Building & Supporting Contingent Faculty & Student-Athlete Relationships

Jenifer Gerard, M.Ed.
Advisor: Michele Welkener, Ph.D.

**Problem:** Increases in number of part-time faculty members may contribute to potentially poor learning outcomes for students & disenfranchised part-time faculty (Cox et al., 2009; McGrew & Untener, 2010)

**Solution:** Integrating part-time faculty into the university community may lead to positive outcomes for students, faculty, and staff (McGrew & Untener, 2010; Strom-Gottfried & Dunlap, 2004).

**DETAILS**

- Adjunct faculty have described feeling “invisible,” “second-tier,” and part of an “academic underclass” (Roueche, Roueche, & Milliron, 1996; Smith, 2007).
- Approximately 500 full-time & 350 part-time faculty teach 10K students at UD.
- Part-time faculty average 8.5 years teaching at Dayton and are active members of professional associations, active on campus & participate in service (McGrew & Untener, 2010).
- Intercollegiate athletics referred to as AHE’s “peculiar institution” and student-athletes commonly assumed to be academically underprepared (Gaston Gayles & Hu, 2009; Umbach et al., 2006).
- By challenging stereotypes and setting high expectations, faculty and student-athletes can “cultivate meaningful relationships” (Comeaux, 2011, p. 529).

**REFERENCES**


**ACTION PLAN**

**The Office of Academic Services for Student Athletes: Orientation for Faculty**

- Pre-Semester Overview
  - Academic Progress
  - NCAA Requirements
  - Student-Centered Services

- Faculty & Student-Athlete Engagement
  - Career
  - Personal
  - Sport

**RATIONALE**

- Positive socialization, communication and participation with multiple contacts throughout the institution strengthen part-time faculty members’ identity as part of the community (Roueche, Roueche, & Milliron, 1996).
- Learning the culture of an organization comes from ongoing in-person interaction (Roueche et al., 1996).
- Communication between faculty and student-athletes outside of class is positively correlated with learning (Gaston Gayles & Hu, 2009).
- Institutional and individual practices influence student-athletes’ engagement in “educationally purposeful activities” (Umbach et al., 2006, p. 712).
- Student outcomes correlated to faculty-student interaction: GPA, persistence, pursuit of post-baccalaureate study, and improved social skills (Cox et al., 2009).

**LIMITATIONS**

- Need to identify existing campus resources for UD’s part-time faculty; McGrew & Untener may be useful resource for follow-up.