

**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE**

Committee on Committees  
(Final;Action)

CC.12.12 Approval of Nominations for the Athletic Board

**Background**

The Athletic Board consists of seven faculty members, appointed by the Chancellor from nominations by the Senate, and two students appointed by the Chancellor from a slate of four candidates from the Illinois student government.

Terms of faculty ordinarily shall be four years; terms of students ordinarily shall be one year, with the possibility of reappointment for an additional year. Continuing faculty members of the Athletic Board and the expiration of their terms are as follows:

Cleo D'Arcy	ACES	2015
Rayvon Fouche	LAS	2014
Margaret Kelley	LAS	2013
Mary Mallory	LIBR	2012
Michael Raycraft	AHS	2015
Brent Roberts	LAS	2014
Thomas Ulen	LAW	2013

The Committee on Committees recommends approval of the following slate of nominees.  
(Submitted interest statements for nominees are attached.)

**Nominations**

To fill one faculty positions for four-year term expiring in 2016:

Adrienne Dixson	EDUC
Joyce Wright	LIBR

To fill two student positions for one year terms expiring in 2013:

McKennon Biers	BUS
Tiffany Gholson Johnson	EDUC
Imran Kazmi	AHS
Christine McCarthy	BUS

**Committee on Committees**  
Bettina Francis, Chair

Nominations from the floor must be accompanied by the nominee's signed statement of willingness to serve if elected. The statement shall be dated and include the name of the position to be filled. If present, the nominee's oral statement will suffice.

## **FACULTY NOMINEES**

### **ADRIENNE DIXSON (EDUC)**

I am writing to you my recommendation of Dr. Adrienne Dixson, an Associate Professor in the Department of Education Policy, Organization and Leadership (EPOL), for participation on the Division of Intercollegiate Athletics (DIA) Board as a faculty representative. I have known Dr. Dixson for more than ten years and I just recently served as the chair of the departmental search committee that brought her to campus for the start of Fall 2011. I feel that she would an excellent addition to the Athletic Board and has the integrity, work ethic, and disposition that would be valuable asset to the mission of the University, Chancellor's Office, and the DIA.

Dr. Dixson is one of the leading scholars in Critical Race Theory. She is the President of the Critical Race Studies in Education Association (CRSEA); her scholarship is read extensively and highly cited; and her theoretical framing of CRT in educational research has directly influenced a current generation of CRT scholars in the field. She is a scholar of national prominence and her reputation and work ethic would be a high-value addition to the Department.

Her immediate contributions to the Department and University are self-evident for any viewing her vita. She has through the years sustained a career of excellent scholarship and has pursued external funding to support her research initiatives. She has an outstanding record of working effectively with diverse groups of graduate and undergraduate students and she actively seeks to be a mentor to all students she meets. After she was hired, I was surprised to learn that EPOL students, in the wake of having a void in the Department with the departure of its CRT expert, had been reaching out to Dr. Dixson for mentorship, advice, and collaboration prior to the position at Illinois being proposed, let alone advertised. She was assisting our students while on faculty at another institution, the Ohio State University, not because she thought it would lead to a job offer, but because she felt obligated to assist students in need of guidance. I think of all the information I have come to know of Dr. Dixson, this anecdote stands out the most to me in my recommendation of her to serve on the Board.

Dr. Dixson is more than a Departmental hire; she is an ideal College and University hire. Beyond her excellent record of scholarship and engagement in Critical Race Theory, her teaching attributes and contributions, and her mentoring of students, she has a demonstrated capacity to work across the differing concentrations in Education Policy, Organization and Leadership (EPOL), departments in the College, such as Curriculum & Instruction (CI), and even outside the College in African American Studies. She has quickly found her niche in the university as she is the current co-chair/president of the Black Faculty and Academic Professionals Alliance (BFAPA). Moreover, she has repeatedly been a resource to me in my new administrative role as Associate Dean for Academic Programs in the College of Education and faculty athletics representative for the Big Ten.

With regard to her activities with athletics, as both a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin, Madison and as a professor at the Ohio State University, she has worked informally with collegiate student-athletes either advising them academically and/or providing academic support in their coursework. As a graduate student, she was an informal mentor for student-athletes of color through her work as the President of the Black Graduate Student Association. The organization worked with undergraduate students, both athletes and non-athletes. She assisted them in applying for graduate school. As a professor, she worked with the Todd A. Bell Center for African American Males at The Ohio State University. In this capacity, she helped young men, again, many of whom were athletes, maintain their academic achievement and aided them in considering graduate school upon graduation from OSU. She would be an ideal member for the student services and public affairs committees in the DIA.

When I told her of my experiences on the Athletic Board and working with the DIA, she informed me that, as a professor of a major university in the Big Ten, it has been one of her goals to work with and on the behalf of student-athletes in a more formal context. She is an avid sports fan (bigger than me); has

two sons who played football in high school; has intimate knowledge of the Big Ten; and is someone who has had the privilege of working with Athletic Director Gene Smith at OSU. It is Dr. Dixon's firm belief that it is essential for student-athletes to have substantive and prolonged contact with faculty and others who can serve in an advisory capacity and advocate for them to be a success in life. As a person who has worked with student-athletes in this capacity, I firmly agree and believe she would be an excellent addition.

As a member of the Athletic Board for five years and now as one of the two faculty athletics representatives for the Big Ten and Chancellor's Office, I would be honored if Dr. Dixon were my colleague on the Board for the DIA. She is truly a remarkable individual who brings immediate value to the Board and has all the attributes that define the high integrity and academic success expectations this University and the DIA have of its leadership, personnel, and student-athletes.

Christopher M. Span

### **JOYCE WRIGHT (LIBR)**

Professor Joyce Wright is Associate Professor of Library Administration in the University Library. She has worked at the University for twenty six years. Professor Wright was director of the Undergraduate Library for thirteen years. Currently she coordinates the Agricultural Communications Documentation Center at the ACES Library, she also works in the Ricker Library of Art and Architecture.

During her tenure in the library she has served on many library and university committees. She chaired the Library EEOC Committee, Social Events Committee. In 1990 she was elected to the faculty senate. Chaired several library search committees and served on the search committee for the current Director of Intercollegiate Athletes. She currently serves on the Avery Brundage Scholarship Committee and the Board of the Spurlock Museum, Black Faculty and Academic Professionals. She is an active member of the American Library Association where she serves on the ALA Committee on Accreditation for Library Programs in the United States and Canada, Member of the Association of Research Libraries Mentoring Program. She has worked with the local chapter of the American Library Association, member of St. John The Divine Episcopal Church.

### **STUDENT NOMINEES**

#### **MCKENNON BIERS (BUS)**

I have grown up bleeding orange and blue, and now that I am a student, my passion for everything Illini has only intensified. I am interested in serving on the UIUC Athletic Board because I want to improve something that I care so deeply about. For many years, my family had C section tickets in the top row of Assembly Hall, and I loved every minute of it. Even now that I get to enjoy games from the best seats in the house with the greatest student section in the country, I try to not take a moment for granted. As my responsibilities within the Orange Krush have increased, my interest has only continued to grow. For me, it is exciting to meet at Bielfeldt to discuss matters related to Krush. This excitement only intensifies when I realize that I am in the same building where the entire athletic program is run. Through meetings there, and interactions with those who work for the Division of Intercollegiate Athletics, I have become fascinated with the operations of the department. This is something that I want to continue to explore; I'm eager to immerse myself as much as possible. By participating on the UIUC Athletic Board, I believe that I will not only be able to continue to escalate my interest in Illinois athletics, but more importantly provide solid contribution that is able to further the growth of Illinois Athletics as a whole. For the past year, I have served on the Illini Pride Executive Board with the position of Orange Krush Chair. This position has given me the opportunity to lead and provide members with the ultimate fan experience while supporting our 21 varsity sports programs. At the same time, I have been able to form and maintain solid relationships with many individuals who work for the University of Illinois Division of

Intercollegiate Athletics administration. For example, this year I worked with Carrie Snyder and Jennifer Larson of the DIA administration to plan two Orange Krush Road Trips. This was a tremendous opportunity, as was the chance to visit the athletic facilities at Michigan and Nebraska. Visiting other athletic facilities allowed me to see the strengths of other schools, and this knowledge will hopefully be able to improve our own athletic department. As a result of these experiences, as well as those that have I have had in serving as the Brotherhood Co-Chair for the Delta Sigma Pi professional business fraternity, I have been able to significantly improve my communication and organizational skills. I have learned the value in planning ahead, and that following through on actions is crucial to achieving success. In short, I am extremely passionate about Illini athletics and I would like to help the UIUC Athletic Board in every way that I am able so that others are able to discover their passion for Illini athletics as well.

#### **TIFFANY GHOLSON JOHNSON (EDUC)**

I feel I am qualified to serve on the Athletic Board for numerous reasons. Sports have always played a major role in my life as a supporter or an athlete. I firmly believe sports is an essential part of any school experience leading to friendships, knowledge, time management and leadership skills, future opportunities, travel, and academic motivation. Though my PhD work is in another area, I plan to study the world of sports once done. As an alumni, current student, parent, and community member, I feel I have a variety of knowledge to assist this board in achieving its educational objectives concerning U of I's varsity sports program. \*I am pursuing my 3rd degree at the University of Illinois and I have been in this community since 1988. \*I was a football recruiter in my undergraduate years and was married to a U of I football player. I learned a lot of the "inner workings" though those capacities. \*I was a leader in other ways during my Bachelors and Masters programs. I sat on a Panhellenic Chancellor Committee (1992-1993) and a Graduate Social Work Committee in the past (1999-2000). \*I was in leadership capacities in undergrad as president of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and as president of the Black Greek Council president. \*As a community member, I have coached sports through the YMCA, Girl Scouts, and Central High School. \*I have children who have been and are currently involved in sports through the Champaign School District. As a booster parent and volunteer, I am aware of many of the issues surrounding sports and athletics. \*I am also a school social worker at Central High School and I am very familiar with eligibility, Title IV, IHSA, NCAA, and other policies and governing bodies surrounding sports. \*I continue to be a supporter of U of I athletics and a supporter of sports at every level. Through this community, I know many who have played or been affiliated with sports in some capacity at the U of I. What I do not know, I am willing to learn.

#### **IMRAN KAZMI (AHS)**

I am interested in serving on the UIUC Athletic Board for a number of reasons. I am a big fan of Illini sports and attend a plethora of sporting events for many different teams. Part of why I am able to do this is because I am a member of the Athletic Bands here at the University of Illinois. I participate in the Marching Illini and I serve as the Section Leader for the Sousaphone Section. We perform at all homegames as well as playing at pre-game pep rallies and other events during the Fall semester. Additionally, I am a member of the Basketball Band at the University. We perform at each men's and women's home game and travel with the team to the Big Ten and NCAA tournaments. As a frequent viewer of Illinois athletic events, I would be delighted to help advise the Chancellor and Athletic Director on the fiscal operations of the varsity sports program. I believe that I am qualified for this service because I have served in such a capacity before. I was a member of a Student Advisory Committee for the class, FSHN 120 with Professor Rebecca Roach. Additionally, I am an Assistant Teaching Assistant for Dr. Stephen Notaro in CHLH 455, Health Services Financing. In this class, we often discuss financing for hospitals and other large institutions. I also serve as Executive Vice President of Finance of the RSO-Future Health Care Executives. In this group, I keep track of expenses and write and process checks to cover for expenses of guest speakers and lecturers. I would be very comfortable discussing financing on this committee.

**CHRISTINE MCCARTHY (BUS)**

Sports have always been a major part of my life; whether participating in actual games or cheering on my favorite teams, I cannot remember a time in my life where sports were not incorporated. Being a member of the University of Illinois community has allowed my passion for the schools sports teams to continue to grow. Many of the lasting memories I will take from attending the University of Illinois will be attending all the different sporting events and really feeling a part of a large fan base. As a member of the Athletic Board, I would harness my passion for U of I athletics and try my best to make a positive impact. As an avid attendee of numerous different varsity sports, I am a qualified person to give my opinions and advice as to how to better our athletic department. Through my years as an athlete, whether that be as captain of my high school lacrosse team or member of my volleyball team, I have seen how good teams can be run and also what problems can exist. Also, through numerous discussions with current Athletic Board member Jenna Sansing, I have a solid understanding of what the position requires and I feel that I can meet and exceed these expectations. My passion in life has always been to do marketing for a sports team. Through my education here at the University of Illinois, I feel that I am coming closer to reaching my goal each and every day. If given the opportunity to join the Athletic Board, I would use the knowledge I have gained through my marketing classes and give ideas on how the Board can better market all sports to the students and alumni. Besides the classroom knowledge I have gained, my previous internship with AT&T has given me invaluable experience. Though working with their sales department, I learned how to interact with others in a work environment on a daily basis which greatly improved my communication skills. I believe that the communication skills I have learned will allow me to

make a positive impact when participating on the Board. Also, while in the sales division at AT&T, I was able to participate in numerous sales meetings that allowed me to voice my ideas and opinions on new projects. The knowledge I have gained through this experience is something I will bring to the Board. Finally, this upcoming summer I will be interning with The Hub Group, based out of Downers Grove, Illinois, in their marketing department. Through my internships, I have gained real life knowledge and experience that will allow me to become an impactful member of the Athletic Board. It would be a privilege to become a member of the Athletic Board. If given this opportunity, I promise to give my full effort in everything I do and will be an extremely hard working member.