



Robert Boland, Principal, Boland Sports Practice Group, LLC and former Athletics Integrity Officer, The Pennsylvania State University



In July 2017, Robert Boland, a well-known professor of sports business and law, joined Penn State University as the University's Athletics Integrity Officer. As Athletics Integrity Officer, a first of its kind compliance role, Boland oversees the University's self-supporting \$180 million-dollar annual athletic enterprise on behalf its President and Board of Trustees, ensuring that the athletics program is meeting both the legal and compliance standards set by law, the NCAA and the Big Ten and the ethical standards set by the University. In July 2021 Boland, who holds teaching appointments in Penn State's Law School and School of Labor and Employment Relations, was named the University's Acting Ethics Officer. He announced that he is leaving this role in March 2022 after nearly five years, to pursue new opportunities in sports law and teaching but remains associated with Penn State's Law and Labor schools.

From 2001-2017, Boland led two of the most innovative and dynamic sports business programs in American higher education first as a founding sports faculty member and ultimately Academic Chair at a much copied and highly successful program at New York University (NYU). At NYU, Boland successfully recruited a major network sports head; the executive director of a major players association, the presidents of six different big four sports franchises, the former vice president of business affairs for the NFL, one of the leading stadium architects in the world, and the managing director of Goldman Sachs' public infrastructure group to the sports faculty.

In August 2015, Boland joined the faculty at Ohio University, as one of the first sports law expert to be a member of the full-time faculty at the oldest, and top-ranked sports administration program, globally and in the U.S. In November 2015, he was named Director of Ohio University's MBA/MSA program and served in that role until joining Penn State. In each of Boland's two years at the helm of Ohio's program it was ranked as the "#1 Graduate Program in Sports Business in the World, by Sports Business International. During his leadership of this venerable program, Boland took steps to increase both the academic credentials and diversity the entering classes. Boland is experienced as a sport, labor, antitrust, and criminal attorney with more than 20 years of practice experience. For more than decade he was an active player agent negotiating more than 100 player and endorsement agreements across a variety of sports.



He also advises a boutique range of clients as Principal of Boland Sports Practice Group, LLC, in addition to his teaching and research, specializing in advising pro franchise purchase groups, professional teams, universities and conferences on legal, economic, stadium, strategic and search issues. Some of the clients Boland has advised or engagements on which he has worked, include franchise acquisition groups for the Oakland Raiders, the Jacksonville Jaguars, and leading due diligence for finalist bidding group for the Buffalo Bills. He served as a principal consultant on engagements with the Cleveland Browns and two collegiate conference re-alignment projects. Most recently he has completed the leadership of a review of Rugby Canada's (the National Sport Organization) High Performance (Olympic & World Cup) programs.

The most interesting project Boland Sports Practice has worked, was a feasibility study for a never built enclosed cricket stadium and entertainment complex, that would have been the world's most advanced stadium, arena, and hospitality venue for an Indian development group in conjunction with the global architecture firm HKS and famed architect, Partho Dutta.

Boland is also a widely sought by media to discuss sports law and business subjects and has recently appeared on or been quoted by ABC, NBC, CNN and Bloomberg Television; WFAN-AM, KMOX, Sirius Baseball, Al Jazeera America and Fox; Sports Illustrated, ESPN the Magazine, Business Week, Bloomberg, MSNBC.com, the Associated Press, USA Today, the New York Times, and the Wall Street Journal. His writing has been featured in Americas Quarterly, Sports Business Journal, National Football Post and Forbes Sports Money.

Academically, he is the author of several leading peer-reviewed studies on coaching contracts and legal issues in the NFL published in the Marquette Sports Law Review and a chapter on Stadium Finance in a new textbook, Sport Finance. He also served as the Atlanta Journal-Constitution's expert commentator in its reporting on both the development of new stadia for the Atlanta Falcons and the Braves and as the expert commentator in several publication's reporting on the New York Mets financial and ownership issues after the Madoff scandal.

As a speaker, he has appeared or keynoted at events hosted by: New York State Bar Association, Practising Law Institute; New York University Law School; the University of Texas School of Law; Cardozo Law School, New York Law School; Brooklyn Law School; Cumberland School of Law; the Sports Lawyers Association; the College Sports Research Institute; the Brooklyn Bar Association; the University of South Carolina; Marquette University; the American Hockey Coaches Association; the African Travel Association in the U.S. and in Kampala, Uganda and the Asian American Hotel Owners Association from 2008-2011. He was awarded the NYU School of Continuing and Professional Studies Award for Teaching Excellence in 2006 and its award for service in 2014.



In 2021 Boland was named to the Ethics Committee of USA Weightlifting, the national governing body of the sport. He also became president of the board of directors of Culture in Sports, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of values and ethical behavior in sports. Boland has an A.B. from Columbia University and a J.D. from Samford University's Cumberland School of Law.