

October 2017

Faculty Congress FAR Report

In my role as Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR), I work closely with the Villanova Athletic Department on issues at the intersection of academics and athletics. In my interactions with various Athletic Department administrators and coaches (which occur every week, if not every day) and the athletics decisions/discussions in which I am involved, I am able to offer faculty perspective and advocate for faculty interests when appropriate. In addition, I have a standing meeting with Father Peter twice per semester to give him faculty perspective on athletics issues. In this brief report I highlight some of the issues that may be of interest to Faculty Congress.

Perhaps the topic that is of highest importance to faculty is how Villanova student-athletes perform in the classroom. I am happy to report that Villanova student-athletes as a whole have maintained 3.0 GPA or above for 28 consecutive semesters (3.257 for the 2016-2017 academic year). In 2017, a record 320 Villanova student-athletes were named to the Big East All-Academic Team. Three of our varsity sports teams were recognized by the Big East for having the highest GPA in their respective sports (one of which was Men's Basketball). Villanova has reached elite status in regards to Academic Progress Rate, with 15 teams scoring in the top 10 percent of all NCAA schools. There are numerous individual academic awards that Villanova student-athletes win each year. Forbes recently ranked Villanova as #19 in the nation in regards to universities that dominate both athletically and academically.

While having a role in helping our student-athletes succeed off the court/field is the most exciting and fulfilling aspect of my job as FAR, duties span far beyond student-athlete academic success. For instance, I am responsible for reviewing and signing off on all NCAA academic waiver requests and violations. Fortunately, in my time serving as FAR, the violations have been minor and more of a function of the voluminous NCAA "rule book" than any substantive violations that may cause serious harm to Villanova. In addition, I have been involved in various aspects of the Finneran Pavilion renovation. Construction is going smoothly and is currently ahead of schedule. I have been particularly active in renovation discussions when the decisions have implications for faculty. For example, the re-seating of the Finneran Pavilion will have a significant impact on faculty season ticket holders.

I am always open to feedback on how I can better represent faculty interests in athletic department matters. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Jeremy Kees

Faculty Athletics Representative

Richard J. and Barbara Naclerio Endowed Chair in Business