

**Wells College**

**Department of Intercollegiate Athletics**

**Assessment Plan and Budget Request**

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## **Executive Summary**

Wells College Department of Intercollegiate Athletics continuously strives for daily improvement. In addition to our own goals and assessments we are assisted in our processes by the resources, rules and guidelines of the National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA). Our Department underwent 2 significant NCAA level assessments during the 2011 – 2012 academic year. Wells Athletics completed the NCAA Division III Athletics Program Assessment as well as the NCAA Division III Institutional Self-Study Guide in spring 2012. We have also made use of survey directed feedback from our student-athletes at the conclusion of each season. This data is shared with each Head Coach and is used to direct future initiatives, practices and policies. Additionally, the Department hosts monthly staff meetings where these issues are discussed and reflected upon. Further, at length discussions occur between each athletics staff member and the Director of Athletics at the conclusion of each academic year as part of their performance evaluations. We also derive direct feedback from the Student Athlete Advisor Committee (SAAC) which becomes the representative board for student-athlete feedback and concerns.

Wells Athletics has greatly expanded its sports sponsorship offering since the College become co-educational in 2005. While many of our programs are still in their infancy, we have made significant improvements in our quality of experience for our students since that time. This assessment plan will outline our goals and objectives and provide updates on each area as we continuously improve and seek to become a model NCAA Division III program, populated with teams and students who succeed in the classroom and on the playing fields.

### Wells College Missions Statement

The Mission of Wells College is to educate students to think critically, reason wisely, and act humanely as they cultivate meaningful lives. Through Wells' academic program, residential atmosphere, and community activities, students learn and practice the ideals of the liberal arts. The Wells experience prepares students to appreciate complexity and difference, to embrace new ways of knowing, to be creative, and to respond ethically to the interdependent worlds to which they belong. Committed to excellence in all areas of its reach, Wells College equips students for lifelong learning and for sharing the privileges of education with others.

### Wells College Intercollegiate Athletics – Mission and Philosophy Statements

The mission of the athletics program is to support the educational mission of Wells College. The Department of Athletics holds that participation in sport is an integral part of the culture in which we live and the values inherent in sport are parallel to those developed within the framework of a liberal arts education. We focus on providing an outstanding athletic experience that is designed to positively influence the life of every participant.

Wells College seeks to provide an equitable, diverse, and competitive intercollegiate athletic program that is properly administered, educationally sound, and a resource for enhancing community on campus. All members of the department of athletics and student athletes are expected to conduct themselves with the utmost integrity, ethical behavior and sportsmanship and comply with Wells College, NCAA and NEAC policies.

Wells College embraces the objectives and philosophy of NCAA Division III athletics.

- We support and encourage the concept of equal opportunity for all sports teams and subscribe to the basic tenet of fair and equitable treatment of female and male student-athletes.
- We value diversity and promote an environment that is free of intimidation or harassment.
- Admission, academic standing and academic progress of the student athlete shall be consistent with the policies and standards adopted by the institution for the general student body.
- It is the responsibility of the members of the Department of Athletics and all sport participants to follow sound principles of health, social and emotional development.
- Student-athletes shall be amateurs, motivated primarily by the physical, mental and social benefits to be derived by intercollegiate athletic participation.

## **Wells College Department of Intercollegiate Athletics Goal #1: Support Academic Mission of College**

**Objective 1)** Maintain proper perspective that students must place academics as their top priority above athletic endeavors.

*Assessment Measures/ Action Items* – Students will not miss class to attend practice or team function. Students will work with faculty members when conflict arises between class and competition or team travel for competition. Established the basic standard that a cumulative GPA of a 2.0 is needed for full participation in intercollegiate athletics. Use feedback from student-athletes end of the year surveys and SAAC feedback to ensure students know the order of our priorities.

**Objective 2)** Provide support structures, plans and goals to boost student-athlete academic achievement.

*Assessment Measures/ Action Items-* Support structures are put into place by listing available campus resources for students. Coaches are to meet with students on regular basis. Coaches are to use the Student-Athlete Academic plan which includes a phased chart of interventions based on cumulative GPA, a calendar of team events, a missed class chart and form letter to share with professors about potential conflicts.

## **Wells College Department of Intercollegiate Athletics Goal #2: Provide positive, competitive athletic experience for student-athlete. Focus is on participation within the sport.**

**Objective 3)** Provide a wide range of sports that fit with student body interests and culture.

*Assessment Measures/ Action Items* – Wells now sponsors 16 NCAA Division III teams. About 35% (183 roster positions during 2011-2012) of our students participate in at least one varsity team. We currently sponsor : M. Cross Country, W. Cross Country, Field Hockey, M. Soccer, W. Soccer, W. Tennis, Mixed Golf, M. Basketball, W. Basketball, M. Volleyball, W. Volleyball, M. Lacrosse, W. Lacrosse, Softball, M. Swimming and W. Swimming. Each team has a healthy roster with the exception of mixed golf and men's swimming. We have cancelled the 2013 mixed golf season due to low roster numbers and studying the feasibility of golf at Wells in the future. Our men's swimming team needs more members to ensure sponsorship is met. The NCAA requires 8 swimmers to meet sponsorship. Due to various reasons, out of the control of our coach, we have 9 swimmers remaining.

**Objective 4)** Schedule and play competitive NCAA Division III schools.

**Objective 5)** Earn playoff berths through effective conference play or at-large bids. Finish season with a winning record.

*Assessment Measures/ Action Items* – 15 of our 16 sports are sponsored by the North Eastern Athletic Conference (NEAC). For those 15 programs, much of the scheduling is performed by the Conference central office. We strive to identify similar, like minded institutions to schedule out of conference competitions with. We will only schedule NCAA Division III institutions for regular season play. In the past this was not always the case. Field Hockey is the only team not sponsored by the NEAC. We

attempted to enter the field hockey team into a different conference as an associate member but were rejected by 5 different conferences. We hope to join the East Coast Athletic Conference (ECAC), a large regional conference, which will allow for postseason play for the field hockey team and some other benefits for the other 15 teams. The NEAC, while very diverse, is our immediate and direct competition and our focus is on earning a conference playoff berth which amounts to finishing in the top 50% of the conference teams for most sports.

Objective 6) Hire and train coaches who will support athletics as an educational vehicle and develop an atmosphere of respect and who make use of positive reinforcement.

*Assessment Measures/ Action Items* – Question applicants about the role they perceive athletics filling on a college campus. Seek qualified, high quality coaches/ teachers to mentor our student-athletes. Through meetings and personnel performance evaluations, provide feedback on appropriate teaching techniques and styles. Use data from end of the year survey administered to each team to ensure coach is treating team with respect and being a positive force – specific questions about these issues are asked. SAAC feedback will also be used to assess progress and adherence to this objective.

**Wells College Department of Intercollegiate Athletics Goal #3: Strive to become model NCAA Division III institution.**

Objective 7) Make use of NCAA resources for continuous assessment, compliance and benchmarking in these areas: Organization/structure, compliance systems, fiscal practices, employment/personnel, recruiting, admissions and academic eligibility, financial aid, amateurism, awards and benefits, sportsmanship, game-day operations, sports information, sports medicine.

*Assessment Measures/ Action Items* – Through use of the NCAA Division III Athletics Program Assessment and the NCAA Division III Institutional Self-Study Guide, we were reassured that we have the basic systems and programs in place to work to become a model NCAA Division III program. Each of these reports dealt with the areas listed in Objective 7. We will remain true to the principles and practices outlined through this assessment process, but flexible to change as the department grows and matures and as new staff members are hired. These reports can be produced by anyone wishing to see them. They are on file in the Director of Athletics' office in the Schwartz Center.

In addition to these two assessment reports, we also administer and report to the NCAA several times a year on department and team level finances, sports sponsorship, game statistics, injury reports, and financial aid mechanisms and variances. We also report data to the US Department of Education to ensure equity in both opportunity and money spent between the two genders.

Objective 8) Provide Department level student programming that embraces NCAA Division III platform and values.

*Assessment Measures/ Action Items* – through use of NCAA grants, hire two speakers annually to speak about student related issues as identified by survey data collected by our Student-Athlete Development Coordinator. We also celebrate NCAA Division III Week and National Student-Athlete Day to recognize

the many positive contributions our student-athletes bring to our community. In addition, each program is responsible for conducting one large fundraising activity to help offset our rising operational costs. Each program is also responsible for conducting a community service event off campus to help foster a sense of the larger community and develop empathy within the student-athlete population. Coaches and teams will be evaluated based upon successfully offering and administering these activities.

**Wells College Department of Intercollegiate Athletics Goal # 4: Contribute to College's enrollment management plans through effective recruiting of qualified student-athletes and serving as a retention tool for the College to retain student-athletes at an above average rate.**

Objective 9) Through collaboration with Admissions Office, recruit 30 – 40% of incoming freshmen class each recruiting cycle. Each program has a set recruiting goal. A new recruiting goal is set each year.

*Assessment Measures/ Action Items-* Coaches are responsible for meeting these recruiting figures. We are anticipating struggling to meet these goals for some programs due to recent staff turnover. Coaches have a recruiting budget and recruiting software at their disposal to help meet these figures.

W. Volleyball	8
M. Volleyball	8
M. Soccer	4
W. Basketball	5
W. Lacrosse	6
Field Hockey	6
M. Lacrosse	9
Cross Country	8
M. Basketball	3
Swimming	13
Tennis	3
Softball	6
W. Soccer	8

Objective 10) Retain students within 85 – 90% rate. Students do not need to stay on team, but enrolled at Wells.

*Assessment Measures/ Action Items-* We believe athletics helps bond students to the institution and creates a social support system for them to rely upon. Data from across many college campuses supports this belief. Older Wells College data also supports this belief. In order to assure we are meeting this goal, we will collaborate with the Registrar office to determine retention rates at the conclusion of each academic year based on the number of students on the initial official roster prior to their first contest, with those students still enrolled at Wells College.

### **How Assessment Data Will Be Utilized?**

We will use the data discovered through our various assessments to thoughtfully reflect as a group during our monthly staff meetings and as individuals during the end of the year performance evaluations. Coaches also use the data and feedback to meet with their respective teams about issues that need improvement or correction. Over time, a culture of thoughtful reflection will need to be developed if we are to see the daily improvement we are striving for.