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(SAM WOLSON/Daily)

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## Assembly calls for athletic reforms

### Faculty panel wants more control over University sports

**By: Emily Barton and Andy Kroll, Daily Staff Reporters**

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The University's main faculty governing body voted yesterday to endorse a set of reforms that would increase the University central administration's oversight of athletic programs.

The Senate Assembly's endorsement recommends four main areas of athletics reform outlined in an initial report submitted to the University's Board of Regents last month.

The suggested reforms draw on the recommendations of a June report from The Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics, a group comprised of the faculty senates of 56 schools with Division I athletic programs.

One of the main reforms in the report calls for the integration of the University Athletic Department budget into the University's general fund.

Current University Board of Regents bylaws say that "separate accounting and financial statements will be made for department funds."

At a meeting of the Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs earlier this month, Athletic Director Bill Martin said the Athletic Department's budgeting process is "totally integrated" with the University's.

Additionally, Martin said the Athletic Department budget is subject to annual review by University Chief Financial Officer Tim Slottow, University President Mary Sue Coleman and the University Board of Regents.

Athletic Department spokesman Bruce Madej yesterday referred comment to Martin, who was unavailable for comment.

Along with the potential integration of the Athletic Department's budget, the report calls for higher academic

standards for student-athletes and increased student-athlete participation in campus life.

Classical Studies Prof. David Potter, vice chair of the Senate Assembly's Government Relations Advisory Committee, said that while the COIA report is valuable as a set of broader guidelines, not every recommendation necessarily applies to the University of Michigan.

Les Thornton, an associate professor of education at the University's Dearborn campus, cast the lone dissenting vote in the Senate Assembly's endorsement of the proposed athletic reforms. In his dissent, Thornton cited the report's first recommendation, which states that student-athletes should be admitted to universities based solely on their potential for academic success.

Thornton said this reform would hurt the chances of certain black student-athletes who may be admitted based on their potential for athletic success despite poor academic success in high school.

Thornton said many of these black students often go on to achieve considerable success in the classroom - success they might not have otherwise had without participating in athletics.

"For many African-American student-athletes, that's the only way they would've gotten into college," Thornton said.

In response, Potter said he didn't think COIA authors intended to hurt the opportunities of black students or limit their abilities to attend universities.

The faculty-endorsed reforms also recommend that the chair of the University's Advisory Board for Intercollegiate Athletics - a governing body comprised of faculty members, students, alumni and staff - be a "senior (tenured) faculty member," not the athletic director.

University regent bylaws stipulate that the athletic director - a job currently held by Martin, who is not a faculty member - chair the board.

The proposal also recommends that the overall growth rate in the Athletic Department's operating costs be no greater than the University's.

The University's general budget increased 1.9 percent between the 2006-2007 fiscal year and the 2007-2008 fiscal year. The Athletic Department's budget, meanwhile, increased 17.6 percent during that same period.

The Athletic Department is one of the few self-supporting departments in the nation, meaning it funds its operating budget entirely from its own revenues.

In his concluding remarks, Potter stressed the importance of the recommendations but told Senate Assembly members that athletic reform is by no means a quick process.

"These are all things that move by small steps, and it won't change overnight," Potter said.

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