

## UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS COMMITTEE Minutes

Thursday, November 14, 2024 (3:30 – 5:00 p.m.)

<https://virginiatech.zoom.us/j/86186887163>

**Members Present:** Chris Wise, Ken Stiles, Dan Thorpe, Alex Efird, Phil Miskovic, Paul Knox, John Galbraith, Liesel Ritchie, Emma Atkinson, Dirk Buengel, Frank Thompson, Brent Kremer. Lisa Karlisch, Rachel Holloway attended by Zoom.

**Absent:** Amy Ingram, Simon Allen, Travis Burns, Whit Babcock, Mark Feldman, Leanna House, Brad Whitney, Brad Wurthman, Eric Martin, Joe Tront, Jen Irish, Robin Queen.

**Guests:** Sarah Anderson, Will Hozey, Danny White, Cliff Wattenberg, Ron Dickson.

1. **Approval of Agenda.** Group
  
2. **Electronic Approval of Sept 12, 2024 Meeting Minutes.** Posted on the Governance web page (<http://www.governance.vt.edu>). Galbraith
  
3. **Guest Presentation:** – Ron Dickson and Clint Wattenberg gave a very informative presentation about the Executive Healthcare Team (EHCT) that provides a multidisciplinary approach to tackling the complex issues impacting our athletes' health and well-being, which underpin athletic and academic success. The big concern is west coast and other long-distance travel and the challenges of keeping athletes in proper mental health and physical condition during and after long travel events. Their powerpoint is attached. Clint discussed proper rest and sleep on plane rides, and proper hydration and nutrition. Ron discussed advantages and challenges for athletes regarding time of day they compete, and whether they are traveling from west to east or east to west. Athletes are asked to condition themselves before West Coast travel by adjusting their sleep times by one hour each night for three nights prior to travel. Practice times are adjusted by the coaches as well.
  
4. **Policy 1036 Update.** Danny White gave an update about the edits provided by committee members to the Student-Athlete Monitoring and Assistance Program (SAMAP) [Policy 1036](#) document. Jen Irish accepted the edits, which were centered around removal of cannabis (THC) from the banned substances list for student athletes by the NCAA. A motion was made and passed to accept the edits, and the updated document will be forwarded to the university for posting.
  
5. **Student Athlete Introductions.** Emma Atkinson (swimming) and Frank Thompson (tennis) introduced themselves.
  
6. **Student-Athletic Academic Support Services (SAASS) Update.** Will Hozey gave a presentation about the Learning Assistance Program (attached).
  
7. **Athletic Director Update.** Danny White reported that we are in the crossover season where

some fall sports are still going but some winter sports have already started. We host about 200 events each year. The House v NCAA case may be settled April 1, with impacts or changes to revenue sharing and roster limits applied in August, 120 days later. This will impact roster management and recruiting. If the House case is not settled until April 1, that leaves little time to adjust rosters. In the meantime, the athletic director and his staff, under advisement from the ACC legal team, are working on contingencies. They are communicating with and preparing affected coaches. Coaches want to know what their roster number is going to be, and how many they can sign on signing day. Signing day for most fall sports was Nov. 13, for football is Dec. 4. Roster sizes will be reduced in some sports. Everyone wants to avoid having to rescind offers to incoming and to current scholarship athletes. There will likely be an increase in the number of transfers as a result. The transfer portal will open for fall sports Dec. 9 – 28, and again April 16-25.

#### **8. Adjourned at 5:00 pm.**

##### Upcoming Fall 2024 UAC Meeting Schedule

**Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup> – 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.** (Virtual Only)

<https://virginiatech.zoom.us/j/88010840825>

##### Proposed Spring 2025 UAC Meeting Schedule

**Jan 16<sup>th</sup> – 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.** (In-person, location: 5<sup>th</sup> floor dining area, Lane Stadium north tower entrance)

**Feb 13<sup>th</sup> – 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.** (Virtual Only)


**March 20<sup>th</sup> – 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.** (In-person, location: 5<sup>th</sup> floor dining area, Lane Stadium north tower entrance)

**April 17<sup>th</sup> – 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.** (Virtual Only)

**May 7<sup>th</sup> (if needed) – 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.** (In-person, location: 5<sup>th</sup> floor dining area, Lane Stadium north tower entrance)



## Executive Healthcare Team (EHCT)

- A cross-departmental VT Athletics leadership group providing a multidisciplinary approach to tackling the complex issues impacting VT Student athletes' health & wellbeing ... which underpin athletic & academic success
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# VT Athletics: Executive Healthcare Team

## Sports Medicine

- Mike Goforth, Dr. Mark Rogers

## CAMP

- Dr. Gary Bennett

## Strength & Conditioning

- Ron Dickson

## Sports Nutrition

- Clint Wattenberg

## Sports Science

- Kelsey Vinson

## Athletic Administration

- Chris Helms, Danny White

# RECOVERY TOOLKIT



- **Components of Athletic Performance**

- Training Stress

- Primarily from sport coaches and S&C staff

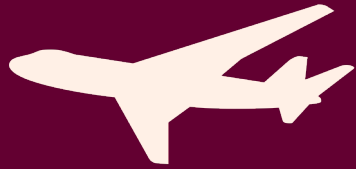
- Recovery

- SAs are primarily responsible for the implementation
    - VT Athletic department provides resources and recommendations

- **Recovery Toolkit Objective**

- Provide a resource for information and strategies to help SAs improve recovery and overall athletic performance

- Identify the most impactful modalities based on science/research



# VIRGINIA TECH ATHLETICS

## CROSS-COUNTRY TRAVEL PLAYBOOK





## VIRGINIA TECH TIME ZONE TRAVEL TOOLKIT

Info detailed in this document:

- Time-zone shift effects on circadian rhythm (i.e Jet Lag)
  - Westward vs. Eastward
  - Pre-travel, at competition destination, return travel
- Travel impact on performance readiness
  - Hydration
  - Inflammation
  - Sleep
  - Recovery
  - Mobility
- General Sleep Hygiene
- Caffeine
- Sleep aides
- Illness / Hygiene
- Technologies

### WHAT IS JET LAG?

Jet lag primarily affects the body's circadian rhythms, which regulate sleep-wake cycles, hormone release, and other physiological processes.

Therefore, it impacts systems such as sleep patterns, digestion, metabolism, hormone production (including cortisol and melatonin), and overall mood and cognitive function.



### WHAT IS CIRCADIAN RHYTHM?

The circadian rhythm is a natural, internal process that regulates the sleep-wake cycle and repeats roughly every 24 hours. It is influenced by environmental cues such as light and darkness, and it governs various physiological processes such as hormone production, body temperature, and metabolism.

Disruptions to the circadian rhythm, such as those caused by jet lag or shift work, can lead to sleep disturbances and affect overall health and well-being.



## WESTWARD TRAVEL

- KEY FOCUS = backward shift in circadian rhythm
- BIGGEST CHALLENGE – PLAYING AT NIGHT
- Athletes will naturally be alert and activated early in the day and thus naturally better able to wake and compete earlier in the day with WESTWARD travel.
- If competition is in the PM, activity and natural light exposure should not occur early AM - a pre-set waking/alert time should be established and activation stimuli (physical activity, natural light exposure, screen exposure, etc.) should be avoided until this PRE-set time. This shift will allow the athlete to be better prepared for PM competition.

## PREPARING FOR TRAVEL

- Initiate circadian rhythm shift to new time zone prior to departure
  - Westward Travel - Delay bedtime by 1 hour per night up to 3 days prior to departure (especially if evening competition on west coast)
  - Eastward Travel - moving bedtime forward can be more challenging but could be helpful if done 1-3 days prior to travel.
- Immune boosting
  - Adequate sleep
  - Stress management
  - Immune boosting nutrients
    - Color your plate
    - Vit C + Zinc

## EASTWARD TRAVEL

- FOCUS = forward shift in circadian rhythm
- BIGGEST CHALLENGE – RESETTING BEDTIME & AM WAKEFULNESS
- When returning from a westward trip, AM sun exposure and mild physical activity will help facilitate desired circadian rhythm forward shift.
- Intense practices upon return east should be avoided in the morning for the 1<sup>st</sup> few days while AM wakefulness will remain impaired.
- Athletes will naturally be alert and activated later in the day with eastward travel- transitioning the bedtime earlier by 1-1.5hrs each night while being strict with waking time will facilitate the desired circadian shift.



## INTRA-TRAVEL MOVEMENT

- During flight - stand every 1-2 hours to move around and do mobility activities.
- Get up and move around on the flight. Walk to the back of the plane, standing intermittently, ankle pumps, and other activities stimulate blood flow through the legs.
- Compression socks for your lower extremity can also help improve circulation during long flights, especially if unable to move as advised.
- Passive recovery modalities can be on / between flights – these can include Normatec boots, compression socks, massage guns and foam rollers.

## INTRA-TRAVEL HYGIENE/SANITATION

- Get your annual flu & Covid shot to help protect you from germs on the plane
- Bring hand sanitizer with at least 70% alcohol and/or disinfecting wipes - wipe down tray table, seat belt, arm rest and other surfaces that can hold germs
- Wash hands after using the bathroom and before eating
- Turn on air flow from the vent above your seat. Will continuously circulate air around you.
- Always have an option to mask on the plane and in busy airports. Please reach out to you ATC should you desire a mask



## INTRA-TRAVEL NUTRITION

### Hydration

- Bring empty reusable water bottle for flight and trip
- Sip on water regularly to stay ahead of your thirst queues to drive fluid consumption
- Include electrolytes to better retain fluids for improved hydration status upon reaching destination (especially when traveling to warmer climate) and to reduce hyperuresis (excessive urination)

### Nutrition

- Pack plenty of protein-containing snacks to consume every 2-3 hours between meals to stimulate muscle repair and to regulate appetite / provide satiety throughout the trip.
- Schedule a full meal upon arrival to destination
- Balance of nutrients based on timing relation to upcoming competition (e.g more carbs if competing the next day)



## UPON ARRIVAL AT DESTINATION

**(Ensure you ensure these 3 things ASAP upon arriving to destination)**

- **Movement** - if not practicing at arrival, ensure 20-30 mins movement/light activity (outside if possible). This aids in sleep cycle shift as well as to clear any edema (i.e. swelling in legs) from travel
- **Direct sunlight** - 20-30 mins direct sunlight exposure (if daytime) will help reset your circadian rhythm
- **Hydration** - replete any fluid and electrolytes that may have depleted during travel



## UPON ARRIVAL - NUTRITION

- Meal timing has a direct impact on circadian rhythm - initiate regular feeding schedule upon arrival.
- Ensure a balanced meal upon arrival including ~3 hours before bedtime if possible.
- Consume breakfast upon waking / at predetermined waking.
- Hydration may be compromised during travel (dry conditions, inconsistent fluid intake to avoid urination need), so ensure hydration (fluid + salt / electrolytes) upon arrival to regain optimal hydration status.
- Manage caffeine and sleep supporting nutrients (magnesium, melatonin, etc.) as indicated below.
- No caffeine in 2nd half of day

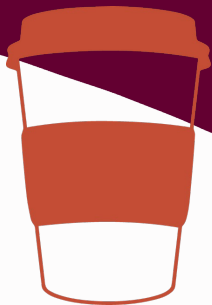
## NAPS

- Naps can provide a physical and mental boost and can do so without impairing circadian shift if done strategically
- **POWER NAPS** - 20-30 minute power-naps restore cognitive performance without impairing circadian shift
  - **Pro-Tip** - "Power-Naps" can be restorative even if full sleep is not achieved. Diaphragmatic breathing, mindfulness, technology disconnect, etc. can all be restorative - achieving actual sleep is an added benefit!
- **\*\* Longer naps 60-120 minute naps help restore both physical recovery and mental acuity but have a bigger impact on circadian shift**
- Naps should be **PLANNED** and executed within the "Mid-Day" period and avoided within ~4hrs of either AM waking and/or PM bed-time. Typically this "nap-window" would be ~ 12pm-4pm but could shift based on targeted wake and sleep times.
- Be sure to set alarms and/or have an accountability buddy to ensure that your power-nap does not extend to a full sleep event!!!



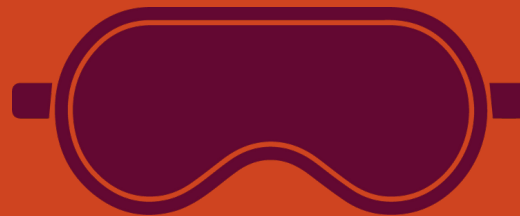
## CAFFEINE

- Caffeine impacts everyone's sleep differently - know your personal response and tolerance to caffeine.
- Regardless of tolerance, PM caffeine is likely to affect sleep and circadian shift so should be avoided in 1<sup>st</sup> 2-3 days after cross-country travel
- AM caffeine can be beneficial to activating the nervous system (in addition to other tactics such as direct sun exposure, etc.) in the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the day.



## SLEEP-AIDES

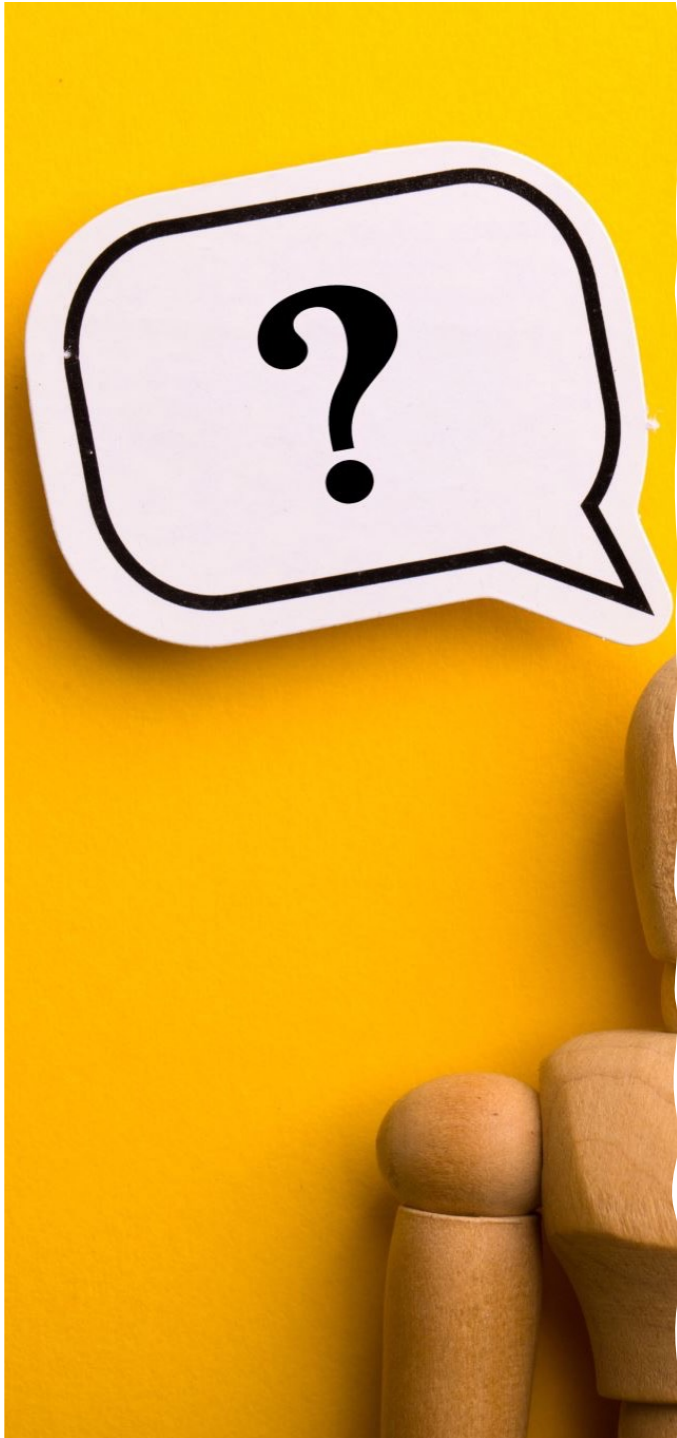
- Tart Cherry Juice - contains natural melatonin that can support sleep onset (see below for more on melatonin)
- \*Magnesium - Magnesium can help you sleep longer, get better quality sleep, and feel less tired.
- \*Melatonin - recommendation for if athletes choose to purchase (3<sup>rd</sup> party tested) melatonin on their own.



*\*If interested in sleep aids, check with your Sports Dietitian to find the right fit and to ensure 3<sup>rd</sup> party testing for supplement safety!*

## \*MELATONIN - EXPANDED

- Melatonin is a neurotransmitter that is released when your body is preparing for sleep and thus supplementation can be helpful for short durations when making circadian rhythm shifts. Taking melatonin today is not just about getting good sleep today, but even more importantly is targeted to retraining the body for sleep tomorrow and the remainder of our time at this circadian cycle.
- Take a minimal dose (1-3 mg) 2 hours prior to bedtime. If waking mid-sleep (before 50% of desired sleep time has passed) take another minimal dose (1-3 mg).
- Maintain this process for duration of time on west-coast competing (if  $\leq$  5days) and up to 5 days upon returning. Beware taking / do not take overnight melatonin the night before an AM competition.



# Questions & Discussion

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# Learning Assistance Program

UAC Presentation

Fall 2024

# Overview

## Learning Assistance Program (LAP)

- What is LAP?
- Personnel
- Role of a Learning Specialist
- LAP Placement
- Bridge to SSD
- International Student Support

Tutoring Program

Mentoring Program

# Learning Assistance Program (LAP)



## What is LAP?

A support program, within SAASS, that provides individualized academic assistance to all student-athletes at Virginia Tech.

## LAP Support Areas

Learning Specialists

Tutoring Program

Mentoring Program





# Learning Assistance Program Staff



**Will Hozey**

Assistant Director, LAP  
Learning Specialist



**Kelsey Wooten**

Senior Learning  
Specialist



**Sarah Wattenberg**

Tutor & Mentor  
Coordinator



**Whitney Osideko**

LAP Intern

# The Role of a Learning Specialist

# The Role of a Learning Specialist

**Learning Specialists help academically vulnerable student-athletes develop skills needed to earn a Virginia Tech degree by:**

- Designing and implementing tailored academic success plans for identified student-athletes in order to strengthen academic skills.
- Teaching individualized learning strategies and study skills.
- Monitoring student work throughout the completion process to ensure compliance with Virginia Tech's Honor Code.
- Working collaboratively with SAASS counselors to explore strengths, successes, and areas for growth.

# LAP IN ACTION: How do we identify student-athletes for LAP support?



STANDARDIZED READING COMPREHENSION & VOCABULARY TEST

Given to all incoming 1<sup>st</sup> year and transfer student-athletes.

ADD/ADHD, DYSLEXIA, ETC.

Voluntary self-disclosure via LAP questionnaire.

COMMON SENSE APPROACH

Not all 1<sup>st</sup> generation students are placed in LAP.

NOT ALWAYS THE BEST PREDICTOR OF ABILITY

Data used in combination with the other three factors.



## Services for Students With Disabilities (SSD)

When a student-athlete voluntarily discloses their education-impacting disability (EID) to LAP, we help them request academic accommodations through SSD.

## Continued Support for Students

- Assistive Technologies
- Refer for Psychoeducational Testing
- Accommodation Letter Requests (On-going)





## International Student Support

- Partnership with VT's Language and Culture Institute in 2022.
- LAP now has a part-time Learning Assistant, Bonnie Sumner.

# Tutoring Program

# Tutoring Program

## AT A GLANCE...

- Coordinated by **Sarah Wattenberg**.
- International Tutor Training Program Certification via the College Reading & Learning Association (CRLA)
- **Total tutors on staff = 78**
- **Total tutoring sessions – 2,662 (Spring 2024)**
- Utilized by **all** teams at Virginia Tech
- **Top subjects:** Math, Biology, Chemistry, Accounting & Information Systems
- **Tutor hiring requirements:** Student at VT, 3.0+ GPA, B or better in course, minimum of Sophomore standing.



# Mentoring Program

# ／ Mentoring Program

## AT A GLANCE...

- Coordinated by **Sarah Wattenberg**.
- **Objective:** College skill-building (time management, study skills, etc.)
- **Mentors on staff** = 10 upperclassmen/graduate students.
- **Weekly meetings** = 1x or 2x per week.
- **Mentees** = Former Learning Specialist caseload students or those that need extra academic support.

# QUESTIONS?