

**2004 NACWAA Fall Forum Empowerment of the Division III SWA
Table Topics
Saturday, October 9, 2004**

TOPIC #1 - *Impact of the "Title"*

1. *What does the title "SWA" signify?*
 - Job responsibilities vary by campus.
 - Experiences range from being a token position on some campuses to being highly empowered at others.
 - The leadership style of campus administration determines the role of the SWA.
 - The SWA is given warm, fuzzy assignments (ie: SAAC)

- *Advantages*
 - Position allows focus on women's issues that the AD may overlook or be unaware of.
 - SWA serves as voice from a different vantage point.
 - The position has been created, this is a good first step.
 - Help from and for the SWA is available *if* it is requested.
 - SWA has the opportunity to do more than other administrators.
 - SWAs have access to serve on NCAA committees.
 - SWAs are often involved in making important and crucial decisions as well as creating processes within the athletic department (ie: search committees, student-athlete service programs, CHAMPS/Life Skills, etc).
 - SWAs have the opportunity to become involved with student-athletes of both genders by overseeing different sports, serving as SAAC advisors or by being mentors or role models.

- *Issues*
 - SWAs on some campuses only oversee female sports
 - Position is often seen as a title/token only – there is a lack of empowerment, little responsibility assigned. The feeling is that this is the case at a majority of Division III institutions.
 - DIII institutions are not educated as to how an SWA can be best utilized on campus.
 - Women administrators feel frustrated.
 - Time constraints exist. SWAs are pressured to wear minimally two hats, and there is a constant struggle or "inner conflict."
 - Coaching is less frustrating than administration.
 - The pay is not equal, and there is a lack of security in employment.
 - The perception of the position is that the SWA is qualified, but is then given menial tasks.

- *Recommendations*
 - Greater education on appropriate role(s) of SWA provided to administrative staff (ie: ADs, senior staff and university presidents).

- More significant administrative duties must be assigned to the SWA by the director of athletics and campus administration.
 - Greater educational efforts should come from conference commissioners for involvement of SWA.
 - SWAs should be included and/or have a greater role in conference governance and meetings.
 - Provide more conference symposiums to educate younger women.
 - Add title of “Assistant” or “Associate.”
 - SWAs should have access to all budget information as a component of their position.
 - SWAs should have more involvement with higher athletic management decisions.
 - SWAs should have involvement with personal issues/management.
2. *What does the inclusion of “Assistant or Associate” to the title of “SWA” signify?*
- The title of “Associate” is more meaningful.
 - As an assistant, an individual will have more responsibility than an SWA at times.
 - Job duties such as game management, signing contracts and transportation.
 - Increased responsibility and authority.
 - The split title can be used to promote ones position across campus.
 - Helps to promote younger female student-athletes to pursue careers in athletics.
 - Not enough time.

TOPIC #2 - *Impact of “Responsibilities”*

1. *What are 3-5 common responsibilities of the SWA?*
- In charge of women’s issues on campus and/or advocate for women’s interests.
 - Role models for women aspiring to be administrators.
 - SAAC involvement.
 - What the AD doesn’t want to do.
 - Compliance.
 - Attend NCAA meetings.
 - Attend Conference meetings.

Advantages

- Younger generations see the SWA as a promotion.
- Gain new skills.

Challenges

- Defining the responsibilities since they vary so drastically between institutions.
- Educating the administration on the role and responsibilities of the SWA.

- Role as an advocate of all athletes.
- Institutions making a commitment to identify an SWA.
- Institutions designating a “female” as opposed to male SWA.

2. *Recommendations for Empowerment*

- Involvement and leadership with EADA data.
- Responsibility with personnel and budget issues.
- Providing more information to new personnel – AD, AD’s boss, etc.
- Campus and conference education about SWA position (articulation of role and responsibilities).

3. *Recommendations to enhance opportunity for advancement.*

- Significant administrative responsibility and involvement as part of athletics leadership.

TOPIC #3 - Role of SWA in Conference Structure

1. *Identify the most common conference governance.*

- Members include presidents, FARs, ADs, SWAs, coaches and SIDs.
- Governance structure varies by conference with different voting assignments and number of votes assigned to administrators.

2. *Identify the SWA involvement in structure.*

Attendance

- SWAs attend conference meetings and NCAA meetings.
- Certain conferences correspond with both ADs and SWAs regarding conference issues.
- Supportive commissioners assist SWA advancement on conference and institutional levels.
- Several conferences do not engage/invite SWAs to attend, nor do ADs encourage attendance.

Voice

- Dependent upon supportive AD (or group of ADs in conference) who recognize the role of the SWA and assign responsibilities.
- Dependent upon the issue being discussed.

Voting

- Do not have voting power in many conferences, although SWAs are invited to attend conference meetings.
- Some conferences assign number of votes to individual institutions and are then split up.

