



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH

VICE PROVOST FOR ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Memorandum of Understanding

The Bickerstaff Academic Center for Student-Athlete Services
Division of Academic Affairs
February 2020 (for 2017-18 review)

This Memorandum of Understanding outlines the consensus reached The Bickerstaff Academic Center (BAC) for Student-Athlete Services and the Division of Academic Affairs, based on the recent program review (self-study in June 2017, the external review in November 2017, and UPRC report in spring 2018). It describes the goals to be achieved, and the actions to be undertaken by all parties to this MOU to achieve these goals, during the next program review cycle. Progress toward goals is to be addressed in an annual report.

Bickerstaff Academic Center for Student-Athlete Services (BAC) serves as an academic support unit for NCAA student athletes. The BAC is the primary source of academic advising, academic support, and major and career information for all of CSULB's NCAA student-athletes. The central function of the BAC is academic advising and academic support for CSULB's NCAA student-athletes. Closely associated with that central function is ensuring that all NCAA eligibility requirements pertaining to academics are met, i.e. regulatory compliance.

In addition to their mentoring and tutoring programs, BAC has added 3 other programs since the last review: learning specialist services to student-athletes, a one-unit course offered each fall for incoming freshmen, and a monitored study hall that is offered on premises.

A number of strengths were identified in the reports:

- **BAC's Reporting Line:** Having a reporting line outside of the Department of Athletics allows for more engagement with faculty and direct education, than would otherwise be the case under alternative structures.
- **BAC's Advising Services:** The BAC's academic advising operations are well-regarded by the Department of Athletics; all staff are trained in advising, familiar with CSULB major and program options, and proactive. BAC has effectively used e-advising tools and learning analytics which are all incorporated into their advising services.
- **BAC's Tutoring Program:** They have a robust and very popular academic tutoring program using dedicated, paid, student tutors.
- **BAC's Mentoring Program:** Their mentoring program uses student mentors to meet regularly with targeted at-risk student-athletes. Mentors work in concert with the other

BAC programs: academic advising, study hall, and academic tutoring, to provide comprehensive support to the target population. Informal assessment measures indicate that outcomes for the at-risk student mentees are positive.

Areas of Concern/Opportunities were noted in the reports:

- With the exception of a decline in in-person advising in the 2015-16 academic year due to a software transition problem, usage of BAC has remained stable, primarily due to decreased capacity for growth. Study hall visits reached peak capacity for advising staff and space.
- BAC engages in formative and summative assessment, including surveys and pre-/post-testing. Areas of potential improvement include the development of student learning outcomes (SLOs) focused on non-cognitive success for the academic mentoring and tutoring programs, and the possible introduction of SLOs for the tutors and mentors who work with the student-athletes.
- The position responsibilities for the Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR) takes an excessive amount of time. Even with allotted re-assigned time, the representative is not able to work with all NCAA athletes. The burden the FAR might be eased a bit, and greater faculty support of athletics achieved, if the BAC developed a faculty mentor/liaison program.
- The peer mentoring program is strong. Peer academic tutors are paid by the Department of Athletics, and BAC typically hires 20-35 of them for an academic year. Increased training for tutors (and mentors) via the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) would further strengthen an already strong program.

It is therefore agreed that the BAC will:

1. Continue to follow all NCAA guidelines necessary to maintain accreditation.
2. Continue to assess student success using multiple metrics. In addition to using student learning objectives (SLO) to assess student-athlete advising, consider expanding the SLO approach to the academic mentoring and tutoring programs. Reports results annually, and in a self-study due June 2024 for a 2024-25 program review.
3. As resources allow, continue to provide staff with ongoing professional development and training opportunities offered by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA), the National Association for Academic Advisors of Athletics (N4A), the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), and CSULB.
4. Contingent upon funding, pursue certification for both the academic tutoring and mentor programs by the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) at the basic level (Level 1).
5. Consider development of a Faculty Liaison/Mentor Program to support and expand

upon the work done by the University's Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR).

6. Work with the Department of Athletics and Academic Affairs to address their needs for additional space as financial resources allow.
7. Work with the Department of Athletics and Academic Affairs to address their staffing needs as well as the need for ongoing and additional professional development and certification.

This MOU has been read and approved by:

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