

**Faculty Athletics Committee
Special Meeting
July 6, 2020**

Present: **Committee Members:** Lissa Broome, Melissa Geil, Tania String, Daryhl Johnson, Amanda Holliday, Dave Hartzell, Aimee McHale, Abbie Smith-Ryan, Stacey Daughters, Rita Balaban, Robert Martinez

Advisors: Vince Ille (Athletics), Michelle Brown (ASPSA), Bubba Cunningham

Guests: Emily Blackburn (Chancellor’s Office), Bruce Cairns (Faculty), Mario Ciocca (Sports Medicine), Debbi Clarke (Provost’s Office), Robbi Pickeral Evans (Athletics), Dwight Hollier (Athletics), Vin Steponaitis (Secretary of the Faculty), Kate Maroney (Communications), Kenneth Pittman (Campus Health), Anna Rose Medley (Chancellor’s Office), Joy Renner (Faculty), David Perry (University Police), Mimi Chapman (Faculty Chair)

I. Welcome

Chair Daryhl Johnson thanked everyone for joining the special FAC meeting on COVID-19 and the plan to return student-athletes to campus. Committee members and guests introduced themselves.

II. Overview of Plan

Athletic Director Bubba Cunningham said the Athletics Roadmap, <https://goheels.com/news/2020/5/29/general-return-to-campus-roadmap-for-carolina-athletics.aspx>, follows the University’s Roadmap, <https://carolinatogether.unc.edu/>. Athletics is currently bringing student-athletes and staff back to campus in phases, although the Athletics facilities staff has been on campus all summer. Rick Steinbacher did a great job in preparing facilities for the return of students and staff. Jaci Field in Facilities Operations was certified in emergency management and has been an asset to the planning process.

Student athletes began returning to campus in mid-June and by July 4th, the football team was back. Upon their return, student-athletes are tested for COVID-19 and after their test results come back negative, they may begin voluntary workouts. They are tested a second time during their first two weeks on campus. In addition to football, men’s & women’s basketball are back and other fall sports will phase in by mid-July and follow the same process. The remaining student-athletes are coming to campus beginning August 3rd as all other students begin moving in for the start of classes on August 10. Athletics is following all Orange County Health Department protocols and will update the campus community on whether the plan is working.

All symptomatic testing is done at the hospital and Campus Health professionals do the asymptomatic testing.

Faculty Chair Mimi Chapman asked Cunningham if the student-athletes who return with the student body in early August will follow the same testing plan. Cunningham responded that those student-athletes would be tested in the same manner.

Dr. Mario Ciocca, the head of Sports Medicine, noted that there have been multiple educational sessions with health professionals and student-athletes and coaches about what is necessary to keep yourself and others healthy. It is not possible to control what students do outside of their structured time with athletics, however.

Bruce Cairns asked whether Athletics' protocols might evolve over time. Ciocca serves on the ACC's Medical Advisory Group and its final recommendations have not yet come out. The current recommendation is for weekly testing as well as a daily temperature and symptom check to ensure safety. There is unity across the conference in this regard. If we face an out of conference opponent, they must meet the recommendations put forth by the ACC.

In addition to the ACC's Medical Advisory Group, Cunningham said that Athletics is working with Ken Pittman, the head of Campus Health, and Ciocca from Sports Medicine to ensure that our student-athletes are treated with the best care possible and in a manner consistent with the rest of the student body.

Melissa Geil asked who sees the aggregate testing data about the number of positive tests. Cunningham answered that all tests are reported to Orange County. He expects that a public report will be made about aggregate test results after there are in excess of 400 tests. It is likely another report will be made after additional teams are tested. Student-athletes who do not wish to compete this year may opt out of their sport obligations and their scholarships will still be honored.

Pittman reiterated that the University is required to provide information to Orange County. He said an isolation plan is developed for students with positive results based on their symptoms. Some students can isolate off campus, but if not, space is provided on campus along with wrap-around support services during the isolation period. There will be a medical monitoring call that goes to the student every day in order to ensure symptoms are not worsening or developing. The Orange County Health Department has limited resources, so Campus Health works as an extension of it for contact tracing. Over 30 Campus Health staffers have completed the Johns Hopkins certification program for contact tracing.

Amanda Holliday asked about the mental health services being offered to student-athletes. Ciocca replied that psychologists are on staff and each team is individually having informational meetings to discuss mental health challenges, what the student are experiencing, and what resources are available for them. If a student is in isolation or quarantine, a sports psychologist is

in contact with that student. Pittman said that in addition to the resources Ciocca referenced, CAPS 24/7 allows students to talk directly to a mental health professional at all hours.

Melissa Geil was on a women's soccer call last week and commended the soccer team and athletics leadership for doing a great job from the mental health standpoint.

Tania String asked about the likelihood of competition going forward if one or more students from a smaller team are in quarantine. Ciocca said that protocols will be adjusted from team to team, as every situation is different. Ciocca and his team will assess at what point is it not safe to play and utilize input from the University's infectious disease experts.

Chapman noted that there is an opportunity for Athletics to lead in this situation since it is dealing with the first set of students to return to campus and can provide guidance on the number of positives. Cunningham said that since the testing is done by the University, the University has all the results and that they are reviewed by campus leadership.

Pittman noted that many students studying in the health sciences fields are now also back on campus and experience with them also can guide campus leaders. He noted that the CDC does not recommend testing for asymptomatic students since the student could contract the virus after testing. The experiences at other schools will also inform UNC. Everyone is trying to share as much information as possible.

Tania String asked how student-athletes will travel to away competitions. Cunningham said that for nonconference games, teams will travel by bus, rather than flying. He reiterated that UNC will only compete against schools that have an equivalent testing philosophy. Debbi Clarke noted that any travel must be approved by the Provost's office.

III. Summary

Johnson expressed gratitude that UNC has so many great experts in this space who can help advise on keeping our student-athletes and greater student body safe.

Ciocca emphasized that it is very important for us to also ensure that our student athletes have the proper fitness levels and that we progress them at a pace that does not increase their injury risk. Cunningham noted that the University trying to come back to some level of normalcy, but that in the meantime we have to have multiple scenario plans.

Johnson will circulate the team liaison document.

The meeting adjourned at 10:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lissa Broome (with assistance from Emily Blackburn)