

Faculty Athletics Committee
October 2, 2018

Committee Members: Melissa Geil, David Guilkey, David Hartzell, Daryhl Johnson, Jeff Spang, Tania String, Kim Strom-Gottfried, Erika Wilson

Student-Athlete Liaison: Naomi Van Nes (Student-Athlete Rep)

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

Guests: Mario Ciocca (Sports Medicine, Campus Health), Robbi Pickeral Evans (Athletics), Dwight Hollier (Athletics), Beth Keith (University Communications), Anna Rose Medley (Chancellor's Office), Jeni Shannon (Sports Medicine, Campus Health), Audrey Smith (Communications, Media Relations), Emily Summers (Chancellor's Office),

I. Welcome. Introductions, and Preliminary Matters

Welcome and Introductions. Committee Chair Daryhl Johnson welcomed everyone to the meeting. Committee members and guests introduced themselves, including Dwight Hollier, recently hired as a Senior Associate Athletics Director. Mr. Hollier is a UNC graduate and former member of the football team. He played in the NFL, received a masters degree in psychology, and subsequently worked with the NFL delivering content on sexual assault and domestic violence, among other things. Dwight's wife is a graduate of the UNC medical school and will move from Charlotte at the end of the school year to join Dwight in Chapel Hill.

Minutes, Agendas, and Meeting Preparation. The minutes were approved as amended with an updated timeline provided by Michelle Brown. Kim Strom-Gottfried noted that each month presentations are made to the committee related to one or more of the academic processes documented at apsa.unc.edu, but that each process has particular relevance to the work of a specific topic group. Both topics discussed at the September meeting and reported on in the September minutes are on today's agenda for further discussion and review in the light of the September presentations. Each topic group should anticipate this loop back and be prepared to discuss any issues raised or point out areas for potential improvement. These items can then be discussed by the committee and, if appropriate, forwarded to the Executive Committee on Student-Athlete Academics for further discussion and potential action.

October 23 Meeting with Head Coaches. The committee has a meeting set with the head coaches on October 23. Last year, the committee met with the head and assistant coaches. We may wish to discuss some of the issues that have been raised at the SAAC focus groups. Athletic Director Bubba Cunningham will forward to FAC in advance of the meeting any particular issues the coaches have identified for discussion and Daryhl Johnson will forward any issues identified by FAC members to Bubba for distribution to the coaches in advance of the meeting.

II. Academic Processes for Student-Athletes: Process 18 -- Student-Athlete Development and Well-being

Sports Medicine. Jeff Spang and Tania String began the discussion by asking Dr. Mario Ciocca from Sports Medicine/Campus Health to describe his role. Sports Medicine (which Dr. Ciocca heads) provides medical care for student-athletes. There are three full or $\frac{3}{4}$ time team physicians, two primary care fellows, and five primary care physicians. Jeff Spang is the orthopedist who assists in the afternoons. A student-athlete may come directly to Sports Medicine without going through the trainer. Many student-athletes will communicate directly with the doctors by cell phone or text. Members of the Sports Medicine staff also see members of the general student body in their clinic. Sports Medicine also has a Trainer on staff who is dedicated to club sports. There is a lot of collaboration with Student Affairs and the Department of Exercise & Sports Science with respect to the club sports program.

Preventing injuries is also an area of focus for Sports Medicine. Some student-athletes who are injured may not be able to continue to compete and there is a process to medically retire them. The students retain any athletically related financial aid and their scholarship support does not count against the team scholarship limits. Schools are not required to continue funding the scholarships of students who are no longer able to compete. Each year, UNC funds approximately 15 students in this category from a variety of sports. Any student in this category meets with Dr. Ciocca to discuss this decision and Dr. Ciocca refers the student on to meet with a sport psychologist individually or for group counseling.

Drug Testing. Dr. Ciocca also described the drug testing program in place for student-athletes. This program is in addition to the NCAA drug testing program. Each week there is some randomized drug testing of student-athletes. The drug test screens for street drugs in addition to performance enhancing drugs. Any student with a positive test meets with Dr. Ciocca for a medical evaluation and then with Allen O'Barr (the Director of CAPS and a psychiatrist) for a substance abuse evaluation to determine if treatment is needed. The student also meets with Bubba Cunningham and then there is a meeting with the student, the coach, Dr. Ciocca, Paul Pogge (from Athletics), and a performance contract is developed outlining the student's obligations. Once treatment is completed, the student is returned to the random drug testing pool. The Department's drug testing policy is a three-strike policy. Students are encouraged to avoid a strike if they have a problem by declaring that they need treatment.

Mental Health. In recent years there has been an ever-increasing demand by student-athletes for mental health support. Athletic Director Bubba Cunningham created a full-time position beginning in January 2017 for Dr. Jeni Shannon, a sports and clinical psychologist. There are also two contract employees and a pre-doctoral intern from Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). Last year and this year the intern has had a sports psychology background. The intern works two days within athletics, but this has helped create a great relationship with CAPS as well. The primary way of serving student-athletes is one-on-one appointments. The sports psychologist professionals are all trained in mental health as well as sports performance psychology. In addition, the staff also facilitates sessions with teams and meets regularly with 15 out of 28 teams. With some teams, there is just a meeting or two to generally describe mental

health resources. Team meetings are a good opportunity to reach those students they do not talk to on an individual basis. There are two special group sessions offered – one for injured athletes and one for student-athletes who have been medically retired from participation in their sport. There is a focus on outreach, meeting students where they are, and reducing the stigma associated with mental health counseling. More and more students say, “I go to see Jeni or Bradley.”

Crisis Response. Jeff Spang asked about the crisis response for medically dangerous situations. Dr. Ciocca said he might experience such a situation two times per year and Dr. Shannon said this could happen three or four times on average per year for a mental health emergency. There is a flow chart of who to involve that also lists a few different layers of available resources. There are always resources available to assist, including CAPS, campus safety, and the hospital. An assessment can be done over the phone by asking particular questions. An athletic trainer, Dr. Ciocca, and Dr. Shannon may be involved in assessing the situation. If there is any question, they recommend the student go to the hospital.

In response to Jeff Spang’s questions, Dr. Shannon said for non-urgent appointments there is typically a two and one-half week wait and that there is a running waiting list, which right now includes 5-6 people. Last year sports psychology saw 205 individual student-athletes out of a total student-athlete population of about 800. About half of the students seen are male. CAPS annually sees about ten percent of the student body. Dr. Shannon did not have a breakdown of student-athletes by race and noted that all of the providers are white. Dr. Shannon’s group works closely with Cricket Lane in the Student-Athlete Development area and Cricket does a lot of diversity programming, including around social justice issues, and the desire is to create more healthy space for discussion of racial issues that way. Last spring at a student-athlete mental health summit, an African-American female student-athlete spoke powerfully about cultural issues associated with seeking mental health assistance in the African-American community.

Since there is a backlog to see someone in Jeni’s group, she recommends that students who want or need to be seen right away go to CAPS. Jeni knows that many more students are starting to access services at CAPS. She doesn’t always know if a student-athlete goes to CAPS, but CAPS will communicate with her about anything she needs to know. Some student-athletes may access CAPS directly if they don’t want anyone in athletics or sports medicine to know. CAPS has a limit on the total number of sessions per student, but Jeni’s group does not have a session limit and that is part of the reason for the backlog for mental health services provided by Sports Medicine.

In response to a question, Jeni acknowledged that sometimes there are teams with more issues. If Jeni is working with the team, she can work on team culture in her work with the team. If she doesn’t have that kind of relationship, it is a challenge. She has to maintain confidentiality, but sometimes she is able to consult with a coach and say something like, “I heard five people say this”

Dr. Shannon and Dr. Ciocca and their staff are connected in their treatment and work closely together.

In response to a question about the adequacy of resources for mental health issues, Dr. Shannon noted other groups on campus that provide support, such as the Center for Eating Disorders. Dr. Shannon can order a bone density scan that can be helpful to show students with long-term eating disorders this possible consequence to their well-being. Dr. Shannon's office is also doing more proactive body image work and will roll out a two-session, athlete-specific model this spring. Dr. Shannon estimates that she has three or four student-athletes in her current case load that are struggling with eating disorder issues, but that body dissatisfaction issues are present for at least half of the student-athletes she sees.

Issues of Confidentiality. Kim Strom-Gottfried asked about protecting confidentiality of personal information and communicating with the coaching staff. Dr. Shannon said she protects the students' confidentiality and does not talk with the coaching staff unless he has a signed consent. She does ask for permission to talk to the sports medicine staff, including team physicians, trainers, and dieticians when it is necessary, and in any case where there is a concern about medical safety. Student-athletes may sometimes be held out of practice or competition because of mental health issues, but this is a decision made in consultation with the team physician and is reevaluated at least weekly. A coach may need to know that the student is missing practice, but it will be described as for a medical issue. Most students allow Dr. Shannon to speak with coaches to try to facilitate their understanding of the student's needs. All student-athletes sign a medical consent form at the beginning of the year that allows communication to the coaches if there is an injury or illness that limits their participation. If they come to the clinic for something unrelated to that, the visit is confidential.

Independence of Medical Staff and Trainers. Jeff Spang asked about the football player who died at Maryland and how to ensure that the medical staff is not too aligned with the coaching staff. Dr. Ciocca reviewed some of the unfortunate elements of the Maryland situation relating to the conditioning drill and the response to the student-athlete when it was clear he was in distress. There is a fine balance between a new coach trying to toughen up the players and the safety of the players. At UNC, there is a heat illness policy that has been reviewed with the staff. There is also a response plan and emergency action plan, which includes how to communicate with EMS to be sure they can get around construction on campus and to the appropriate site. The staff also looks at any situation like that in Maryland and tries to understand what could have been done better. UNC has an emergency care team that is looking at the Maryland report to see if it suggests anything we could do better at UNC. Dr. Ciocca believes that UNC's independent model of medical care, where the physician does not report to the coach, reduces the actual or perceived pressure on the physicians and trainers from the coaching staff.

Erika Wilson said some student-athletes reported that they could only get an MRI or x-ray if the coach requested it. Dr. Ciocca said that each case is different and the medical staff does not treat student-athletes differently team by team. He would like to know more about the specific situations so that if there is an issue, it can be corrected.

Student-Athlete Mental Health and Wellness Workshop, October 18. Tania String reminded the group about the Student-Athlete Mental Health and Wellness Workshop set for October 18, to which all faculty are invited. Dr. Shannon will be moderating a panel of student-athletes. Anna Rose Medley will forward the link to program registration to FAC and former FAC members.

Dr. Shannon and Dr. Spang also organized two student-athlete focused events last spring and are working on another student-athlete focused mental health event.

Daryhl Johnson made the following observations, including some summaries from the prior discussion:

- It is important to learn from tragedies suffered by others and ask the tough questions.
- We need to work to shift culture and reduce stigma around mental health issues so that it becomes acceptable to seek help.
- Suicide is preventable. We have to be comfortable enough to talk about it.
- We need more resources to devote to mental health.
- It is important that coaches and other athletic staff are aware of the messages they are sending out about mental health.

Bubba Cunningham added that another situation he had been asked about was that at Michigan State. This is another area where we need to be always vigilant.

Mental Health First Aid. Kim Strom-Gottfried noted that the grant for the mental health first aid course offered through the School of Social Work was coming to an end. She urged people to take advantage of that training while it is still available. It would be great to get support through fundraising or from the Chancellor's office to continue that training. Dwight Hollier spoke about the NFL's use of transition coaches in a peer-to-peer model to provide support to former players.

III. Athletic Director's Remarks

Athletic Director Bubba Cunningham provided a few updates:

- A state legislative commission headed by Lt. Governor Dan Forest on the fair treatment of student-athletes will hold its first meeting tomorrow, October 3. Marielle VanGelder (Athletics Compliance) and Scott Oliaro (Sports Medicine) will attend. Tomorrow's topic is health care. The commission is focused on state universities throughout the state. Other sessions will be held on academics, policies and procedures, and compensation.
- Athletics is hosting a sports and entertainment summit in conjunction with the sports business club at Kenan-Flagler on October 12.
- The criminal trial in the college basketball case is coming to an end.
- Closing arguments are expected in the *Alston* case about paying student-athletes in December.

The meeting adjourned at 4:57PM

Respectfully submitted by Lissa Broome (with assistance from Anna Rose Medley).