

University Athletics Committee

January 24, 2018

President's Suite, Lane Stadium

Members Present: Holly Scoggins (Chair), Rachel Holloway, Joseph Gabbard, Kevin Gehr, Debbie Greer (for Dwight Shelton), Robena Hughes, Jennifer Hundley, Matt Mayotte, Robert Owen, Jay Poole, Tim Stelter (GSA Rep), Brian Strahm, Terry Swecker, Susan Sumner, Joe Tront, Steve Trost, Paul Winistorfer, Chris Wise (for Patty Perillo)

Members Absent: Whit Babcock, Gordan Bryan, Bill Lansden, Kristine Loscalzo, Thomas Mills, Robert Parker, John Pinkerton, Irene Leech

Guests Present: Ryan Connolly, Reyna Gilbert-Lowry, Derek Gwinn, Angie Littlejohn

Recorder: Megan Griesemer, Assistant Director Compliance

Holly Scoggins, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:32 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made to approve the agenda, and was passed unanimously.

2. Approval of Minutes from December 6, 2017

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of December 6, 2017. The motion was passed unanimously.

Susan Sumner and Steve Trost did not attend December 6th meeting. Debbie Greer (for Dwight Shelton) . . Dwight Shelton also listed as absent.

Business

3. Athletics Update and Q&A

Angie Littlejohn, Senior Associate Athletics Director for Internal Operations

- Football schedule set for Fall 2018
- NCAA Meetings in Indianapolis – Autonomy Vote
 - Unlimited snacks on official visits approved
 - Volunteer coaches can be provided meals on recruit visits and participate in entertainment
 - Medical insurance post-separation from the institution
 - Working to collect more information on best practices
 - Will continue to update on status

Questions/Comments:

- Michigan State – has allowed a predator to exist in their environment?
 - What messages can we bring back to this group to help inform the University on what we can do to prevent this situation from happening here
 - Can provide more information about our internal review of policies and procedures in place to protect against these situations
- Is NCAA investigating?
 - Title IX impacts and accountability
- Bowman Room projected construction dates
 - Preliminary construction on the exterior this summer
 - Interior construction in the fall of 2018
- How is the Baseball facility progress?
 - Should be ready within 2-week window of expected completion date
 - For first game may need to have fans limited to grass area or may need to seek alternative facility (worst case scenario)

4. Concussion Research Part 2

Dr. Stefan Duma

- Research began in early-2000s after observing “accelerometer” at military conference
- Virginia Tech became first school in Fall 2003 to use these instruments to measure head impacts in helmets
- Research affecting rule changes
 - Head impacts increased August 2018 with elimination of 2-a-days but more practice days
- Have added a new course
 - Focuses on critical thinking around issues with concussions
 - How to interpret data, etc
- Starting working with women’s lacrosse to measure head impacts
 - Debate over soft shell helmets
 - Debate over adding helmets in women’s lacrosse
 - Less than 1 impact per game
- Work with soccer
 - Sport participation is very high
 - Number of concussions are very high
 - Very few impacts per game were measured
 - 1-2 per game
 - Head-to-head impacts are more dangerous
 - Working on systems to evaluate protective gear (headbands)
- New investigation of the sport of rugby
 - Custom mouthguard to measure head impacts
 - More concussions than any other sport
- Hasbro
 - Studying nurf products and providing research for materials
 - “Knock-off” products can be very dangerous
- Studying bicycling

Questions/Comments:

- Is the NFL interested?
 - NFL doesn’t agree with the sensor data
 - Share with the NFL, and the organization has made some changes

- What is the advantage of a hard-shell helmet vs a soft-shell?
 - Football is moving toward softer materials
 - Have to be careful about head-to-head
 - Too soft can create neck movement
- How does neck protection work in football?
 - Band that compresses the arteries to keep blood in the head
 - Dr. Duma doesn't feel this is effective
- Do teams wear a soft shell during practice? What do those do?
 - Data proved that it makes effectively no difference (if you are wearing a top helmet)
 - Could help with fingers/arms contact on helmets
- What is the impact of the new rules with the 2-a-days?
 - Theory was if you get rid of 2-a-days it would improve player health and well-being
 - There were not many impacts happening when this system existed
 - Now more hitting practices
- Article indicating that CTE was being caused by other forces applied to the body other than head impact. Does our group look at that?
 - The reality is that everyone who gets hit in the head does not get CTE
 - We don't really have the full data set
 - We don't know why certain people with concussions suffer from CTE
 - Many other issues at play potentially
- Packaging program – helmet manufactured out of natural materials. Thinking of shaken baby syndrome and how this could impact tracking these issues.
 - Could use accelerometer, also could use video footage, etc
- Is there any evidence about sleep contributing? Is someone who has suffered one concussion more likely to suffer repeat concussions?
 - No known investigations about sleep
 - Thinks there are other contributing features for “second impact syndrome”
- In basketball is there a place for the mouthguard technology?
 - The numbers are down the list for number of concussions
 - Trying to start at the biggest and work their way down
- Have you been able to provide analyses of certain products? Have you seen companies improve their products because of our research?
 - Yes, very responsive to get high ratings because this is an important piece to boost sales
- What makes a 5-star helmet?
 - Cushions the impact better
 - Must reduce accelerations at all levels of impact
 - Has lead to more padding and variations of padding
- Do you have data about military helmet usage?
 - Majority of research
 - Highest funding is understanding impact on military
 - Also dealing with PTSD, which contributes to change in affect just like concussions
- Do you think we'll ever see the public wearing a helmet to drive a vehicle?
 - It wouldn't hurt
 - Seats could have 4-point belt
 - Thinking was that usage would go down, so they don't make them
 - School buses?
 - Would struggle to support the load

5. Day in the Life of a Student-Athlete

Robert Owen

- 5th Year Student-Athlete in Mechanical Engineering
- one of most decorated athletes in Virginia Tech history
- Swimming: multiple training sessions in a day
- Scheduling classes around practice times
- Time management improves as you get older
- Study hall is a helpful resource for transitioning into learning the schedule and how to manage time
- Weekday nights are “study time” as well as Sundays
- Important to mix in personal time
- Most important piece of travel competition is communication with professor
 - Put a face to your name early in the semester
 - Can be beneficial in making accommodations for travel
- Grateful for opportunity to compete in the ACC and get an education from Virginia Tech
- Challenge but very rewarding

Questions/Comments:

- Are you doing senior design this year?
 - Yes, probably could have done it during season, however it would have been difficult
- What’s the most frustrating thing dealing with academics that you hear from fellow teammates?
 - Doesn’t hear anything
- Is there any way that you could tweak your class to benefit student-athletes but not hinder other students?
 - Having exams earlier in the week does help somewhat
- Is there enough time for sleep?
 - The more time you spend on the team, the more efficient you can be with your time to get more sleep
- Athletics offers seminars for personal development . . . can you fit that in?
 - Sunday is a day that they can do service
- Would you change 20 hrs per week?
 - Wouldn’t change, you need to train to be successful
- Time management impact in 2017-2018 year
- How much time do you dedicate to preparation and cool down? Does this push academic courses to delay graduation?
 - Travel time, etc
 - Some student-athletes plan for 5 years to help lighten the load
 - Summer classes can help as well
- Did you ever consider changing majors because of time demands?
 - Did not consider changing

6. Amateurism and the NCAA

Dr. Joe Tront

- SWOT of amateurism model
- What is important to maintain the amateur model?

- Define the amateur model
 - NCAA statement
 - Students first and athletes second
 - Can you be them at the same time?
- Develop strategies to take advantage of the opportunities for college athletics
- 144 1 and done since 2006
- reconvene on another meeting

Meeting Adjourned at 5:01 pm.