February 12, 2007

Restructuring Club Sports at Brandeis University

CONCERNS WITH THE CURRENT MODEL

Currently, club sports at Brandeis University fall under the supervision of the Student Union with all funding allocated through the Union’s Finance Board. As student-driven organizations, individual club sport teams are, and should be, student-run. The overall organizational structure of clubs sports at Brandeis, however, and their relationship to the University in general, needs examination.

The main concerns with the current model center on too many clubs given the available resources, an infrastructure that does not provide club sport student-athletes with access to day-to-day professional management and guidance, and a lack of attention to risk management issues.

Given that the club sport issue at Brandeis is a matter of concern for student-athletes, the Student Union, Athletics and the University at large, it is in everyone’s best interest that the current system is examined and changes to that system are explored.

Better Support for Clubs
At Brandeis currently there are approximately 274 student clubs. Of the 274, 43 of them are grouped under the category of “sports”. Club sports, like all club activities are chartered in the same manner yet there is no consideration to the unique needs sports require. There is no consideration for available athletics facilities for practices or games or for storage space for athletics equipment.

By recognizing and financially supporting such a large number of teams, all club sport groups are competing for limited financial resources and none are funded at the optimal level. In addition to funding, sport clubs are competing for many other similar resources, such as indoor and outdoor facility space, transportation and storage. In the current system it is nearly impossible to manage club sports well and the students involved in these organizations are often left feeling under funded, under supported and under appreciated.

Lack of Professional Guidance
Many of the problems club sports encounter are the result of a lack of guidance. Each club is responsible for purchasing their own equipment and managing their practices, roster and schedule. The turnover in club leadership from year-to-year often results in purchasing the same equipment each year, a lack of an inventory system to track equipment, and general waste. Also scheduling problems can arise within the University and outside of the University when a new club leader is not aware of whom their predecessor’s contacts were on and off campus to schedule practices or games.

To provide continuity from year-to-year, many other institutions, such as Emory and Carnegie Mellon, have professional staff members work hand and hand with the club leaders to order, inventory and store equipment, schedule games, and arrange transportation. Understanding that
club teams are meant to be student-run, it benefits them to have a professional athletics administrator provide assistance and suggestions that benefit the program in the short and long term.

**Risk Management Concerns**
There is further concern that currently club sport rosters may not be up to date and that club sport athletes may be participating without adequate attention to risk management concerns such as assumption of risk waivers and proper training for driving passenger vehicles such as vans. Furthermore, there is a concern to what degree the Union has the resources to monitor rosters and practice and competition schedules. Without detailed oversight of rosters, practice and competition schedules, there is no way to verify who is on a team or where that team is practicing or competing at any given time. All of these instances are cause for concern, particularly regarding the safety of our students.

**PROPOSED MODEL**

**Proposed Solution**
Effective with the next academic year, create a Club Sports Program that would fall under the direction of the Department of Athletics and Physical Education. By including club sports under the Athletics umbrella, we feel that we can improve upon the current situation and make huge advances in the development of the overall program. Club Sports are, and should be, an integral part of student life at Brandeis. Shifting from the current structure to a purposeful Club Sports Program is in best interests of club sport athletes and the University as it allows for a more organized, safe and efficient enterprise overall.

First, club sports would officially become part of the Department of Athletics and Physical Education. Second, the necessary fiscal and human recourses would be added to the department’s existing budget to support this added responsibility. Third, we would implement a new model for club sports that addresses the concerns outlined above and is consistent with how club sport programs are managed at many of our peer institutions. The basic premises that club sports are student run and driven organizations will remain and students will continue to play an active role in how the program is directed. The central change will be that through the creation of a Club Sports Program, club sports athletes will benefit from the leadership, support and professional expertise of the Department of Athletics and Physical Education.

**Name Change**
To reflect the increased emphasis on recreational programming and the inclusion of club sports, the department’s name would be changed to the Department of Athletics, Physical Education and Recreation, which for the purposes of the report, will be referenced to as “the Department.”

**Definition of a Club Sport**
Club sports are recognized student organizations designed to serve interests in a variety of sports and physical activities. Clubs can be competitive or purely recreational.

**Mission Statement**
The Mission of the Club Sports Program is to provide diverse sports opportunities for all students across a broad range of skill levels and experiences. Unlike varsity athletics, club sports
are student-run. Each club relies on its members for recruiting, organization, administration, and coordination of all club functions. The Department will provide direction for the Club Sports Program as a whole, with an emphasis on student development and leadership. The Club Sports Program is a training ground for student leadership, organizational development, and teaching.

**Staffing**
In comparison to our University Athletic Association (UAA) counterparts, we are the only member institution with one full-time staff member dedicated to the recreation area. Of the other seven UAA schools, each has at least 2.0 FTEs working in recreation with NYU and Emory employing 3 full-time staff members. The most common models use a supervisor of Intramurals, Recreation and Club Sports such as the position currently filled by our Assistant Athletic Director, Tom Rand, and two additional positions: a club sports coordinator and an intramural coordinator.

**Club Sports Coordinator**
Under this proposed model the Department would employ an experienced, full-time professional to oversee club sports and their activities. This individual would work under the direct supervision of the Assistant Athletic Director for Recreation, currently Tom Rand. The Club Sports Coordinator is responsible for insuring that the individual clubs operate in a safe and mature manner benefiting both the club participants and the University community as a whole.

The Club Sports Coordinator serves as a consultant and resource to clubs on both their day-to-day operations and special events. The Coordinator acts as an advisor to the Club Sports Council and ensures that all rules and regulations are followed according to the Department and Brandeis University guidelines. The Coordinator also serves as a liaison between the clubs' participants and the University's administration. The Coordinator oversees all day-to-day operations of the Club Sports Program such as maintaining regular contact with club leaders, advising the Club Sports Council, addressing all risk management concerns, assisting with scheduling and travel arrangements and managing all fiscal responsibilities consistent with Department and University policies and procedures as well as the funding agreement between the Student Union and the Division of Student and Enrollment.

**Club Sports Council**
Given that club sports are student-driven organizations, many institutions employ a Club Sports Council connecting professional staff with student leaders in the decision making process. We would use the Club Sports Council as an advisory board consisting of current club leaders and the Club Sports Coordinator.

Establishing a Club Sports Council is a viable means to maintain a balance between students and administrators in the overall administration of the University’s Club Sports Program. Further, the use of a Club Sports Council is an accepted practice at several of our peer institutions we have studied.

Regarding the fundamentals of the Council’s operational structure, the Club Sports Coordinator would advise the Council and actively participate in the governing process, the Council would be involved in the budgeting process consistent with the funding agreement between the Student Union and the Division of Students & Enrollment and all Council decisions would need the
approval of the Director of Athletics to be enacted. However, we recognize that determining membership to the Council as well as defining all areas of responsibility is a complicated and involved process that requires input from those involved in the program.

Therefore, we recommend that the first year of this new administrative structure be seen as a transitional year. During the transitional year, all club presidents would hold membership on the Council. Throughout the year, the Club Sport Coordinator would facilitate discussions regarding the Council’s composition moving forward and its role with the program. This transitional Council will develop a proposal to bring forward to the Director of Athletics regarding their suggestions for the operational structure of the Council. At the conclusion of the transitional year, a new Council would be formed consistent with the newly established principles.

**Club Sports Officers**

Each individual club sport must have some leadership structure. Typical officer positions include President, Vice-President, Match Secretary, and Treasurer. Other leadership positions, such as Team Captain or Marketing Director, may also exist. Club officers are responsible for performing the duties set forth by their individual club, as well as responsible for following policies and procedures outlined in the “Club Sports Handbook”.

**Coaches and Instructors**

Clubs may utilize students, alumni, or community persons for paid or volunteer coaches/instructors if the following are submitted to the Club Sports Coordinator:

- Application and/or Resume
- Copies of any pertinent certifications.
- Certificates of Rank (where applicable)
- National Governing Body certification (where applicable)

Coaches and instructors would be paid as temporary Brandeis University employees and are subject to all polices and procedures of the Department of Human Resources and Employee Relations. The Club Sports Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the employment process and determines the appropriate number of coaches/instructors to be assigned to each team.

**Types of Club Sports**

Club Sports would be classified into one of three categories:

1) Competitive  
2) Recreational  
3) Martial Arts

For competitive and recreational teams, the basic principle is that the Department would sponsor club sport teams that are recognized by the NCAA toward sport-sponsorship requirements and are not currently being offered on the varsity level. For martial arts, the Department would sponsor the seven existing martial arts groups. Additionally, we propose that the sport of Ultimate Frisbee be grandfathered as a supported club. The rationale is that Ultimate is an established club that competes with outside competition and relies on athletics facilities for practice. If they were not included, Ultimate would most likely cease to exist on campus.

Competitive teams have competition against other colleges or universities. Recreational clubs engage in the sport with members of their own club in a recreational manner. The Department
will only support those recreational clubs which rely on Brandeis athletics facilities to exist. When applying for membership or annual renewal, clubs must indicate in which category they are requesting membership.

**General Criteria for Club Sports Sponsorship:**
The following criteria must be met at the time of initial request for charter and maintained from year-to-year to remain active.

1. Club constitution on file in the Department
2. List of officers on file in the Department
3. All participation waivers, medical and insurance forms on file in the Department
4. An active membership roster of at least 10 current participants
5. Current resumes for all club coaches and/or instructors on file in the Department
6. Duplicate club sport teams will NOT be offered
7. Club Sports can not duplicate an existing varsity team.
8. For competitive and recreational team sports, the Department will support club sport teams in sports that are recognized by the NCAA toward institutional sport-sponsorship requirements.

Given this, the following current Brandeis club sports would be supported under this new model:

**Competitive and Recreational Teams:**
Archery
Badminton
Crew
Field Hockey
Ice Hockey
Lacrosse
Men’s Volleyball
Rugby
Skiing
Squash
Ultimate Frisbee
Water Polo

**Martial Arts Groups:**
Aikido
Brazilian Jiu Jitsu
Kokondo
Tae Kwon Do
Tai Chi
Uechi-ryu Karate
Wun Hop Kuen

Only the sports listed above would fall under the direction of the Department and receive funding. Current club teams not included in this model could still have access to athletics facilities on a first come first served basis after time had been allotted to Department supported
groups and activities, but it must be noted that space for non-Department programs will be very limited. Further, only those sports included in this model would be officially referred to as “Club Sports” teams.

Through the Department’s recreational programming a commitment will be made to accommodate those current clubs whose interest is in engaging in recreational “pick-up” activities such as indoor soccer or basketball. Even though the Department offers programming in these sports on the varsity and intramural level, we recognize that members of the Brandeis community enjoy engaging in these activities in an informal way. A commitment will be made to include “open gym” in the overall athletics facilities schedule to accommodate these interests.

Participant Eligibility

1. All current Brandeis University undergraduate and graduate students are eligible to participate in the Club Sports Program.
2. Current Brandeis faculty and staff may also participate in club sports.
3. All sport specific eligibility requirements apply e.g. rugby is governed by the NERFU as well as any specific standards for collegiate competition.
4. Club officers must be current full-time students

Clubs may not “make cuts” or disallow anyone, who meets the eligibility criteria, the opportunity to participate with a club. It is understood though that certain events may have a limit on the number of allowed participants or competitors.

Establishing a New Club Sport

Any organization, chartered under the Student Union, wishing to become part of the Club Sports Program who meets the criteria for sponsorship can contact the Department and request membership. All requests must be received by March 15 to be considered for the subsequent fall semester and should include a complete operating budget request.

If all outlined criteria are met, the Club Sports Council will ask the group to make a presentation and then the Council will make a recommendation as to whether or not the group should be added to the Club Sports Program. All final decisions will be at the discretion of the Director of Athletics, Physical Education and Recreation. All requests will be acted upon before the end of the spring semester in which they were made, and if approved will take effect the subsequent academic year.

Annual Renewal

To stay active for the subsequent academic year and to receive funding, each club sport must submit a new officer list and membership roster with at least 10 returning students by March 15. A waiver from the minimum active participation requirement may be requested if the nature of the sport necessitates a smaller roster size. Any recreational or martial art club that that does not meet the criteria will go “inactive”. An inactive club may apply for reconsideration at anytime after which they meet the general criteria for sports sponsorship and practice space would be allocated on a space available basis. However, funding would not be considered until the next budget cycle. For competitive clubs that do not meet the criteria they will move to recreational club status for the subsequent semester. As a recreational club they will have access to practice space and time, but will not be allowed to compete. In these situations, the club may apply for
reconsideration at anytime after which they meet the general criteria for sports sponsorship and if
granted they will resume competitive status the subsequent semester with limited funding
available for competition.

Risk Management
Assumption of Risk and Liability Release
The Department would coordinate with the University’s risk management officials to assure that
all risk management concerns with regard to club sport participants and operation of the Club
Sports Program are addressed.

Medical History
The Department would recommend that each club sports participant have an annual physical
examination and that any physical problems or questions regarding participation be discussed
with a personal physician or the University Health Center. The Department would require that
all club sports participants complete a “Medical Information Sheet” prior to participation. This
form would be on file in the Department and the club would be required to take copies of all
forms with them when they traveled for competition.

Medical Insurance
The Department would require that each club sport participant provide certification of medical
insurance prior to engaging in any physical activity with the club. Copies of medical insurance
would be on file in the Department and the club would be required to take copies of all forms
with them when they traveled for competition.

Travel
The Club Sports Coordinator would assist each club with their travel arrangements. When
available, the Coordinator would schedule departmental vans for club use for approved off-
campus practices and competitions. If departmental vans are not available, the coordinator
would assist the club with renting vans. To be eligible to drive either departmental or rented
vans, club members would be required to pass the van driver certification course offered by the
Department of Public Safety. Only current club members and their coaches/instructors would be
allowed to travel in the vans and it would be required to submit a travel roster to the Club Sports
Coordinator prior to the club leaving for an away contest.

Funding Agreement
In accordance with the funding agreement reached between the Student Union and the
Department of Athletics, the Club Sports Program would be funded by the Department of
Athletics and by a portion of the Student Activities Fee (SAF). The Department of Athletics and
the Student Union both have a vested interest in the Club Sports program, and therefore, will
work together to ensure its complete success. The Department of Athletics will oversee the
structure of the program and work with the clubs to plan and budget on a long-term basis. The
Finance Board will maintain its role as a funding source for Club Sports by reviewing the budget
and allocating SAF money for specific club sports activities. The Department of Athletics will
also contribute funding to the program. By collaborating on this effort as outlined below, the
Student Union and the Department of Athletics can be certain that this program will run as
successfully and smoothly.
A Club Sports Council will be formed to work with the Club Sports Coordinator in the administration of the Club Sports Program. The exact makeup of the council will be determined through discussions between club sport leaders and the Department of Athletics.

Each year in March, each club sports team will work in conjunction with the Club Sports Council, the Club Sports Coordinator, and the Department of Athletics to prepare an operating budget for the following academic year. Once this internal budgeting process is complete, the Club Sports Council will present a full budget for the Club Sports Program to the Finance Board. The Finance Board will discuss the budget with the Club Sports Council and allocate money to the individual clubs on a line-item basis for coaching fees, referee fees, league registration fees, and tournament fees.

The Finance Board will have the ability to fully or partially fund other aspects of the club sports program if it views the extra request(s) to be within the purpose of the club and in the interest of the Brandeis Community.

The Student Union Treasurer will transfer to the Department of Athletics the administrative and bookkeeping responsibilities associated with the allocated funds. The Department of Athletics will then ensure the distribution of the funds. If, at the end of the fiscal year, funds remain, they will be spent in a manner to be determined through discussions between the Club Sports Council and the Finance Board.

The Department of Athletics will submit regular financial reports to the Finance Board to demonstrate that the individual club sport teams are spending within their approved budgets. The frequency and details of the reports will be determined through discussions between the Student Union and the Department of Athletics.

**Funding, Budgets, Allocations**

Active clubs have the opportunity to request annual funding by March 15 for the subsequent academic year. Allocations will be announced by May 1. Should an inactive club become active before the next budget cycle, that club may request Special Request funding. Clubs with annual budgets are also eligible for Special Request funding though it is expected that all budget needs will be considered through the annual request process.

**Applying For Allocations**

Annual budget requests are divided into four major categories: Fees & Officials, Travel, Equipment, Uniforms, Facility Rentals, and Coaching. A detailed list and justification of what the money will be used for should be submitted as part of the overall budget request. All clubs must present their budget in an oral presentation to the Club Sports Council, in addition to their written request. After the presentations the Council will determine individual club allocations. Clubs are eligible to apply for Special Request funding at any point during the school year.

**Types of Budget Items**

**Fees & Officials**

This budget line is used to pay for local, regional or national governing body fees and/or dues for the entire club – not for individual club members. This money may also be used to pay for referees and officials when a club hosts an event.
Travel
This budget line is used for tournament entry fees, vehicle rentals, gasoline, road tolls and hotel per diem (incidents not included). Meals are not included.

Equipment, Uniforms and Facility Rentals
This budget line is used for equipment and supplies that are to be used by the club at large and cannot be kept by any one individual. The purchase of personal equipment is not allowed. All uniforms purchased through the Department are the property of Brandeis University and are to be returned to the Department at the conclusion of the season. This line can also be used for required storage or facility rental fees.

Coaching
This budget line is used to pay for coaches or instructors who are working with the club during regular practices or as a one-time guest instructors.

NOTE: Travel expenses as well as fees associated with outside competition will only be provided for competitive teams.

Club leaders will meet with the Club Sports Coordinator at the start of the academic year to review their roster, schedule and budget. The Coordinator will work with club leaders to review the club’s operating plan for the year to confirm that it is possible given their budget allocation. Clubs will have the opportunity to make special requests as they arise.

During the course of the transitional year, the Coordinator will work with club leaders to review, create and finalize budgeting policies that are fair and consistent for all clubs. These principles will then be distributed to all clubs and used in the budget allocation process for subsequent years.

Procedure for Accessing Funds
Club treasurers would be responsible for coordinating all fiscal needs with the Club Sports Coordinator and for completing all University paperwork required to access funds or receive reimbursements. All fiscal transactions would be consistent with the University’s set policies and procedures for such.

Fundraising
All fundraising events must be approved by the Club Sports Coordinator. Clubs are encouraged to submit all fund raising proposals at the beginning of the academic year. The Club Sports Coordinator will review the proposals of all clubs to assure that such activities are spread out over the year and not concentrated during any one time of year.

Equipment
Each club would prepare and maintain an inventory of all of the club’s equipment. Annual verification would be conducted between the clubs and the Club Sports Coordinator. Some equipment may be shared between clubs. If that is the case, each club involved should assist with the inventory. Equipment or cash awards cannot be retained by individuals, and must be
used to support the entire club. All equipment must be inventoried and all cash awards must be deposited in the club’s account. Team trophies may be housed in the private residence of a team member, but should be passed on to the club upon graduation.

**Accounting**

All income and expenses associated with a club team’s budget, including fund raised monies, shall be coordinated between the club’s Treasurer and the Club Sports Coordinator. All funds will be collected and expensed in accordance with University policies and procedures and accounted for in a University designated account. Off campus bank accounts are strictly prohibited.

**BENEFITS TO PROPOSED MODEL**

1) **Fewer Clubs, Better Support**: Through a more comprehensive monitoring of the teams’ participation from year-to-year, the clubs whom maintain active status will be the more organized and dedicated teams. It seems only fair that this smaller group of active clubs benefit from more available resources. The Department’s criteria are also more restrictive and eliminate the duplication of club teams. By designating the clubs as competitive, recreational or martial arts, with criteria for each, the model also addresses the needs of competitive clubs to request more support for costs associated with competition such as travel.

2) **More Professional Guidance**: With a full-time Club Sports Coordinator, there is a dedicated professional position overseeing the Club Sports Program on a day-to-day basis. This creates more interaction and guidance between staff and students to build an organized environment. Should a crisis occur, there is someone in place to troubleshoot and manage the situation in the moment. With more direct oversight, proactive action from the Club Sports Coordinator should help to prevent and avoid problems from occurring in the first place.

3) **Risk Management**: By taking a more involved, hands on, role with club sports we can better manage the potential risk. The Club Sports Coordinator will be responsible for monitoring rosters, schedules, travel plans, and practice venues and schedules. The Coordinator will also monitor participants’ completion of waivers, medical and insurance forms. This trained professional will provide the daily continuity to assure that all details are addressed by the clubs leadership.

4) **Cost Effective**: By allowing the Department to oversee the funding, equipment, and storage needs for all club sports, the result over time will be less waste and a more effective use of University resources. Because the Department has the experience of managing the intercollegiate program, it has the expertise needed to manage the Club Sports Program in a fiscally responsible manner. Specifically, the knowledge and resources to order, inventory, and store equipment, maintain uniforms, meet travel needs, hire coaching staff, and allocate practice and competition space.
Note: A Sports Operating Budget of $125,000 was determined after an analysis of club sport funding over the past three fiscal years, FY03, FY04 and FY05. Funding balances shown here reflect only the 23 sports considered in this proposal. Data for funding requests and allocations was obtained through the myBrandeis website; specifically under the Club Center for Sports.

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<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Total Funding Requested</th>
<th>Total Funding Allocated</th>
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The gap between requests and allocations suggests what we have been hearing from club sport student-athletes for years; that they are under-funded. Therefore, given these numbers we felt that an operating budget of $125,000 was a reasonable compromise between average requests and allocations.

Thank you for the consideration of this proposal.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sheryl A. Sousa ‘90
Director of Athletics