

Faculty Athletics Committee
October 20, 2021
3:00-5:00PM
Location: Zoom

Present: **Committee Members:** Rita Balaban, Lissa Broome, Stacey Daughters, Melissa Geil, Kevin Guskiewicz, Amanda Holliday, Aimee McHale, Lisa Rahangdale, Keia Sanderson, Jay Smith, Abbie Smith-Ryan, Isaac Unah, Erianne Weight

Advisors: Michelle Brown (ASPSA), Debbi Clarke (Office of the Provost), Bubba Cunningham (Athletics), Vince Ille (Athletics)

Student-Athlete Representatives: Alessandra De Vito (SAAC), Duwe Farris (SAAC)

Guests: Lauren DiGrazia (University Registrar), Robbi Pickeral Evans (Athletics), Dwight Hollier (Athletics), Cricket Lane (Athletics), Mieke Lynch (Operational Excellence), Katie Sessoms (Chancellor's Office)

I) Welcome and Introductions

Chair Melissa Geil welcomed everyone to the October meeting and reviewed the charge of the committee.

II) Housekeeping Items

Minutes.

The minutes from the September meeting will be postponed for approval until the November meeting. The committee members were asked to review the revised minutes and direct any further revisions to Lissa Broome and Katie Sessoms.

Team Liaison Update.

Isaac Unah met with the Men's Soccer coach and two assistant coaches before the Wake Forest game on October 10. Unah hopes to have a formal meeting soon with the Men's Soccer coaches and players. Unah also met with the Men's Wrestling coach in September and plans to attend a practice soon.

Erianne Weight established relationships with the Volleyball and Women's Field Hockey teams. She has offered her assistance and has enjoyed getting to know the players and coaches.

Rita Balaban met with the Women's Softball team and Women's Basketball team at the end of September. Balaban was excited to learn that there are graduate transfer students on the Women's Basketball team this year.

Chair Geil met with the Gymnastics coach recently and learned that many first-year student-athletes have told their coaches that they were having trouble learning time management skills while adjusting to in-person classes.

III) Chancellor Remarks

Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz acknowledged that this was a tough time for the Carolina community as we mourn the loss of two students. Guskiewicz spent a significant amount of time over the past week talking with students and families. Higher education across the country has been experiencing a mental health crisis, even prior to the Pandemic. The Chancellor shared his sadness that the suffering of others goes unnoticed too often and hopes to address this with additional support centers. University resources include the Heels Network and the Mental Health Summit. The Mental Health Task Force, established in 2019, is convening working groups that will be planning the Mental Health Summit for November 15. The summit will focus on the culture on campus, crisis services, and prevention. The Chancellor was pleased to learn in another meeting that the Student-Athlete Advisory Council had heard from mental health professionals in each of its first two meetings this fall.

Dwight Hollier requested that Jeni Shannon be invited to work with the committee planning the Mental Health summit to include the perspective on student-athletes' mental health. Chancellor Guskiewicz agreed and will relay this request to Samantha Brody.

Lisa Rahangdale recently discussed with Brody the poor mental health coverage provided by Blue Cross Blue Shield, North Carolina's largest health insurance company. Rahangdale urged the Chancellor to consider this as an opportunity to push for better mental health coverage for UNC plans.

Commencement ceremonies for the Class of 2020 were held in Kenan Stadium with retired Men's Basketball Coach Roy Williams as the commencement speaker. Williams recognized the resiliency of the 2020 graduates and spoke of his own experiences as a student and coach at Carolina.

University Day was held on October 12 in Memorial Hall. The ceremony recognized the 228th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of Old East, celebrated the 50-year consolidation of the UNC system, and honored eight distinguished alumni. University Day continued even though classes were cancelled for a wellness day.

The Provost search is down to five finalists. Guskiewicz hopes to make an announcement by mid-November with the new Provost beginning by mid-February.

Chancellor Guskiewicz congratulated Erianne Weight for her important work in heading up a small grant program for the Atlantic Coast Conference through UNC's Center for Research in Intercollegiate Athletics.

Chancellor Guskiewicz encouraged the members of the committee to attend the remaining fall sports events. Many students are coming to games this semester to support our student-athletes.

IV) Student-Athlete Mental Health Update

Dwight Hollier reported that in response to the student deaths that took place on campus Sport Medicine's Sport Psychology staff created spaces for student-athletes to come in for emergency counseling sessions. Student-athletes were impacted deeply by the recent events and many of those who had relationships with the students who passed reached out to connect with the Sports Medicine clinicians for support. Sports Psychology staff members also attended team practices to offer a space for conversation.

Cricket Lane shared that the leadership academy holds a student-athlete mental health panel to provide information for first-year student-athletes and this program alerts students to the assistance available through Sports Medicine and more broadly through Campus Health.

Geil asked the SAAC members, Duwe Farris and Alessandra De Vito, if they could talk with the committee about their experiences this past week and how FAC can help support students through this difficult time. Duwe Farris responded that a Sports Psychologist attended a Men's Basketball practice and provided important information on signs their teammates might be struggling. Although no one from Sports Psychology came to the Women's Rowing team practice, Alessandra De Vito reported that she had received information about mental health resources from the Leadership Academy and Athletic Department listserv emails. Student-athletes are aware of the resources available, however, the wait time for sessions can be long.

Michelle Brown, Director of ASPSA, said that feedback they received from students and academic counselors is that some faculty adjusted assignments for the wellness day, while others did not. The wellness day pushed grades for many student-athletes to after the pass-fail deadline, adding additional stress to a difficult decision. Some students say they will now have to complete assignments on Fall break. Brown noted that some first-year students did not understand the message about the pass-fail deadline. She suggested that it might be good to have students provide input on messages that might otherwise seem clear to administrators. Geil inquired whether coaches adjusted practice schedules to accommodate the wellness day. Bubba Cunningham, Athletic Director, said Athletics encouraged Spring sports to cancel practice and that teams that were in season were encouraged to discuss mental health. A video was sent to all head coaches encouraging them to talk and have conversations about the student deaths.

Aimee McHale said some students in the School of Public Health wished there had been more humanity in the communications about the student deaths along with more information about how to access resources for support. She also expressed concern that campus Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) was overwhelmed and under-resourced.

The Chancellor commended faculty for their willingness to accommodate students in their struggles and grief. Some faculty requested classes be held on Monday so they could discuss the events that happened over the weekend with their students and serve as a resource to them.

Geil referenced a comment made in the chat about faculty being equipped to provide support to students. It would be helpful to provide faculty with information about how to approach these

types of conversations with students. The Chancellor agreed and said the goal is to provide faculty with training in the role they might play in intervening with students who may not be in crisis, but potentially are on that path. Isaac Unah encouraged faculty to be flexible and show empathy to their students.

Rita Balaban referred to variances between Farris's and De Vito's experiences this past week and their access to mental health professionals. It is critical to address this difference and provide equal support to all student-athletes. Geil agreed with Balaban's statements.

Robert Martinez, Vice Chair, said the University may have internal resources that could be used to provide more student support. He referenced the School of Education counseling program. The University worked hard to marshal all resources, including the School of Social Work and the Department of Psychology.

V) Faculty Athletics Representative Update

Lissa Broome, Faculty Athletics Representative, provided an update on the NCAA Constitutional Review Committee. A Constitutional Convention will be held November 15 to discuss redrafting the principles, governance structure, and membership commitments found in the NCAA Constitution. The final draft is due to the NCAA Board of Governors by December 15, 2021, and then will be voted on at the January NCAA Convention. The anticipated constitutional changes will necessitate a review in 2022 of the Division I By-Laws.

The NCAA Standardized Test Task Force was appointed as a result of issues about racial equity around standardized tests. The group recommended the elimination of standardized test score requirement. The D1 Committee on Academics will vote on the recommendation on February 22. Any change in initial eligibility will need to be approved through the D1 legislative process.

The General Counsel to the National Labor Relations Board issued an opinion on September 29, 2021, indicating her view that student-athletes should be considered employees. As a public university, this opinion would likely not impact our student-athletes, however, there is a potential application addressed in the footnote of the opinion: "it may be appropriate for the Board to assert jurisdiction over the NCAA and an athletic conference, and to find joint employer status with certain member institutions, even if some of the member schools are state institutions."

Broome shared an update on the Supreme Court's *Alston* case reporting that it permits up to \$5,980 in academic awards per year in addition to other academic support such as internships and study abroad paid for by the school. Several conferences have announced that monetary awards are at the discretion of each school. Jay Smith will circulate an *amicus* brief he assisted in preparing for this case.

Broome congratulated Erianne Weight and the Center for Research on Intercollegiate Athletics on their involvement with the 2020-21 ACC Innovation Initiative Small Grants Projects.

The ACC Board of Directors met on September 15 and on October 15. The other ACC Governance Groups will meet October 25-27 at Notre Dame.

Broome and Geil presented the FAC and FAR annual reports to Faculty Council on October 1, but used their time before the Council to report on NIL with Chris Gray, a student-athlete from Men's Lacrosse.

VI) Athletics Director Update

Bubba Cunningham, Athletic Director, said Broome had covered many of the topics and issues that he had planned on his list. The week of October 25th-29th will be Unity Week for the ACC.

VI) Advising and Priority Registration

Mieke Lynch, Transformational Manager, and Lauren DiGrazia, Assistant Provost/University Registrar, joined the committee to update it on the new registration appointment process for Spring 2022 course registration.

Lynch explained that students were frustrated with the current registration system. Some concerns were the lack of transparency surrounding how registration appointments were assigned and feeling rushed to register in 15-minute registration appointments.

The registration date is currently determined by terms in residence, while the new system will determine the registration date by the number of earned credit hours, excluding credits in progress and test credits. The time-of-day students register is randomly assigned in the current system, but in the new registration process students will be assigned by terms in residence, with students with more terms in residence registering earlier in the day. An additional change is that registration appointments will begin every three hours rather than every 15 minutes.

The length of registration will be extended to 4 weeks, with 2 weeks for each wave. In the first wave, students can register for up to 12 credit hours. During the second wave, students may register for up to 17 credit hours, including 4 waitlisted credit hours.

In the new registration process, groups assigned to priority registration by the Priority Registration Advisory Committee (PRAC) may register on the first day of each wave. Members of Honors Carolina will have priority for Honor classes and sections, as well as be assigned a 7:00 am appointment on the day they register based on earned credit hours.

Students will no longer be able to add themselves to a class waitlist at any time during registration. They will only be allowed to get on a waitlist during the second wave.

Under the new registration process, open enrollment begins when the second wave ends.

Meike and DeGrazia hope the new system will result in more equitable access to classes and improved progress toward degree, especially for transfer and dual enrollment students.

VII) ASPSA Update

Michelle Brown, Director of the Academic Support Program for Student-Athletes, asked FAC members to invite a colleague to join them at a pregame event at the November 6 football game against Wake Forest University. The event will include a tour of ASPSA and Kenan Field House by ASPSA staff.

ASPSA will participate again with the Center for Faculty Excellence in the Equity in Teaching Institute. Abbie Smith-Ryan and Aimee McHale will assist Brown with this presentation.

The Academic Progress Rate (APR) for each team is being finalized. During COVID, the NCAA has suspended the public release of all schools' numbers, but each institution may release its own numbers on the release date. The Graduation Success Rate (GSR) will likely be released by the NCAA in the coming month.

A virtual Career Fair for student-athletes, including internship opportunities, will be held October 29.

VIII) Planning for Head Coaches Meeting

The FAC meeting with the head coaches will be Tuesday, November 16. Jay Smith asked for a Zoom link if the meeting will be held in person. Topics the committee may wish to discuss with the coaches include priority registration, internships, study abroad, and mental health. If other topics come to mind, please email Geil.

The meeting adjourned at 4:57

Respectfully submitted, Lissa Broome (with assistance from Katie Sessoms)