

# **Health and Safety Review Cal Football Strength and Conditioning Program**

## **Introduction**

In July 2016 Chancellor Nicholas Dirks announced his decision to launch an independent review of Cal football's strength and conditioning program in order to ensure that the policies and practices now in place maximize the health and safety of the University's student athletes.

In August 2016 Dr. Elizabeth Joy, MD, MPH, and Hon. Wayne D. Brazil (Ret.) were retained as co-reviewers who would lead this effort. (Their biographical information can be found at the end of this document.) Together, they developed the following plan, and will be responsible for its execution, as per the objectives defined by Chancellor Dirks.

## **Overview**

The over-arching purpose of this review is to contribute constructively to the shared goal of making Cal football's strength and conditioning program a leader in developing best practices that promote health and protect the safety of student athletes.

This review will focus largely on present and the future conditions of the strength and conditioning program. It will be both broad and program specific. It will map the campus-wide system of responsibility for the health and safety of student athletes who participate in the strength and conditioning program and it will describe, in some detail, current policies and practices that bear on that program.

One of the multiple goals of this study is to identify changes in both policies and practices that have been designed and implemented over the past couple of years. Coauthors of this report will incorporate information on pertinent circumstances and procedures within Cal's strength and conditioning program that were in place a couple of years ago. This study is not an 'investigation' of past events, nor is it designed to be a 'fact finding' mission aimed at uncovering events that have occurred in the past. Instead, past circumstances will be examined to identify changes already implemented and additional steps that might be taken, going forward, to deliver even better protections to student health and safety.

In pursuit of their broad objectives, the coauthors will draw on a wide range of internal and external sources. A key source of learning will be the experience and insights of people at every pertinent level of the system on the Berkeley campus. In addition, the authors will look for helpful perspectives and promising approaches from nationally recognized experts in sports science and medicine, and from innovators in system design. Ultimately, all efforts will be directed toward the goal of identifying system adjustments or changes in practices whose adoption could enhance the health of the young people who participate in the intercollegiate football program.

## Plan for the Review

### I. Background Information

- A. NCAA rules, policies, and reports
- B. Pac 12 rules and reports
- C. National Athletic Trainers Association (NATA) standards, guidelines, reports
- D. U.S. Army Medical Department Heat Illness Prevention
- E. American Society of Hematology papers, guidelines
- F. Relevant policies and practices at other universities, e.g., Michigan, Northwestern, Virginia.
- G. Court filings in Agu litigation and any documents about other health/safety events connected with S&C program.
- H. Documents reflecting concerns expressed by faculty or others.
- I. Consult with/interview external experts and strength and conditioning coaches in other institutions.

### II. Map comprehensively, the campus-wide system for distributing responsibility, accountability and reporting relationships for health and safety of student athletes.

- A. Identify changes made during last two years.
- B. Study/assess job descriptions/qualifications-requirements/lines of reporting.

### III. Establish who determines applicable policies.

### IV. Describe current policies. Identify changes in policy (or their articulation) during last two years and determine by whom and through what process any changes were made.

- A. Interview:
  1. Person most responsible for such policies within Chancellor's Office
  2. Dr. Anna Hart, Director of University Health Service
  3. Athletic Director
  4. Head Football Coach
  5. Head Football Team Physician
  6. Faculty Athletic Representative
  7. Three or four other interested faculty
  8. Legal counsel/risk management

### V. Assess current policies against NCAA standards and against other credible/useful sources of standards/guidelines/best practices.

### VI. Establish who determines what the current practices are.

Include an examination of "delegations" of responsibility for "some duties in medical care," for example:

- (1) from Head Team Physician to coaches or trainer for review of workout designs, or for
- (2) "safety when no medical staff is present or when a coaching decision is appropriate," e.g., environmental safety and "other areas."

VII. Describe current practices in detail. Identify changes in practices during last two years, and who made them.

- A. Direct observation of football practice and strength and conditioning training sessions
- B. Interviews:
  - 1. Ryan Cobb, Associate Athletic Director for Performance, Health and Welfare (oversees, generally, the Strength and Conditioning Programs for all sports).
  - 2. Mike Blasquez, reports to Mr. Cobb
  - 3. Damon Harrington, director of S&C for football. (Reports to Mr. Blasquez)
  - 4. Campus Physician
  - 5. Team Physician
  - 6. Associate Team Physician
  - 7. Head Football Coach
  - 8. Head Athletic Trainer – football
  - 9. Head Strength and Conditioning Coach - football
  - 10. Associate or Assistant Strength and Conditioning coaches
  - 11. Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialists on football staff
  - 12. Regular or occasional consultants to football program
  - 13. Current student athletes
  - 14. Former student athletes

VIII. Assess current practices relative to Berkeley policies, NCAA policies, and other credible sources of policies, guidelines, and best practices.

- A. Identify different and perhaps better practices from other institutions.
- B. External consultation
  - 1. Strength and conditioning coach
  - 2. US Army Physician
  - 3. Sickle cell expert
  - 4. Sports medicine administration

IX. Describe and assess systems for monitoring adherence to policies and practices

- A. Identify the challenges that monitoring systems face.
- B. Determine whether comparable institutions have developed alternative or better systems for monitoring.

X. Describe and assess systems for enforcement.

- A. Timeliness; Independence; Due Process; Balancing protection (identity and privacy) of individuals with need for credible information
- B. Determine whether comparable institutions have developed better or more effective systems for enforcement.

XI. Write and deliver report