelings shared by hundreds of faculty athletics representatives that too little is known, generally, about their own positions and about institutional athletics committees” (Ramer, iii).

The study revealed that, among the 723 NCAA member institutions, 108 still did not have a designated faculty athletics representative. The vast majority of these institutions were in Division II and III and employed athletics directors or prominent coaches who were also members of the faculty (Ramer, 2). In addition, the study found that more than half of NCAA institutions had a designated faculty athletics representative position for over 25 years (Ramer, 8). Ramer concluded

that, in the typical case, the faculty athletics representative was a position chosen by the president of the institution to assist both members of the faculty and the athletics department in the interpretation of NCAA and conference regulations; certify the academic and athletics eligibility of student-athletes; serve as a representative for the conference and/or the NCAA; and advise the athletics department on matters related to athletics (Ramer, 8). More generally, the faculty athletics representative was charged with promoting understanding of the relationship between athletics and the overall institutional goals of academic integrity and responsibility. Ramer also offered several recommendations for the future operation of the position of faculty athletics representative. He recommended a broader sharing of information about the position to develop a better understanding of its functions and practices, and how they vary by institution. Ramer also suggested official recognition of the position in NCAA publications and the promotion of ethical decision-making among faculty athletics representatives.

The exhaustive study not only uncovered meaningful information about the position of faculty athletics representative, but more importantly, it served as a impetus for change. The NCAA, responding to one of Ramer's recommendations, produced the first Faculty Athletics Representative Handbook. This handbook included specific recommendations for prescribed duties and responsibilities of faculty athletic representatives on each campus. The handbook also included suggestions that individual institutions develop a position description, commit institutional resources to the position, and insist the significance of the position is recognized by both the president and faculty governance structure of the institution (Faculty Athletics Representative Handbook, 3).

The Ramer Report and the corresponding response from the NCAA provided needed momentum for faculty athletics representatives on a national scale. Faculty athletics representatives convened in a special meeting at the NCAA Convention in 1985 to discuss issues related to the position and to the formation of a national organization of faculty athletics representatives. In 1987, a task force of faculty athletics representatives was formed to facilitate feedback on the newly formed NCAA Presidents Commission (Faculty Athletics, 13). This task force participated in other activities including the review of pending NCAA academic legislation. Two years later in 1989, this task force ratified by-laws that formed the basis for the first national organization of faculty athletics representatives, the Faculty Athletics Representatives Association (FARA).

During the late 1980's and early 1990's, heightened criticism was evident surrounding the recruiting and academic abuses taking place in collegiate athletics and the need for reform. The faculty's involvement, or lack thereof, was a major part of these criticisms. "The recent sports scandals suggest at least two significant issues relating to the faculty's role in athletics. First, why did not faculties assume a greater oversight role over the conditions of big-time sports? And second, can we expect a better faculty performance in the future?"

commented Weistart in an issue of "Academe," a bulletin of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) devoted to collegiate sports (Weistart, 12). Faculty were called to take a more active role, becoming "the most – rather than the least – involved of constituencies" (Strohm, 11). On October 19, 1989, the trustees of the Knight Foundation created the Knight Commission and directed it to propose a reform agenda for intercollegiate athletics ("Keeping Faith with the Student-Athlete, v). A message to the faculty was included in the first report of the Knight Commission stating, "The evidence presented to the Commission indicated that some faculty athletics representatives have not fulfilled their potential as guardians of the academic interest. Your task is to help insure that our institutional representatives to the NCAA are not confused about their purpose: ("Keeping Faith with the Student-Athlete", 26).

One of the driving forces in the development of the Faculty Athletics Representatives Association (FARA) was a desire to enhance the role of the faculty athletics representative in the governance of intercollegiate athletics. The formation of FARA helped to realize long sought-after goals of cohesion among the diverse group of faculty athletics representatives across the nation, as well as helped to ratify specific NCAA legislation relative to faculty athletics representatives. In January of 1989, the NCAA formally adopted legislation requiring each NCAA member institution to designate a specified faculty athletics representative (Bylaw 6.1.3). The faculty athletics representative shall be a member of the institution's faculty or an administrator who holds faculty rank and shall not hold an administrative or coaching position in the athletics department (1997-98 NCAA Division I Manual, 48). In 1992, FARA made the important decision to draft and adopt guidelines for the duties and responsibilities of faculty athletics representatives, "A Statement of the Role of the Faculty Athletics Representative" (Faculty Athletics, 14).

Despite increased knowledge about the FAR position, the formation of a national association, and the standardization of many functions and practices of faculty athletics representatives, faculty involvement continues to be one of the more controversial issues in intercollegiate athletics. Some faculty athletics representatives are given significant influence or control by their presidents or chancellors over institutional athletics matters and activities. Other faculty athletics representatives report directly to the CEO of the institution with recommendations or information, and the CEO then utilizes this information to make his or her own decisions on matters related to the department of athletics. Similarly, some faculty athletics representatives are given considerable amounts of institutional support to conduct their duties, others are not, while still others may have little need or interest themselves in such support.

Over the nearly 150 years of collegiate athletics, faculty athletics representatives have proved to be an important resource in the development of a collegiate athletics program that is a significant part of the overall educational experience. It is important that these faculty athletics representatives are informed of the role that they are to fulfill, are provided with appropriate resources and support on

behalf of the institution, and are recognized both within their institution and externally by the NCAA and other associations involved in the governance of intercollegiate athletics.

Note: Sincere thanks to Prof. Carol A. Barr, Ph.D., of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, for her permission to reprint this history, which first appeared in the August, 2002 FARA Survey Report.

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