

University Athletics Committee Minutes

April 2, 2020 – 3:30 p.m.

Zoom

Members Present: Whit Babcock, Katie Boes, Tom Burbey, Bob Denton, Debbie Greer, Rachel Holloway, Sara Jordan, Art Keown, Jake Lamparella, Drew Lund, Ken Miller, Sally Morton, Michael Nappier, Jay Poole, Susan Short, Brian Strahm, Susan Sumner (chair), Joseph Tront, Danny White, Clay Word, Brad Wurthman

Absent with Notification: Gordon Bryan, Joseph Marcy

Absent without Notification:

Guests Present: Sarah Armstrong, Caitlyn Nolan, Danny White, Tim Hodge, Gary Bennett, Reyna Gilbert-Lowry, Tom Gabbard

Recorder: Anna Taylor, CALS Academic Programs Admin Assistant

Susan Sumner, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

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

2. Athletic Director Update – Whit Babcock

Thanked everyone for all the work and to move courses online to teach students in spring 2020. The athletic department is examining and managing the COVID 19 financial crisis. There will be some insurance claims.

The NCAA voted to grant an extra year eligibility for spring 2020 sport athletes; and would allow each student athlete to return for another year. Universities are responsible to pay additional scholarship monies for the one-year period. The athletic department worked with coaches and student athletes to determine which student athletes decided to return for an additional year.

Sally Morton on behalf of all the college deans provided a summary of how diligently faculty are working to transition courses. The university has received some concerns from students who are experiencing connectivity issues.

All student athletes who returned to campus were screened and self-isolated if deemed necessary. No student athletes have so far tested positive for COVID 19. There are not many student athletes still in Blacksburg.

There are many uncertainties about the fall 2020 semester. The NCAA, athletic conferences and universities will work together to determine the best scenario for fall sports.

Whit Babcock, Art Keown, Susan Sumner, and Tim Hodge have agreed to serve on a university financial taskforce for athletics.

3. Athletic Fee and Student Fee Planning – Tim Hodge (presentation available in Google drive)

Tim presented a summary of how tuition and fees are set at institutions of higher education and explained the relationship of the university, SCHEV, and the government of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Health insurance is a significant cost.

Tuition and fees are approved by the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors and must adhere to state requirements.

Current student athletic fee is \$326

One principal guideline that Virginia Tech adheres to is to never raise athletic fees to fund buildings – other universities use fees for construction.

4. Student Athletes and Well-Being (Gary Bennett and Reyna Gilbert-Lowry)

Dr. Bennett, Associate Athletic Director, Sports Psychologist

A. Overall Counseling and Athletic Mental Performance (C.A.M.P.) programming of the office

B. Supports Student-athletes in current circumstances

Reviewed brochure (available in Google drive)

Questions from UAC members:

Where do you see your Virginia Tech program fitting into the ACC?

For over 20 years, Virginia Tech has developed a student mental wellness program, but some schools just started programs in the last 4 or 5 years. Virginia Tech has been on the forefront of these issues.

Reyna Gilbert-Lowry, Senior Associate Athletic Director, Student-Athlete Development/SWA

A. Broader ACC/SWA proposals related to student-athlete well-being

- Regular Season Travel Squad Exception for Mental Health

B. Inclusivity Groups/Programs within our department

1. Hokies All In – launched in Spring 2019
2. Diversity and Inclusion Council also provides opportunities for staff and coaches to connect and provide education related to diversity and inclusion.
3. NCAA Diversity Review Requirement

ACC proposals discussed at the last ACC meeting:

- A proposal for a travel exemption for a travel limit based on mental health, case by case basis.
- Proposal included – athletic director would be responsible for approving these requests, would also go to Dr. Bennett. This proposal was passed in February and will be put implemented in the fall 2020.

Diversity and Inclusion Groups

- Spring of 2019 Hokies All In started. A comfortable place to identify and connect outside of being a member of a sports team. In September had a family night, a holiday event in December. Staff serve as ambassadors. The program is student-led. Reyna advises the black student athletes and they meet every 2 weeks. Connecting with cultural community centers more.
- Chairs Diversity and Inclusion staff, monthly newsletter to department. Membership on committees on campus

5. Tom Gabbard, Senior Associate Athletic Director, Facilities and Operations

- Student-Athlete Performance Center (available in Google drive)

Review of the new center, 13,000 square feet, should open in early fall 2020

Double the size of what was the Bowman Room

6. Brad Wurthman, Senior Associate Athletic Director, External Operations

A. Hokie Club April 30 Deadline

- <https://hokiesports.com/news/2020/3/18/general-letter-to-fans.aspx>

B. External Relations Evolution

C. Mobile/Digital Adoption

- Fundraising, ticket, external relations
- Hokie Club and season tickets, adjusted the deadline to April 30. Four-month process from start to end, ideally would be about five months.
- Over 12,000 season tickets purchased
- Student Hokie Club, some growth, we have over 800 in just two weeks

There will be no UAC meeting in May.