February 18, 2004

Dr. David J. Skorton
President
University of Iowa

Dear President Skorton:

You delegated responsibility for developing a Student Athlete Code of Conduct to the Presidential Committee on Athletics (PCA) and the Department of Athletics. PCA has unanimously endorsed the document entitled “University of Iowa Student Athlete Code of Conduct: Rights and Responsibilities” for your consideration. **Two recommendations were made:** 1. that the document’s readability level be evaluated, as some PCA members felt the text was too technical and wordy for students; and 2. that the document be reviewed by General Counsel.

I have enclosed the document with this letter and also offer a description of our procedures.

The process leading to the development of this document included reconvening a dormant sub-committee of the PCA, the Student Athlete Welfare Sub-committee (SAWC), to review existing practices at comparable institutions, review applicable NCAA and Big Ten Conference compliance regulations, and review existing University of Iowa policies included in the University Code of Student Life, the University Operations Manual, the Student Athlete Handbook and the Policy Manual of the PCA. The process also involved setting in place newer versions of grievance procedures, recruitment guidelines, sexual harassment training, and substance abuse policies. This included input from PCA members, student athletes, coaches and staff from the Department of Athletics, and appropriate University officials.

The sub-committee and the Department of Athletics also undertook the responsibility of incorporating into the document an array of matters of importance to the welfare of student athletes. This was of particular importance to the student athlete member of SAWC, who urged the committee to incorporate matters of concern to all student athletes, rather than merely react to one particular crisis. The result is a document that unequivocally sets forth university policy and expectations.

First and foremost, athletics participation is a privilege that entails certain obligations on student athletes, including the responsibilities of being a representative of this University. Second, student athletes are entitled to a climate of respect and support for their scholarly endeavors and an environment that does not support hazing and respects racial, ethnic, cultural and religious differences. Along those lines, perhaps the most important part of the work of the sub-committee was not the Code itself but setting the procedures in place and clearly communicating University philosophy and expectations. The backbone of the Code along with the sexual harassment and
substance abuse procedures were distributed to the student athletes and coaches for a trial period and to provide feedback to the Department of Athletics and our committee.

It is important to note that, at no time during this process, was the Department of Athletics without working policies. Adequate protocols have been in place beginning with a departmental set of Values and Commitments explicitly stating the philosophies that the overall well-being of the participant and the integrity of the program are paramount to everything the department does. Student athletes are aware of the fundamental need for ethics and integrity. They have the opportunity to make good choices. Coaches, sports administrators, our committee, and University officials continue to be responsible for maintaining a culture of respect.

The enclosed document while comprehensive cannot be all inclusive. When dealing with human behavior, it is impossible to anticipate all possible needs and scenarios. Thus, we encourage revisions to the Code on a periodic basis. We also encourage the President, through the PCA and Athletics Advisory Council to continue to communicate to all members of the University community the importance of the values expressed in this code.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Presidential Committee on Athletics,

Ana M. Diaz-Arnold  
Professor  
Chair, PCA

Marcella David  
Professor  
Chair, SAWC