

NEW BRUNSWICK FACULTY COUNCIL Resolution on the Administration of the Athletics Program

Background

As we know, competitive sports, professional and collegiate, occupy an important place in American culture. For a substantial fraction of the population of the United States, virtually everything they know about a university is related to its athletic program. Therefore, it is critical for a university, especially a public university, whose funding depends in some measure on the good will of the citizens of its state and their legislative representatives, to make certain its athletics program adheres to the highest moral, ethical, and fiduciary standards. Also desirable is for an athletics program to be very successful in competition. Such success is not always possible consistently because to some extent it depends on factors that are difficult to control. But it should be possible at least to be consistently competitive.

Unfortunately, in recent years, the Rutgers New Brunswick athletics program has done very little to enhance the image of Rutgers, but a great deal to sully it. The list of missteps, blunders, and errors in judgment is a long one and they seem to have increased in frequency in recent years.

Football is the most visible of all collegiate sports. Over the last few years our football team has been less competitive than at almost any time in its 150-year history. The result of this non-competitiveness can be seen at any home football game where there are far more empty seats than attendees. In addition to the lost revenue from low attendance, there is also an enormous multimillion dollar payout as part of the financial arrangements put in place for the person who was chosen to lead our football program and was subsequently fired. In addition to these blunders, there have also been ethical and moral lapses.

A well run athletics program must be vigilant and must respond rapidly and appropriately to any information about such practices. Starting this spring, information about alleged abuse issues in our softball program was being provided by some student-athletes and their parents. In mid-July, information in connection with a legal action about alleged abuse issues became available to the athletics program. Neither the Athletic Director nor the sport administrator, who is also the Deputy Athletic Director, took any meaningful action and it wasn't until the press coverage in late October that there was any response to the issue. The response of the leadership of our athletics program to the abuse issue was egregious enough that members of the State Legislature have called for new leadership.

As members of the faculty, we are committed to doing everything we can to ensure that the reputation of Rutgers is as good as it can be.

Resolution

Therefore, be it resolved that the New Brunswick Faculty Council calls upon the President to dismiss the athletics director and to appoint an interim athletics director who -- assisted by advisors drawn from outside the intercollegiate athletics industry -- will conduct a complete review of the program's past failures and formulate a detailed action plan to reform its management and finances.

Copies of this resolution will be sent to President Barchi; Chancellor Molloy; the chair of the Board of Governors; the chair of the Board of Trustees; and NJ Advance Media.com.