The Ad Hoc Committee on NCAA Division I Athletics was formed in late April as a result of a petition by a number of Senate Faculty who were concerned with the implications of moving UCR's intercollegiate athletic programs from NCAA Division II to NCAA Division I. The committee was charged with evaluating the potential impact of such a move on the makeup of UCR's student body, the academic curriculum, and other legitimate faculty concerns.

The committee has met independently three times, and once together with Chancellor Orbach, Vice Chancellor Webster, Tony Norman (Faculty Athletic Representative), and Bob Gill (Executive Assistant to the Chancellor).

The committee polled the full faculty by e-mail in order to get a sense of what questions and concerns the faculty might have. We posed the following questions to the Chancellor and summarize his responses after each question.

QUESTION 1. Funding: How will the funding of the move to Division I be financed, beyond the $800,000 or so to be raised from student fee increases? Are there promises of significant private and corporate support? Will there be diversion of funds (now or in the future) that would have been otherwise dedicated to academic programs? Who will assume the financial risk of Division I status on academics if insufficient funds are not raised? In particular, will financing come from your "discretionary fund", funds that might otherwise be used for academic purposes? What probability do you see that there will be a shortfall of funding for athletics that will then require the use of funds that might otherwise be directed to academic and/or nonathletic ventures?

ANSWER: We are still working on defining expenses and funding sources. Vice Chancellor Webster has prepared a draft Budget and Resource Planning Model for collecting and analyzing this information.

QUESTION 2. Fund raising: Do you anticipate that the move to Division I will enhance our development effort? If so, by how much do you estimate such development growth? Will resources that could be used to develop other aspects of the campus, like the Colleges, Professional Schools and Library, be diverted towards athletics?

ANSWER: All studies indicate that athletic development does not compete with but rather complements academic Fund raising. Current estimates of the potential for athletic fund raising at UCR as a Division I institution are about $500,00 per year. Our total fund raising last year was over $27 million. I expect that the proportion of my fund raising effort that is committed to athletics will be comparable.

QUESTION 3. Admissions: How do you anticipate the move to Division I will affect our admissions policies? Will we feel pressure to dramatically increase the number of our special admits for athletic reasons? Is there a limit on the number of such special admits?

ANSWER: All requests for special action admission in Athletics are referred to a special action
advisory committee that has faculty representation. Athletics has a maximum number of special action admissions it can request, but it does not use all of them. We have obtained information on special action admission practices at two other UC campuses (UCI and UCSB) as well as information on advisory boards for these two campuses. All of this information will be considered in future planning.

QUESTION 4. Curriculum: Many faculty are concerned that Division I athletics will bring more pressure from student athletes, coaches, alumni, and so on for faculty to change grades, grade leniently, etc. Are there any safeguards envisioned against this? Faculty are also concerned with the creation of separate academic tracks for student athletes, whether that might entail particular classes or new "athlete-friendly" majors.

ANSWER: The faculty has full control of curriculum. The administration will not bring to bear any pressure for any relaxation of academic standards, development of "athlete-friendly" courses or majors, etc.

QUESTION 5. Will there be an athletic director who is also not a coach?

ANSWER: Once we declare Division I we will have an athletic director who is not a coach. If we wait a year to declare, we may, for budgetary reasons, have to continue to have an athletic director who is also a coach, although I want to make that change as soon as possible.

Finally, the committee has discussed the possibility of doing something creative and proactive concerning the interface between athletics and academics. We are concerned in part with what could be described as the "exploitation" of student athletes, and the many conflicts they inevitably feel regarding the pressures of simultaneously competing athletically and succeeding academically. We recommend that a faculty senate committee be established that would act in an oversight capacity and that would develop ways to monitor, advise, and mentor the progress of our student athletes. We feel given the fact that UCR is a small school with an excellent reputation for teaching and academics that we could create such a committee that would be innovative and help ensure that athletics and academics work together, rather than be, in theory or fact, opposed to one another. The committee will consider this possibility in depth and welcomes suggestions from the faculty.

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