Assessment Plan Update
Athletics Department
June 15, 2006

Introduction:

We have continued to sharpen and clarify the assessment plan for the athletics department. As evidence, we have collected the following data during the 05-06 academic year:

1) Golden Eagle Scholar Athlete DVD.
2) Graduation Rate Information
3) Grade Point Average Information
4) Player Portfolio Pilot Project (women’s tennis)

This data will continue to support the program goals we have set for ourselves in the athletic department. These program goals emerge out of our departmental mission statement:

1) To grow deeper in our relationship with God, and our understanding of how to honor him through athletic competition.
2) To provide student athletes the opportunity for a life shaping experience.
3) To encourage student athletes to fully immerse themselves in the life of the college.
4) To consistently compete at the highest level sponsored by the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA).

All evidence is currently housed in the “Program Review” file in the athletic director’s office.

Describe Program Goal:

1) To grow deeper in our relationship with God, and our understanding of how to honor him through athletic competition.
2) To provide student athletes the opportunity for a life shaping experience.

Summarize Assessment Methods and Collected Data:

The assessment method for these program goals (obviously somewhat interrelated) will continue to be the Golden Eagle Scholar Athlete Award Banquet. The Spring, 2006 banquet is recorded on a DVD and housed in the “Program Review” file in the athletic Director’s office.
Interpret the Results:

The Golden Eagle Scholar Athlete continues to reach new heights. The following are excerpts from the Spring 2006 banquet.

One athlete says:

“Four years ago, when I was choosing a school, I was never pressured by family, coaches, or teachers to go to a specific place. So I chose to go to Westmont College as a personal decision. Spiritually, I did not share the same faith as a lot of the people at Westmont. Academically, I did the work, but (only) went to class to get the grades and keep the scholarship. Spiritually, I did not take a strong interest and basically went through the motions. However, as I went through Westmont, I used (the freedom the school gave me) to choose to take a semester off to study abroad. I also chose to take a season off from athletics. I also chose to make my faith my own, rather than being forced into it. I’ve learned the lesson of approaching tasks as opportunities, rather than obligations, and doing something because I truly loved it. I love to learn, I love to compete, and learning that lesson was so valuable and has led me to a year of success I would not have predicted.”

Yet another says:

“My determination and desire to be the best at both academics and athletics has proven to be an effective means to accomplishing the goals that I have set for myself. However, I wasn’t always happy. If I did not get an “A” on a test, or lost a basketball game, I found myself moping around and upset because I had not done as well as I should have. My mood and attitude became dependent on how I performed in the classroom and on the court. If I did well on an exam, or well in a game, I was confident, content, and cheerful. But, if I did not receive a good grade, or perform well on the court, I was irritable and annoyed. This was particularly true of my performance on the court. As any competitive athlete will tell you, they want to play well and they want to win. Fortunately for me, my four years at Westmont and especially my senior year, has proven to be an eye-opening experience. Under the mentoring of Coach McKnight (head women’s basketball coach), I have learned one of the most valuable lessons of my life: God’s love for me does not depend on my performance in the classroom or on the court.”

Finally, the President of Westmont College, Dr. Stan Gaede, closed the evening with these remarks of affirmation:

“I see in you exactly what we are trying to be as an institution. Westmont is a classic liberal arts college. That means we are about enabling young men and women to flourish as God intended them to flourish. That means it’s an institution that wants to bring together the head and the hands and the heart. That’s what we’re about and I see that in you. It’s not just about hands and feet on the court. It’s about learning, it’s about knowledge that becomes wisdom and is then applied to life. And it’s about heart, rooted in faith and about developing the courage and the will it takes to play the game, the game
on the court and the game of life. This evening I’m renewed in my knowledge of what we’re about as an institution.”

I think the Golden Eagle Scholar Athlete Award Banquet continues to serve as compelling evidence that we are accomplishing two of our program goals within the athletic department of Westmont College. The preceding remarks as well as the President’s summation reinforce that lives are growing spiritually and athletic experiences are helping to shape young men and women.

**Describe Program Goal:**

1) **That athletes receiving athletically related financial aid would graduate at or above the graduation rate of the general student population.**

**Summarize Assessment Methods and Collected Data:**

According to the data provided by Associate Provost William A. Wright (Congress mandated Student Right-to-Know Act), Westmont College student athletes who receive athletically related financial aid currently graduate at a higher rate than the general student population (athletic average-89%, all students-73%) for first-time, degree-seeking students (cohort year: 1999). The Student Right-to-Know Act document is housed in the “Program Review” file in the athletic director’s office.

In addition, the four-year average (cohort years: 1996-1999) indicates that student athletes receiving athletically related financial aid are graduating at 83% (as compared to all students at 74%).

**Interpret the Results:**

Westmont athletes receiving athletically related financial aid continue to graduate at a higher rate than all students. In fact, the % gap has increased slightly from last year’s SRTKA. These results indicate that Westmont athletes continue to fulfill their academic obligations in a way that meets or surpasses the general student body.

**Describe the Program Goal:**

1) **That the cumulative grade point average for all student athletes would be 3.0 or above.**

**Summarize Assessment Methods and Collected Data:**

Westmont College Registrar Bob Kuntz has provided information regarding student athlete grade point average. The cumulative grade point average for all athletes in 2003-04 was 3.12 with the following year (04-05) up slightly to 3.16. 2005-2006 showed a slight dip to 3.07 (with the three year average coming in at 3.12). The grade point average information is housed in the “Program Review” file in the athletic director’s office.
Interpret the Results:

This data indicates that Westmont student athletes are continuing to excel in the classroom as they far exceed the necessary 2.0 GPA, which is required to retain athletic eligibility.

Describe the Program Goal:

1) Each intercollegiate head coach will choose one of the following projects, whichever would work most effectively in his or her sport:

   a) Player Portfolio Project.
   b) Video Analysis Project.

The primary goal of this project will be for each head coach to document what he or she is learning about his or her athlete’s development.

These portfolios would represent a running dialogue between player and coach, focused primarily on the athletic development of the player.

Summarize Assessment Methods and Collected Data:

During the spring semester 06, Kathy LeSage (women’s tennis coach) initiated the first player portfolio project. She described the goal of the project as follows:

“To assess the growth and development (spiritual, skill and knowledge of the sport, relational, academic, etc) of the player on and off the court/field.”

The portfolio contains the following inclusions:

- Westmont Athletics Mission Statement
- Player Portfolio Project Description
- General Questionnaire
- Match Analysis Chart
- End of Season Overview
- Media Related Reports (media guides, newspaper articles, internet stories)

The women’s tennis portfolio is housed in the “Program Review” file in the athletic director’s office.

Interpret the Results:

The women’s tennis player portfolio project provided some solid results. The focus of this portfolio was first year player Kristen Lee. Concerning Kristen’s development as a player, Kathy notes:
“After a tough battle in doubles, Kristen and Jenny pulled it out in a tiebreaker, 8-6!”

On another occasion, Kathy observes:

Kristen was a dominant force over a player who can give an opponent fits. Kristen remained calm and focused. She played her game. As always, she was a great sport. I’m always proud of the way Kristen handles herself on the court. She is gracious in victory and defeat.”

And finally:

“Kristen has come so far in all areas. This is probably due to the fact that she is open, wants to communicate and wants to get better. She has learned to be less shy when sharing her faith. She showed excellent ability to fight for a win and cast off discomforts. I will look for improvements in setting up a point, continued patience, and mental toughness.”

Will each of these comments/slash observations are helpful, they are not specific enough to meet this program goal. The women’s tennis player portfolio project is too general in nature and probably more applicable to the experience program goal. The communication within this portfolio framework was essentially one way (coach to player). In essence, it was the player identifying some initial goals and then the coach “journaling” responses back based on a variety of different criteria. Two things need to happen to make this a more effective project:

1) There needs to be a regular exchange of ideas pertaining to training, match performance, and scouting of opponents (weekly, Bi-monthly?).

2) The priority focus of these exchanges needs to be actual athletic performance.

Conclusion:

With the revision of the January 20, 2006 report as well as the submission of the June 15, 2006 report, my hope is that the athletic department is moving in a more positive direction relative to assessment.

Respectfully Submitted,

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