

**Attachment B – Vision Statement for the Department of Athletics  
Director of Athletics Michael Goldberger – Fall 2007**

**Department of Athletics and Physical Education**

**Vision Statement**

**Fall 2007**

Introduction

“Brown University’s goal is to have an excellent athletics program that provides a superior experience for our students, and that is integrated fully into the academic mission of the University.” (NCAA Recertification 2006) At present, the Department of Athletics and Physical Education provides athletic and recreation opportunities for the entire Brown community. Our 37 varsity sports teams are made up of highly competitive, well-qualified student-athletes. The 16 club teams provide an outlet for Brown students interested in a competitive experience at a less-intense level than varsity. A variety of intramural leagues support physical fitness and competition within the Brown community, and our structured physical education classes and our available fitness equipment encourage physical activity and skills training for students, faculty and staff, and the local community.

It is the responsibility of the department to provide staffing, administration, logistical support, equipment and training/competition space for our varsity, club, intramural and recreation participants in a healthy and safe environment. As members of the Ivy Group, we believe in the principles of the league which state that intercollegiate athletics ought to be maintained within a perspective that holds paramount the academic programs of the institution and the academic and personal growth of the student athlete. Our facilities and programs are available for Brown’s more than 7,000 students and 3,000 faculty and staff. The number of participants in our programs annually is staggering: 3,000 intramural participants, 2,000 physical education class members, 500 club sport athletes, and nearly 900 varsity participants, not to mention the more than one thousand daily users of our fitness facilities.

The department is comprised of dedicated administrators who support the student-athlete experience, who support the recreation aspect of the university’s mission and the student experience, and who partner effectively with other administrators within the university. The department is comprised of dedicated coaches who believe in the Ivy competition ideal and can thrive within Ivy and NCAA rules, who teach student athletes life skills while encouraging excellence on and off the field. Finally, and most important, our department is comprised of student-athletes who seek excellence and who strive to fulfill both their athletic and academic potential. The Department employs 130 people to provide this broad based program.

**Planning process**

At the request of the Vice President for Finance, the Department of Athletics and Physical Education has taken a long and thoughtful look at how to best serve our constituencies. Where should this department be in five years and how well can our current budget provide us with the

resources to achieve our goals? While most of the passion that surrounds the department centers around the varsity programs, our review has considered every aspect of our department. We have looked in depth at the more than 60 budgets within the department. Senior members of the athletic staff met with coaches and administrators responsible for each of the individual budgets. Those coaches and administrators provided their insights on the resources needed to run those programs properly. This information was then reviewed by the senior administration of the department, the division budget director, and the Director of the BUSF. This group discussed the information, compared it with similar type institutions when possible and created a list of needs and associated costs to those needs. This list was then vetted through the President's Advisory Council, the Executive Leadership group of the Brown University Sports Foundation, the Vice President for Campus Life and Student Services, and the University Budget Director.

### **Developing a Vision**

As the various recommendations from coaches and administrators surfaced, it was clear to us that each individual steward of her/his budget had thought carefully about each facet of the operation. None of the requests or recommendations was capricious and none was out of line with what was available at other institutions. However, we know we cannot be all things to all people and it was incumbent upon us to articulate the building blocks around which the department of athletics and physical education should build its future. We knew that our plan should be student centered and we have used the Plan for Academic Enrichment as a guiding principle in our efforts.

What do we want a Brown student to experience in five years? How can we shape a plan for the future to allow our department to have a strong, positive impact on the lives of our students? We have looked carefully at this question and feel that we can make important strides through working in four main areas of strategic focus:

1. The Department of Athletics and Physical Education should be an integrated part of the educational mission of the university;
2. The health and safety of our students and athletes is paramount in all we do;
3. Brown is committed to being a competitive member of the Ivy League;
4. Our programs and facilities should reflect the excellence of the University.

### **Areas of Strategic Focus**

#### **1. The Department of Athletics and Physical Education should be an integrated part of the educational mission of the university.**

**Specific Objective 1** – Recruit and retain the best possible coaches, instructors, and administrators.

**Specific Objective 2** – Provide a broad based program for all students featuring multiple levels of commitment and opportunity.

**Specific Objective 3** – Provide and support programming that addresses the educational values of athletics.

The primary mission of any university is academics, but there is little doubt that athletics plays a vital role in the education of our students. Whether their commitment is through membership on a varsity team or through developing a healthy life style in one of our recreation programs, the contribution is immense; and we believe that almost all students consider themselves athletes at one level or another. All students can learn about teamwork, leadership, discipline, commitment, working with diverse groups of students in addition to developing healthy life skills. Surely, there are other places where these skills can be developed, but some would argue that athletics can do this better than any other discipline.

*For an athlete, their whole being is involved in their sport. Their bodies are involved, surely, but also their intellects, and also their emotional commitments, and also their very sense of self-identity. Because, then, of the very nature of athletics as involving the whole person, coaches are often able to involve the whole being of the athlete in a way that those of us who are classroom teachers struggle mightily and with relatively rare success to achieve. Is it any wonder, then, that the teaching they do, positively or negatively, will have deeper and more lasting affects. Yes, coaches are indeed teachers, and their power as teachers is immense, surely as great as any teachers in other disciplines. (Drew Hyland)*

It is indeed important to be sure that our University respects its coaches as teachers and places them in situations where it can teach those lessons. Similarly, one must realize that this works both ways – good coaches are good teachers, so too, are bad coaches teachers. We cannot tolerate bad teachers in any area of the university.

Thus, our goal is to recruit and retain the best possible coaches and administrators. We do not seek million dollar deals for our staff, but the fact remains that the funding level for many Brown coaches is well below the Ivy medians. Historical inequities between men's and women's compensation should be narrowed. Our assistant coaches should have realistic work schedules and should be compensated fairly, and our administrators should be paid at competitive levels.

We currently offer one of the largest intercollegiate programs in the nation with 37 varsity sports. However, this portion of the department services only 900 young men and women. Brown should expand its offerings in the areas of club sports, intramurals, physical fitness and recreation so that all students can, if they so choose, participate in a program that suits his/her needs. The Jonathan Nelson Fitness Center will provide increased space and opportunity for this expansion, but personnel to direct these programs and instruct new classes will need to be added. One of the important missions of our department should be to provide classes and supervision that promotes healthy life styles.

We need to provide consistent support and programming to provide for the bridging of academic and athletic goals. We expect to produce scholar-athletes whose performance in the classroom and on the fields of play are a reflection of the values of this institution.

## **2. The safety and the well being of our students and our student- athletes are paramount.**

**General Objective 1** – We must provide modern, safe facilities, venues, and equipment, for our students and our athletic teams.

**General Objective 2** – We must provide our athletes with well trained support personnel in crucial areas involving training and sports medicine.

**General Objective 3** – Travel to practice and competition must always be arranged with an eye towards safety.

There are inherent risks to athletic competition and training. That said, it is our responsibility to be sure that athletic participation and competition take place in as safe an environment as possible. Our facilities should be maintained and monitored for safety on a regular schedule. The equipment we make available to our students must be cared for properly. Budgets must be such that equipment can be replaced on a regular schedule and the risks involved must never be taken for granted. Home competitions require crowd control so as to provide for the safety of our athletes and the well being of our fans.

The Department must maintain an adequate staff of professional support personnel to provide for the safety and well being of our students and our athletes. Every aspect of our operation should put the safety and well being of our athletes first. This practice would extend from obvious areas like sports medicine and strength training to mundane areas like clean laundry to prevent staph infections.

Transportation is an area of great concern. The away competitions require team travel and athletes should be transported safely, using approved vehicles with trained/certified drivers. Steps have been taken in this direction already, but there are still areas of concern. Many of our teams (golf, skiing, sailing, and equestrian) practice at venues off campus and our students are often responsible for providing their own transportation to these sites. The nature of these sports does not permit for practice venues on campus, but we should take steps to reduce the use of student transportation.

### **3. Brown University is committed to being a competitive member of the Ivy League**

**General Objective 1** –We should derive great pride in our membership in the league and strive to compete as equal members of that league.

**General Objective 2** – Our administration must be staffed in a manner that they can perform the duties required by league membership and can perform them well

**General Objective 3** – Our varsity and club intercollegiate programs should be staffed and funded in a manner that allows each to compete on an equal level with other teams in the League

Brown University is a member of the Ivy League and it is certain that we derive great benefit from this membership. It is how we are best known and it is without doubt the biggest factor in our ability to attract faculty and students. That said, it is important to remember that the Ivy League is an athletic conference and as members we must abide by its rules, standards and policies. This membership sets standards and policies with regard to recruitment, travel, compliance, game expenses, and much, much more. Yes, this is a price for this membership, but the benefits are great.

At the present time, Brown sponsors the third largest total of intercollegiate teams in the conference with 37 and smallest number of administrators with 13. Only Harvard with 41 sports and Princeton with 38 exceed our offerings; yet Harvard has 24 administrators and Princeton 27 compared to Brown's 13. This difference should be addressed so that our administration can perform their work properly and with pride. In addition, these differences impact not only our intercollegiate teams, but also the ability of this administration to provide proper service and supervision to the non-intercollegiate offerings.

We are committed to providing our student athletes with the opportunity to compete on a level playing field with our Ivy brethren. Surely, we could field teams without matching the commitment of the other Ivy institutions and in some areas we may choose to do so, but the League's founding principles state that each member school, ". . . ought not merely to tolerate, but to value a balance of competitive success within the Group. Although schools may differ in those sports in which they excel, a reasonable competitive balance among institutions over time over all sports should be sought." We are committed to being an equal partner in our goal of competitive balance. This commitment translates to coaching staffs, travel and recruitment budgets.

#### **4. Facilities should reflect the excellence of our university**

**General Objective 1** –We should provide athletic facilities and venues that are safe, appropriate, and competitive within our league.

**General Objective 2** – We should provide and maintain athletic equipment so that it is adequate, safe and functional.

**General Objective 3** – New athletic venues should be planned with an eye towards future needs and an eye toward creating beautiful spaces on campus.

The current state of facilities at Brown is in serious need of support. This commentary reflects every aspect of operation from recreational athletics to intercollegiate. The current situation with the Smith Swim Center makes this abundantly clear. We recently brought in an outside consulting group, Cannon Design, who provided extensive lists of deficiencies. Our track facility is no longer eligible to host the league championships because of an inadequate number of lanes, our swim center (when it was open) was not adequate to host the league championships due to lack of depth. Visiting teams refused to play on our outdoor tennis courts due to the large number of cracks on the playing surface. Our gymnastics team has a member who is a current silver medalist at the recent world championships – yet we do not have a training space adequate for her work out on one of the four core events. Many of our varsity teams do not have locker rooms or are forced to share with one or two other teams. Additionally, many of our facilities are in severe need of repair – and I say this despite an excellent relationship with facilities management who provides us with what I am sure is more than our share of service.

Athletic equipment for our recreational athlete is inadequate. We currently possess over \$500,000 worth of cardio equipment, most with a lifespan of only 3 years, yet we have no budget to replace this equipment. Some of our varsity teams, like men's and women's track often require students to purchase some of their own equipment.

As we consider new facilities, it is crucial that we keep an eye on future needs. The Cannon Design group provided excellent benchmarks for where we should be heading in the future. For example, our facility for strength and conditioning is 4,000 n.s.f. Cannon Design recommended that our facility be 14,500 n.s.f. At this time, there is under consideration the possibility of adding this facility to the Nelson Fitness Center. This could be a very important first step for the future.

#### Conclusion

To achieve our goal of having “an excellent athletics program that provides a superior experience for our students and that is integrated fully into the academic mission of the University,” we must focus our efforts on the objectives outlined in this vision. Each area of strategic focus provides opportunity to improve the experience for the thousands of students who participate in athletics during their time at Brown. We know there will be obstacles, but believe we possess the desire and the ability to turn this vision into reality. Next steps include sharing the vision with other decision-makers in the University, developing a plan and timetable for implementation, and identifying funding resources.