

FACULTY ATHLETICS COMMITTEE

Notes

March 21, 2023

FACULTY ATHLETICS COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

David Berkoff, Abbie Smith-Ryan, Erienne Weight

ADVISORS:

Michelle Brown (ASPSA), Dwight Hollier (Athletics), Vince Ille (Athletics), Cricket Lane (Athletics)

GUESTS:

FAC UPDATES AND MINUTES

- The February minutes were not approved since a quorum of the committee was not present.
- Erienne Weight proposed a two-year term for the FAC chair to ensure continuity in leadership.
- FAC members should consider whether they are interested in serving as Chair or Vice-Chair of FAC.
- Weight is interested in continuing as Chair but will be on leave Fall 2024 and would need a temporary replacement. Abbie Smith-Ryan expressed her interest in continuing as Vice Chair. David Berkoff noted that he would be willing to help, but he is not interested in a formal leadership role.

FOLLOW UP FROM DISCUSSION WITH APSA TEAM

- Weight began by describing the feedback shared in the conversation with ASPSA Counselors at the February FAC meeting.
 - *Time commitment / boundaries for academic counselors*
 - Counselors said they are exhausted. Is there a way to increase/institute boundaries? With texting and all access, many counselors never get a break.
 - Counselors noted that with the normal semesters, Maymester, summer school (2 sessions), and championships seasons, there is no break.
 - *Messaging faculty about submitting book orders to UNC Student Stores so that scholarship student-athletes may receive their books*
 - Some faculty do not submit book orders for their courses to UNC Student Stores, assuming that students will order their books from Amazon or other stores. Student-athletes who are receiving books as part of their

scholarships get those books from UNC Student Stores. If faculty have not submitted a book order to Student Stores this creates a big delay in getting the books and may place a financial burden on the students if they have to purchase a book and request to be reimbursed.

- Could FAC assist by connecting with Faculty Council or the Provost's Office on this subject to provide guidance to faculty on the practical importance of submitting book orders for their courses to UNC Student Stores?
- *Approved Absence Policy/Travel Letters*
 - Michelle Brown, Director of ASPSA, provided a brief update regarding the travel letter and integration with electronic approved absence notifications. She said the University is still working to merge the systems, but that the University Approved Absence Office under the Dean of Students office is overwhelmed. This has been in the works for 2 years and there is no projected date for completion.
 - Erianne asked where the FAC travel letter/memo originally drafted by Jay Smith stood. Lissa Broome had agreed to send it to the Provost. [The letter was sent to the Provost's Office in December 2020.]
 - The Educational Policy Committee (EPC) has approved absences as one of its priorities. Perhaps a FAC member could join with EPC to ensure the committee understands the student-athlete perspective on the updated campus-wide approved absence policy. Medical absences for all students have changed from 3 days of missing class to 5 days of missing class prior to being eligible for approval. Meg Zomorodi (member of EPC) and Joy Renner are both involved and have been helpful connections. Joy Renner previously served on FAC.
 - Perhaps FAC could create an informal survey to ask faculty how they would prefer to receive travel information.
 - The group also discussed a FAC member's suggestion to update the travel letter to mimic the academic progress report requests.
 - Would it be possible for there to be one letter with a list of all student-athletes in the course with a link to their schedules that would be updated as the schedule may change? Michelle Brown and Vince Ille will look into the software available on their end and the practical feasibility of this suggestion.
 - Brown suggested that FAC propose to EPC that it establish a process for all students if they believe a faculty member is not abiding by the University approved absence policy.
 - As a next step, FAC could form a subcommittee to put together a proposal to establish a process/portal to the Dean of Students as a way to capture and collate the prevalence of these grievances.

- The group suggested creating a list of faculty who do not “follow” the approved absence policy by providing an opportunity to make-up missed work instead of using the missed work as a dropped quiz/test.
- *Meaningful exit interviews – process and follow-up*
 - Weight reported that an academic counselor said they were interested in learning what issues were raised in the exit interviews and what happened in response to recurring issues.
- *For-credit options for student-athletes – leadership, transition in programs (THRIVE, personal branding), Transition out programs (job search), financial literacy, sport psychology*
 - The Leadership Academy and the Leadership in Action class offered for credit to a select group of student-athletes were discussed at the head coaches meeting. There appeared to be some interest in exploring coordination with the business school and athletics so that student-athletes might receive academic credit for the leadership academy training.
 - This will be added to the FAC list of issues to tackle. This provides an opportunity for FAC and Athletics to work synergistically to help move this forward. For-credit options for student-athletes could include –
 - leadership,
 - transition in (THRIVE, personal branding),
 - Transition out (job search),
 - financial literacy,
 - sport psychology
- *Other discussion items – 8-week courses*
 - Brown noted several institutions, including NC State, are adding 8-week courses. Students could take 1 or 2, 3-credit courses in the 8-week period. UNC offers this on a limited basis (ie School of Business does), but it would be advantageous for student-athletes to make progress toward their degree earlier in the semester. In addition, 8-week courses could reduce the number of missed final exams due to post season competition. This has been briefly discussed with the Provost and is another opportunity for FAC to work with Athletics to support the academic progress of the student athletes.
- *Other discussion items – ASPSA Instructor Feedback Forms [added to this list by Brown on 3/22/23]*
 - It would be helpful to ASPSA to get a higher response rate from instructors on the Instructor Feedback Reports.
- *Communicating with Faculty*

- To address many of the points raised above, perhaps ASPSA, FAC, and a student-athlete could make a joint presentation to faculty in departments with a lot of student-athletes. The presentation could highlight what APSPA does and discuss items like: travel letters, make-up opportunities for excused absences, the importance of submitting book orders to Student Stores, and responding to ASPSA instructor feedback form requests.

Respectfully submitted by Abbie Smith-Ryan (with assistance from Lissa Broome and Amy Grau).