

CalAggie9 – October 2011 “Intercollegiate Athletics review report”

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Topic: *The Chancellor just released a review of Intercollegiate Athletics (ICA) that found that the UC Davis model of athletics is inconsistent with the philosophy of NCAA Division I institutions and calls for many changes. These are summarized in the first few pages of the report but include, stepping away from the current principles of continually adding sports, not tiering sports in regards to resources, not tying ICA's budget to wins and losses, and permanently funding ICA with student fees. How do you feel about this? Is this a step in the right or wrong direction? If this is the direction that we go, what needs to be known by the decision-makers?*

Speaker	After reading the report, I have never used my red pen so fast. The tone was snotty and condescending and I hate what the Chancellor wants to do to athletics. We have a brand new stadium, let's not talk about bigger and better seating.
Speaker	First of all, I want to reference a previous speaker about the brand new football stadium. One thing proposed was to add 30,000 seats to it. I don't know when was the last time that we sold out the seats as is. The principle comparisons was between the Davis model and a business (Division 1) model, and whether Davis should change. Page 5 of the audit mentions Stanford and UoM as universities of a standard with huge budgets. I wanted to explore whether a university with strong academics and strong athletics can have strong athletics academically. I looked up a study to look at GPA of athletes among major universities (Berkeley, UCLA). Tom Lithca quote: UCLA has the biggest gap between sports and an SAT score. Schools with the best athletic records have the biggest gap between SAT scores among athletes and non-athletes. Also, universities are to allow student athletes to be exempt from minimum admission standards. More than half of athletes were special admits at a number of universities (including UCLA and Cal). More than 50% didn't meet admission requirements. Lithca (of UCLA) said the SAT gap is the price of filling a whole team.
Speaker	I wanted to give overview of the NCAA program when I was a student. There was the campus expansion initiative in 2003 which was when our NCAA grant was made. Any principles that were violated or changed were written in the ballot. The students voted on the increases. CEI was a broad based support of athletics programs.
Speaker	My area of research is on sports and part-time athletic trainers, as well as studying emotional impact. NCAA has a chart that will give you the odds- the likelihood of going to the pros is less than 1% and that is usually talking about the big sports. The Knight report is done year after year, and you can find out where the problem lies. Graduation rates among athletes has always been an issue. Graduation rates have been worked on with the new leader of NCAA. The scandals have continued and they are perpetuated by athletic staff, etc. There are serious ethical issues that people are not talking about. When we moved from D2 to D1, my biggest concern was where are the safeguards? How do we protect the teacher-coach-student relationship? I am not opposed to moving to D1(A), but services are being cut and tuition is being raised. Book prices are disgusting. 100% of the student body is going to be asked to

	financially support less than 5% of the student body.
Speaker	To respond to the comments about admissions, the wrestling team was put on academic probation before D1. Defense of this probation was basically that they had to meet the same entrance standards as everyone else. The problem is that once they get in here, they have an entirely different standard to compete in, they are put in an entirely different world. While their entrance level should be the same, they have different priorities once they are here. The “shame of college athletics” has specific examples of things that have happened in athletics.
Speaker	I think that the overall issue is where we are going as a school-notoriety, our national ranking. There’s no secret that the Chancellor thinks we should be the #1 public school and the way to get there is with an athletics program. But supporting 5% of the students is supporting athletics and supporting the university. If I had to put a gage on where the student perception is right now is that the students want it and faculty, staff, and alumni don’t. I think it’s interesting to look at the differences. We are at a crossroads. Going to division 1(A) can be positive and negative. A lot of people talk about it hurting academics, but UCLA and Berkeley are at the top. The general fear is that moving to a top athletic school is going to dampen our academic prestige and I think that some people feel you can’t have both, and I think that you can. Some of the things I’ve read, it seems like there are two distinct sides. Personally, I think we should be more concerned over adding 4,000 students to the university than this topic.
Speaker	I’ve talked to a few friends of mine about the topic, and what I really want to know first is “how does the student body feel about this?” From my conversation with student athletes, they hate the idea behind the study. If we want to gamble the risks to be a top Division 1 school, then maybe we should. But a lot of the promises that were made when the students voted to raise fees when going to D1 have not been kept. I don’t see any other way to do this than let the students decide how they did it initially.
Speaker	I think there is a lot of confusion about the issues here. We are already D1, it’s not about whether we are going to be D2. The only classification is in football regarding D1(A) and D1(AA). We have always patterned our program like an Ivy League not any other school. We’ve always had a high graduation rate athletically and I’m sure that concept will be kept going. As far as the students, it really is a student program-- they built the stadium, the ARC, the swimming pool. It’s where the students want to go. To be D1(A) you’d have to have 30,000+ seats. Ivy league has been doing this forever and they maintain theirs very well. I think a lot of the fears need to be heard. Going to 30,000 seats would take a while-this is down the line. That report is just a report, he’s getting a handle on what our philosophy is, it’s not what his philosophy is. The University will decide how it should move through the Division 1 ranks. I don’t see the problems that other people fear because the students want it and that’s why we are there.
Speaker	Well I agree with some previous comments. One is that there is absolutely no question that we can be D1(A) and have high academic standards, but there needs to be safe guards. From sources I have, they are already starting to change the percent of the teacher-coach relationship. The fact that we just lost a faculty rep is concerning. I would love to see Katehi recognize and understand the rich teacher-coach relationship. When you get into D1(A), you need to be clear that student athletes are there for student needs. This is going to take a long time to go D1(A), but the question

	<p>is: Do we continue to truly embrace the Ivy League model? The only business model we should be considering is how we can market ourselves differently than the 'traditional' business model.</p>
Speaker	<p>Someone mentioned the process of how this will go. There's a committee that has students-both athletes and non-athletes, faculty, and staff on it. There's a real chance within this room and the Townhalls to really put that recommendation forward. The committee's responsibility is to gather alumni, faculty, staff, and current students, but I think the student's opinion should be really sought after, they pay for 75% of it all. If you read the Dempsey report and look at other schools, there really is a really serious opportunity saying you can compete and you can have excellence in education. There's no other school like ours that has our program. There's a real chance establishing that ourselves and defining what those principles are. Why can't we add to what we have now? I know there will be a Townhall on Nov. 2nd and it will be great to talk about future implications. I understand fundraising and alumni networking will be an important component. Whether it will be completely thought out or not, a major stakeholder is the students. We pay double of what other schools do, and you wanna feel good when you go to a game, and you lose to a school that isn't as good as us we all leave feeling down. Imagine that for morale, talking to them, and the reaction they give you. It's like anything, going into something and doing poorly-it all correlates. It's tough to do stuff with so many stakeholders and it's hard to find the middle ground and not every one is going to be happy. There are issues with trust (regarding the last votes) but there are people listening and they want to present the Davis Way and that can still be, just maybe a little bit different from now-maybe a little more competitive.</p>
Speaker	<p>I think there are too many elements here: funding and culture. In terms of funding, one of the reasons we pay more than many other schools is that we don't tier our sports. This allows us to excel in some sports that aren't as high profile. The question is how does the funding relate to the culture. If we were to fund a D1(A) program, we would probably need additional student fees for new facilities. On the culture side, I'm not sure whether we want to go down that road. The 5,000 planned students is that many more students paying fees.</p>
Speaker	<p>To reference a few things about the Ivy League model, Yale was brought in as consultants when we started our model. That has always been what we have tried to use. I think it's something that's definitely possible. Our Chancellor came from multiple schools that had very large sports programs, it's what she's used to. I believe Katehi believes the sports can stand on their own. The push of where this is coming from, is that someone has been there before. The stadium was built a certain way so they can add up on top of what is already there. It was built with the 30,000 in mind--this is nothing new, now it's just coming to light. I also am a firm believer of this being a student issue. This is the student's school. It comes down to the students that are there. I agree that the student's view is pertinent and important. It may be not fair to say that one group should have a higher percentage on weight or voting, but students may need a bigger weight. One of the biggest things to point out is the term "business model". It can be taken 2 ways, or multiple ways. The way I see and agree with it, is that the only way that this program will be on a national stage is treating it as a business, this all comes down to money. It is an important thing to look at, but I don't think we should be afraid of that term, we need to talk about what it means and realize the athletic programs are run like businesses, which is why the Chancellor thinks it should stand on its own. You can't have your cake and eat it too.</p>

	<p>Regarding morale, I feel so bad for our football team. They get killed and you can't blame 'em. There are so many issues with morale and that they go through 4-5 weeks of losing. We are doing it for a business, I understand that -they are paying for us to play them and lose. That is part of the reason why we are taking those games, but I know that I couldn't take it if I were on the team. The Humbolt thing hurts, but I don't know if you can really blame them because they start off getting slaughtered. What's gonna get us past that hurdle? One could say that money could get us past that threshold. I think that this can be looked at in 2 ways-opportunity and threat. It can be taken as an opportunity if it is handled the right way. Change is scary and there is an immediate force towards seeing it as a threat as opposed to an opportunity.</p>
Speaker	<p>Money - the private schools are heavily endowed. We are bankrupt, we are losing staff, and students are being priced out of education. We shouldn't be putting any extra money towards sports. The phrase "dominate" the conference has come up a couple times. From a teacher perspective, when students come to you saying they have to leave for 'games'. When you get to big time sports, this is an issue. Also, all the student fees will go to support a big 'money machine' when we do away with tiering sports.</p>
Speaker	<p>Stanford has \$500 M in the bank for athletics. Many people have said that the 2 worst football games have been losing to Humbolt, and beating Stanford-because it established an expectation that we can no longer meet. I have a number of concerns that I hope the faculty will share about this model. I think number 1 is academic standards. The athletes are very similar to the normal student. I'm concerned about the number of student athlete opportunities. Summing those up in three words- cut cut cut. Only a few teams will be around and do well. A few years ago we had 800 student athletes, and I think there is an enormous benefit for having sports and athletics. We have not followed our major decisions. We've had recent improprieties in admissions, and I don't want this to be the tip of an iceberg. The athletic rep was dismissed-I don't think she was dismissed for proper reasons and I don't want someone to be let go because she's hardworking. The teacher-coach model doesn't have a lot of 50/50 jobs. It removes job security, I don't want to evaluate coaches on wins and losses. They have recently started asking coaches to fundraise, that's a big conflict of interest. The vast majority of schools lose money, all of those schools are in big 6 conferences. The chancellor has never really supervised athletics at any part in her career. She chose a consultant what she wanted to hear and that's who she chose. I think we are moving much too quickly, and she's trying to finish this by December and I don't think there's any hurry. Students should have the most say in what's going on here.</p>
Speaker	<p>This is a student university, and they should listen to the students. I would say Katehi doesn't lose sleep over how students think, but I do think she cares about how the Academic Senate thinks. I will say that this isn't surprising when she wants to be excellent across the board. This report wasn't about reducing the number of sports available here. What that does is break the contract that athletics made with students, in several ways. They have done this several times. I think that a more honest approach to this problem would have been the contract needs to be broken. But they can't do this because they wouldn't win the vote when talking about higher fees. Students should really be angry about the principles being abandoned with this 'model of excellence' governance. I think what makes this a great atmosphere is the family</p>

	<p>type of atmosphere, and that isn't in line with the business model.</p>
Speaker	<p>I find it interesting that athletics is always under such scrutiny, everyone has an opinion but it is a student program and they should decide what to do with it. I don't think other sports will dry up. What is the teacher-coach model? I've seen lots of programs over decades and we have been the model program in athletics for much of California. It was, and is, competitive, achieving, and has a very high standard. If it isn't maintained it's because we have been lax in our scrutiny. We are expected to do well. If you have 8 or 10 losing seasons you probably aren't doing a very good job. Should we maintain that because someone is a nice person? I don't think so. Maybe we do that in academics, I don't know. What we are trying to teach is how to compete favorably, respectfully, with dignity and how to achieve that in athletics. We have 40 sports clubs and lots of intramurals. Athletics affects everything if you aren't doing well. A young woman said she went to the Cal game that she had UCD shirt on but started to hide it as we were losing. Will it take us a long time to achieve a high level? I don't think so. This is for all sports, not just for football. Look at our women's golf team, they finished first in a very large tournament. Our women's basketball team played in the NIT two years ago and lost in overtime. Cal went on to win the NIT. Last year they were in the NCAA regionals. That is competing well and that's what we are looking for. It's about if we are competitive, not about winning and losing. Compromise academics? I don't think so. The university has always allowed students to travel regionally and nationally. There is nothing new here at all that I see and I see this as we finally got a chance to go D1 and compete with the best. All it really has to do with is who is coaching. It's like teaching-are they doing the best job.</p>
Speaker	<p>With regards to funding, I will put out some questions. It is definitely the students decision, but they need honest information. We hear it a lot about revenue producing and making a profit. Only 22 out of 200 universities are making a profit. The other question is in the history of Davis, what was the largest athletic donation ever made vs the non athletic donation? Non athletic donation - 25 million to degree program. Athletic - 2 million is the largest donation. Mondavi's made an investment in a long, sustainable career. It is my concern about overall life impact of athletics. So there are ethical principles here. We need to put something in place to address academic integrity and what is in the best long term interest of student interest.</p>
Speaker	<p>My background is a student-athlete, in a smaller sport and concerns with that. I was also on the advisory committee as a student and now as an alumni. It's an interesting place to be. I do see an issue with moving away from an educational model. Do we need the biggest <i>and</i> best players or strong athletes than can develop? If you change things a lot, then let's return student fees. It's interesting how the conversation has changed, because it used to be do you want to play the best teams? and now it's thinking of well, we don't want to get slaughtered. Any given day, any given team and sometimes it happens.</p>