

**The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Faculty Athletics Committee
Minutes of 2014 Retreat, Session 1: May 6, 2014**

Present: **Committee Members:** Lissa Broome, Beverly Foster, Paul Friga, Layna Mosley, Barbara Osborne, Andy Perrin, Joy Renner, John Stephens, Deborah Stroman, Kimberly Strom-Gottfried

Athletic Department Personnel: Bubba Cunningham

Guests: Debbie Clarke (Provost's Working Group), Marc Cohen (English and Comparative Literature, incoming FAC member)

I. Introductions

Committee members and guests introduced themselves and Marc Cohen who was elected to join the committee on July 1 was welcomed to the committee. Joy Renner outlined the day's discussion topics. The first focus is perspectives from FAC partners – students, faculty and staff, and athletics. The second focus is relaying information necessary for planning and future work on the time commitment associated with participation in intercollegiate athletics and an overview of the Athletic Department's finances.

II. Perspectives from Students

The discussion focused on take-aways from the SAAC focus group discussions conducted by FAC members earlier in the spring. The general topics discussed and opportunities for improvement are set forth below.

- 1. Educating student-athletes and faculty about how to best communicate and interact with one another.** Student-athletes may need to be encouraged and taught how to best approach faculty when they are presenting their travel letter or need guidance or assistance outside of class. For instance, catching a faculty member right before or after class may not be the best time to have a discussion and faculty members may prefer to talk with students during their office hours. We also heard that faculty need to be educated about how to interact with student-athletes. Some student-athletes said that in some classes they were reluctant to disclose that they were athletes and sometimes felt that they are stereotyped as not being able to handle the academic rigor of UNC. One SAAC member reported that a professor said that student-athletes would be unable to pass the class. As an example of proactive communication by the student, the student talked to the professor during his office hours and established a good relationship with the professor.
 - a. Opportunities.**
 - i.** Prepare documents and powerpoints to help guide students and faculty in these areas.

- ii. Collaborate with the Center for Faculty Excellence on a pamphlet and/or a short course on strategies for teaching student-athletes and dealing with excused absences.
- iii. Have a short guide for faculty about NCAA rules that may pertain to their interactions with athletes (i.e., extra benefits).
- iv. Expand opportunities for students to invite professors to practice or competitions to build relationships and allow professors to observe the demands on and benefits to students from intercollegiate athletics.
- v. Train student-athletes on professional etiquette.
 - 1. Talk to the professor during office hours or make an appointment if office hours are not convenient; do not try to catch professor to sign a travel letter right before or after class.
 - 2. Discuss with student-athletes their responsibility for their academic success and relationships with faculty and how college may differ from high school with regard to personal responsibility.
 - a. Examine what we continue to do for student-athletes and reduce assistance given to student-athletes when appropriate.
- vi. Help student-athletes who arrive off-cycle (summer school or in January) understand the role of Loudermilk and other campus resources available to assist them in their transition to college.
- vii. Encourage student-athletes to take advantage of First-Year Seminars and the opportunities these afford to form bonds with a faculty member and other students and to help dispel the negative stereotypes about student-athletes.
- viii. Consider the special challenges faced by black student-athletes
 - 1. Encourage student-athletes to explore the role of the black Greek system in developing leaders and a service mentality.
 - 2. Consider other resources for all student-athletes that might be akin to a social worker or clergy person.
- ix. Explore options to help ease the burden of student-athlete travel such as recording classes for students (including student-athletes). Some buildings on campus have the technology to do this already, but many may not.
- x. Consider standardizing all travel letters so that student-athlete letters resemble those of other student groups who receive official excused absences.
 - 1. Although the student-athlete travel letter should spell out information about options for the student to take an exam while traveling.

2. Student-athletes may not have opportunities to engage in study abroad, internships, or other career exploration. One student reported in the SAAC focus group that she missed deadlines during the academic year to apply for internships. Other students said they could do internships in the summer but it would set them back athletically.

a. Opportunities.

- i. Allow student-athletes to return for a fifth year or a ninth semester in order to pursue these opportunities once their athletic eligibility had ended. For instance, Nursing allows students more time to complete their degree because of time demands associated with getting practical experience.
 - ii. Consider how this relates to the University goal of graduation in four years and the University rules on when a second major may be added. Also, consider NCAA rules that opportunities must be available for all students, and not just student-athletes, to avoid this being characterized as an extra benefit.

- 3. **Emphasize culture of academic success among the coaches.** FAC heard from an honors student who was about to drop out of the Honors program because the student was unable to attend all of the honors class that met in the afternoon and conflicted with part of practice. After discussion with the coach, the coach decided to allow the student to leave practice early two days a week to attend the class meetings. This was the right result, but it seemed it might have taken the coach longer to reach this result than is ideal.
 - a. **Opportunities.**
 - i. Encourage students to engage the coach and professor in a three-way conversation to mediate situations like this.
 - ii. Help coaches and professors understand that chemistry and bonding is important in the classroom as well as on an athletics team.

- 4. **Involve student-athletes in FAC and other bodies.** The NCAA is considering a new governance model that would include student-athletes as voting members of the Board of Directors, the Council, and on the group that will make legislation for the Big 5 Conferences in areas designated for those conferences to have autonomy. Lissa Broome has had an initial conversation with SAAC members about how they might become more involved in our institutional bodies that deal with student-athlete issues. One SAAC member attended the most recent Working Group meeting and made important contributions to the discussion. Debbi Clarke will be soliciting feedback from SAAC members who volunteered on the process documents that the Working Group will be circulating for comment this summer. Although we want to involve student-athletes in these advisory groups, we may need to be mindful of all their time demands.
 - a. **Opportunities.**
 - i. Use the monthly SAAC meetings more strategically to inform students and get feedback and reactions from them.
 - ii. Inform SAAC members of the meeting schedules and agendas for FAC, the ASPSA Faculty Advisory Committee, and the Working Group so they might consider attending.
 - iii. Consider whether one or more voting student members should be added to FAC.
 - iv. Students who have completed their eligibility might have more time for these issues but also be able to represent the student-athlete perspective.
 - v. Students who compete in individual sports may be able to attend afternoon meetings more easily than students in team sports that have conflicting practice times.

- vi. Check with Notre Dame on how it incorporates student-athletes into its Athletics Council.

III. Perspectives from Faculty and Staff

The FAC held open forums for faculty and staff members on April 23 and April 24. One forum was located on the health affairs side of campus in the afternoon and the second was held on the main campus in the morning. There were approximately 30 people in attendance at each forum. The first forum was covered by the press. The forums were structured to provide audience members with an opportunity to make comments or ask questions (limited to 90 seconds) with responses or observations provided by one or two committee members. The forums proved to be an effective vehicle for FAC members to hear from campus community members about issues of concern.

1. Improve communications with faculty and staff.

a. Opportunities.

- i. Hold a FAC forum each semester.
- ii. Involve interested groups like the Retired Faculty group and the History Department.
- iii. Consider more FAC statements and resolutions when needed.
- iv. Use the Carolina Commitment website.
 - 1. Wainstein Report may answer questions that remain about origins of AFAM paper courses.
- v. Use the Faculty Governance FAC page to aid in communication
 - 1. Post searchable FAQs.
 - 2. Provide a mechanism for faculty/staff to ask additional questions that would then be addressed in the FAQs.
- vi. Provide links from GoHeels.com to Carolina Commitment, FAC page, and the Latest from Loudermilk updates.
- vii. Celebrate student-athlete academic successes. The recent lunch was quite successful and honored 10 faculty members who were invited by the top 5 male and top 5 female student athletes by GPA.
- viii. Consider circulating a letter to fans about positive academic experiences from a student-athlete.

2. Concerns about courses in which student-athletes are enrolling.

a. Opportunities.

- i. Continue and refine role of FAC in course clustering and grade review.

3. Concerns about course selection by student-athletes.

a. Opportunities.

- i. Track when students are taking English 100. Should be first course or one of first courses they take.

4. Concerns about student-athletes integrating more into campus and taking advantage of campus resources.

a. Opportunities.

- i.** Encourage student-athletes to take advantage of resources on campus like Advocates for Carolina First.
- ii.** Help student-athletes become aware of other resources on campus.

IV. Perspectives from Athletics

FAC members shared their observations from discussions each had with the coaches and students on their assigned teams about issues facing the coaches and the students.

1. Negative recruiting by competitors based on media coverage related to the paper courses and media reports about literacy levels of student-athletes.

a. Opportunities.

- i.** Provide coaches the information they need to counter the negative recruiting.
- ii.** Be sure they are aware of the Carolina Commitment website and that it explains clearly the facts relating to these concerns.

2. Limitations on communications between coaches and faculty. Some coaches expressed concern that current policies prohibited them from communicating with faculty.

a. Opportunities.

- i.** Clarify policy to ensure that limits on communications are clearly specified. Perhaps any policy should be limited to the coach talking to a faculty member about a student-athlete's academics, noting that communication with faculty about a student's academic performance should be through the ASPSA staff.
- ii.** Encourage opportunities for general interaction with coaches and faculty through guest coaching or professors at practice events.

3. Sensitivity of coaches to academic calendar and academic demands on student-athletes. In SAAC focus group discussions, some students suggested that coaches be more sensitive to the academic calendar and its demands to help student handle the academic demands in the week before fall break and spring break when mid-terms are typically scheduled.

a. Opportunities.

- i.** Bubba Cunningham can work with FAC to identify these times in the semester and communicate with the coaches and administrators that they should be sensitive to the academic demands on students during these periods by reducing practice obligations when possible.

4. Some coaches are concerned that student-athletes at other institutions have fewer academic demands on them than students at UNC-CH. Examples given were that Duke has degrees available that only require 96 credit hours (versus the normal 120 credit hours). The committee was told that Duke requires 34 courses for graduation, but only gives credit for two AP courses. If the 34 courses are 3 credit-hours that is a 102-

credit hour degree. Subtracting 2 3-hour courses from this total leaves 96 credit hours. A second example was from one coach who reported that Wake Forest does not have a limit on the number of classes students or athletes can miss for competition or practice.

a. Opportunities.

- i. Learn the facts regarding the Duke requirements and educate our coaches about the requirements at Duke, but more importantly about the requirements at UNC.
- ii. Learn the facts regarding the missed class limits at Wake Forest, educate our coaches and communicate UNC-CH expectations regarding class attendance.

5. Enhance communication opportunities between FAC and the coaches.

a. Opportunities.

- i. Should we have focus groups with Coaches?
- ii. Identify and disseminate successful strategies for coaches in considering academics in recruiting and creating a culture of academic success among their students.

V. Time Commitments

Layna Mosley and Deb Stroman distributed a chart of missed class days by team for travel in the Fall 2013 and Spring 2014 semesters.

1. Questions related to approval of competition schedules based on missed class time.

a. Opportunities.

- i. Coordinate this with the Working Group which is looking at these issues also.
- ii. Learn how competition schedules are constructed.
- iii. Compile missed class by team each year on a consistent basis and compare (if possible) missed class time before and after ACC expansion.
 1. Add summer school to the schedule request form and the missed day calculation.
 2. Consider whether men's basketball, women's basketball, and football should complete schedule request forms.
 3. Standardize the way that coaches count partial missed days.
 4. How is missed class time calculated for sports where not all students travel to all competitions?
 5. Should the maximum number of missed class days be based on M-W-F and Tu-Th counts, instead of an overall day limit?
 6. What is the procedure for approving an exception from any stated limit?
- iv. Discuss polices related to competition during the final exam period.

- 2. Concerns about course and major selection.** Some student-athletes may not pursue certain majors or pre-professional programs because they perceive that the programs do not fit with their practice and competition schedules. Some student-athletes may be

foreclosed from taking courses that meet only during practice times or may forego enrollment since missed practice time may mean reduced playing time.

a. **Opportunities.**

- i. Consider the work of the Education and Medical Professions Task Forces formed by FAC in previous years and whether these groups are still working, whether they need to be reactivated and whether other task forces need to be created.
- ii. Encourage three-way conversations between the student, the professor, and the coach to work through class conflict issues.
- iii. Encourage ASPSA and Academic Advising to bring to FAC's attention special difficulties that student-athletes may have in major and course selection.
- iv. How is practice time set and can the student-athlete time commitment be reduced or streamlined?
- v. Educate coaches about how practice and competition times may limit student-athlete course and major choices.

VI. Finances

Martina Ballen from the athletics department presented her annual review of the Department of Athletics budget. The committee suggested that the budget labels indicate more clearly every expense category that was devoted to student-athlete support. Bubba Cunningham reported that the Kenan-Flagler Business School had recently done a project for the department on increasing ticket sales to help increase department revenue. At UNC-CH, logo licensing fee income is not retained by the Athletics Department but does fund need and merit-based scholarships. Could this be acknowledged in some manner as a contribution from athletics to the University? Are there other ways that the Athletics Department could give back to the University?

The committee will meet again for a half-day on May 16.

Respectfully submitted by Lissa Broome