

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE

Senate Committee on Admissions
(Final; Action)

AD.11.01 **Proposed Amendment to the Admissions Task Force Report** regarding communications on the admission status of recruited wheelchair athletes.

BACKGROUND

On September 30, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Richard Wheeler communicated to Interim Chancellor Robert Easter the results of his office's evaluation of the issues concerning the admission of wheelchair basketball athletes. These concerns were brought to Dr. Easter's attention by Dean Tanya Gallagher and the Division of Disability Resources (DDR) and Educational Services. Specifically, the implementation of the Admissions Task Force recommendations last year inadvertently cut off the flow of pertinent and important information necessary for DDR and admissions officials to fully and efficiently consider and recruit wheelchair basketball student-athlete applicants. Despite the Admissions Task Force's expressed intention not to do so, a similar issue was created for the Committee on the Admission of Student Athletes (CASA) regarding the admission of student-athletes for NCAA sanctioned sports. This error was corrected with the published 2010-2011 CASA Guidelines that reinstated the previous practices allowing Division of Intercollegiate Athletics (DIA) representatives to communicate with admissions officers about an applicant's academic and athletic record, existing DIA academic support structure, and likelihood for academic success as a part of the CASA review process. Communications are expressly limited to those topics and to DIA representatives. However, as wheelchair athletics is not an NCAA sanctioned sport, the admissions process for these student-athletes is not covered by CASA guidelines, and therefore the communications issue still exists.

Consequently, in order to serve our commitment to diversity and inclusion, it was recommended by Dr. Wheeler's office and approved by Dr. Easter that modifications be made to the restrictions on communications between admission officers and campus staff engaged in recruiting wheelchair basketball student-athletes. Specifically, it was recommended that the following amendment to the Admissions Task Force's recommendations be reviewed by the Senate Admissions Committee and Senate Executive Committee and adopted (an equivalent statement is present in the CASA Guidelines):

"To facilitate timely review, coaches for wheelchair basketball athletics, or their designees, may discuss a recruited student athlete's application, academic record and athletic performance/potential with admissions staff members and/or employees with admissions responsibility prior to and during the admissions review process to ensure materials are complete, provide information relevant to the review process, screen credentials, etc."

SENATE ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Senate Admissions Committee has carefully reviewed the proposed amendment. Considering:

- the CASA process was extensively reviewed by the Admissions Task Force and they specifically stated their confidence in and intent to not alter that process, and
- our committee's immediate charge is not to re-review existing admissions processes, but rather to assess compliance with those policies and processes set forth in the recent admissions reforms efforts,

the committee proposes the following:

1) The proposed amendment to the Admissions Task Force recommendations be approved with the caveat that the final "etc" be removed as we feel that term leaves the admissions review process too open for inappropriate external or internal influences.

2) The recommended amendment would read:

"To facilitate timely review, coaches for wheelchair basketball athletics, or their designees, may discuss a recruited student athlete's application, academic record and athletic performance/potential with admissions staff members and/or employees with admissions responsibility prior to and during the admissions review process to ensure materials are complete, screen credentials, and provide information relevant to the review process."

3) Our committee recommends in our soon to issue One Year Admissions Review Report that we review the CASA process in depth during the current academic year and assess whether that process is adhering to its published guidelines.

Senate Committee on Admissions

Michael Biehl, Chair

Britney Boyde

Heather Cupps-Miller

Christine Coraglio

Pradeep Dhillon

David Forsyth

Diana Grigsby-Toussaint

Kevin Hamilton

Christine Hurt

Jack Juvik

Yasmine Kumar

Eric Meyer

Matthew Nickrent

Jeremy Tyson

Edelyn Verona

Chi-Fang Wu

Kimberly Brown, *Ex officio*

Elizabeth Kibler, *Ex officio*

Stacy Kostell, *Ex officio*

Keith Marshall, observer