



Faculty/Staff Fans: Building a Community of Athletic Support

FARA Annual Meeting
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Principle Investigators



- **Dr. Kim Eiler**

Professor of Exercise Science &
Faculty Athletics Representative;
Franklin College, IN
keiler@franklincollege.edu



- **Jessica Mahoney, MLS**

Associate Professor; Director of
Library Services & Assessment;
Franklin College, IN
jmahoney@franklincollege.edu

Photos Courtesy of Franklin College
Marketing & Communications

Franklin College (IN)

- Residential liberal arts and sciences institution; 20 minutes south of Indianapolis
- Undergraduate majors; Master's degree programs (Physician Assistant Studies and Athletic Training)
- ~1,000 students
- NCAA DIII; 21 sports
- > 43% student athletes
- Grizzly bear mascot
- Navy blue and old gold



Photo Courtesy of Franklin College
Marketing & Communications



Introduction to the Faculty/Staff Fans Program

Do you know the **number** or **percent**
of your student body that participates in athletics?



Introduction to the Faculty/Staff Fans Program

The goal of the Faculty/Staff Fans program is to create **intentional support** of our student-athletes.



Men's & Women's Cross Country, 2022

Introduction to the Faculty/Staff Fans Program

- Emerged from the Faculty Athletic Mentor program, 2021-2022 academic year
- Building a community of Faculty and Staff attending Franklin College athletic events
- Expanded to music and theatre productions.



Women's Volleyball (2023)

Introduction to the Faculty/Staff Fans Program

- Participants agree to attending **at least two** (2) events per year
- Online platform for event sign-ups
- Faculty/Staff encouraged to bring their families
- Free admission with college ID



Introduction to the Faculty/Staff Fans Program

- Free t-shirts
- Free popcorn at select events
- Notecards for Faculty/Staff to send to students following an event



Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate **the benefits and challenges** of the Faculty/Staff Fans program at Franklin College.



Men's Soccer, 2023



Methods

- **Email invitation**
- **Pre- and post-survey (Qualtrics)**
 - Pre – September 2022, 2023
 - Post – April 2023, 2024
 - **59** participants (2022-2023)
 - **44** participants (2023-2024)

Methods

- **Pre-survey questions:**
 - Q1: What **benefits** do you hope to gain by participating in the Faculty/Staff Fans program?
 - Q2: What **challenges** might/do you foresee by participating in the Faculty/Staff Fans program?
 - Q3: What **motivates** you to participate in the Faculty/Staff Fans program?
 - Q4: Have you **attended** a Franklin College athletic event in the past year? (2022)
How many years have you **participated** in the FSFs program? (2023)

Methods

- **Post-survey questions:**
 - Q1: What **benefits** did you gain by participating in the Faculty/Staff Fans program?
 - Q2: What **challenges** did you face participating in the Faculty/Staff Fans program?
 - Q3: Would you consider **participating** in the Faculty/Staff Fans program in the **future**?
 - Q4: What **recommendations** do you have for future Faculty/Staff Fans programming?

Results: Pre-Survey

- Q1: What **benefits** do you hope to gain by participating in the Faculty/Staff Fans program?
 - **Emerging Themes** → Community, Connection & Support
 - “I hope that students and student-athletes see faculty and staff at the games, increased sense of community and school spirit, strengthen connection between academics and athletics.”
 - “A chance to support our student-athletes, I also look forward to meeting the faculty and staff who attend the games.”
 - “Rooting for the Grizzlies, meeting new employees, fellowship.”

Results: Pre-Survey

- Q2: What **challenges** do you foresee by participating in the Faculty/Staff Fans program?
 - **Emerging Themes** → Time, Schedule, Balance
 - “Balancing my own family events and needs with events held on campus.”
 - “People who don't live near Franklin not wanting to stick around after the work day.”
 - “Time---also the dates of the games may not work for my schedule.”

Results: Pre-Survey

- Q3: What **motivates** you to participate in the Faculty/Staff Fans program?
 - **Emerging Themes** → Enjoy sports
 - “I enjoy going to sport activities and rarely go because I don't know who I would sit with or if there would be anyone there I would know. It will be nice to be part of a group and maybe make some new friends at Franklin College.”
 - “I love sports and supporting our students. I think at a small college like FC, it is important that student athletes feel supported, especially when such a huge population of our students are athletes.”
 - “I played volleyball in college and felt that few of my professors cared about this aspect of my identity – I want to offer support to our student-athletes.”

Results: Pre-Survey

- Q4: Have you **attended** a Franklin College athletic event in the past year? (2022)
 - **Emerging Theme** → 19 Yes, 2 No
 - “Yes -- mostly men's basketball, so I am excited to intentionally dabble more in women's sport, and as I said earlier to include my oldest daughter in on it and bring her to the games as well since she loves watching sports.”
 - “No...first timer!”

Results: Pre-Survey

- Q4: How many years have you participated in the Faculty Staff Fans Program (2023)
 - **Result** → 25 returners, 18 rookies

Results: *Post-Survey*

- Q1: What **benefits** did you gain by participating in the Faculty/Staff Fans program?
 - **Emerging Theme** → Supporting student-athletes & connecting with faculty/staff colleagues.
 - “I enjoyed seeing many of my students compete in their sport. It was fun to hang out with other faculty and staff at the athletic events.”
 - “Good way to support athletic programs while also conversing with other faculty/staff we may not normally get to interact with on a daily basis.”

Results: *Post-Survey*

- Q2: What **challenges** did you face participating in the Faculty/Staff Fans program?
 - **Emerging Theme** → Conflicting schedules
 - “The days and times did not always fit my schedule. Difficult to come back to campus for an evening event. Did not have the time to attend more events, especially on weekends.”
 - “My schedule didn't seem to line up with the games selected very well but I hope this continues. It is such a great idea.”

Results: *Post-Survey*

- What **challenges** did you face participating in the Faculty/Staff Fans program?



Women's Soccer, 2023

Results: *Post-Survey*

- Q3: Would you consider **participating** in the Faculty/Staff Fans program in the **future**?
 - **Emerging theme** → Overwhelmingly respondents were in favor of participating again.
 - “Yes-it encouraged me to attend when I knew others were there and I already had it on my calendar. I attended more events this year than all previous years I have worked at the college combined.”

Results: *Post-Survey*

- Q4: What **recommendations** do you have for future Faculty/Staff Fans programming?
 - **Emerging Themes** →
 - More options for attending games
 - Consider adding a tailgate/social mixer
 - Maybe offering something free from the concession stand. Food always helps and it might increase participation.

Discussion

- Support of student-athletes/connection with colleagues
- Time of major concern/scheduling of selected games
- Overwhelming support for the continuation of the program



Conclusion/Next Steps

- Recruitment of another Faculty/Staff Fans coordinator
- Earlier marketing of Faculty/Staff Fans program
- Potential expansion beyond athletics
- Food



Women's Soccer, 2022

Questions?



Men's Football, 2023



Consider Implementing on Your Campus

