

University Athletics Committee Minutes

October 22, 2020 – 3:30 p.m.

Via Zoom

Members Present:	Danny White (for Whit Babcock), Kevin Lahmers (for Katie Boes), Allison Bowersock, Tom Crow, Bob Denton, Patrick Finley, Rachel Holloway, Art Keown, Joseph Kozak, Mike Madigan, Joe Marcy, Ken Miller, Sally Morton, Michael Nappier, Jay Poole, Bridget Ryan-Berman, Chris Wise (for Frank Shushok), Susan Short, Becki Smith, Kenneth Stiles, Ester Talamazzi, Eric Wiseman, Brad Wurthman
Absent with Notification:	Whit Babcock, Katie Boes, Tom Burbey (until spring 2021), Joseph Tront
Absent without Notification:	
Guests Present:	Sarah Armstrong, Coach Mike Young
Recorder:	Anna Taylor, CALS Academic Programs

Susan Short, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

1. **Welcome** – Susan Short
Introduction of those who were attending their first UAC meeting.
2. **Adoption of Agenda**
A motion was made to approve the agenda and was passed unanimously.
3. **General Comments/Reflections** – Mike Young, Men’s Basketball Coach
Coach Young discussed his background and his emphasis of academics on the recruiting process. Coach Young is a Radford, Virginia native, spent 30 years in South Carolina, and is excited to be at Virginia Tech. Spoke highly of SAASS group. He indicated that he is fortunate to have two former student athletes on his current staff. Men’s basketball student-athletes finished with a 3.62 in spring 2020. Academics will always be in the forefront the basketball program. He would like for this committee to consider helping with greater efficiency of a more normal recruiting cycle. There will be kids on the team who have never been to Blacksburg. The transfer issue is only going to be more difficult to navigate as they move ahead. The team is looking good. Excited about this team. As for how the season will look, it is hard to tell right now. There will be bumps in the road, but there are meetings with the staff about contingency plans. Pleased with how the student-athletes and staff have handled themselves. There are 15 healthy folks and practicing without interruptions. He and the team will be ready for contingencies as they occur.

Wrap up – challenges in recruitment specifically related to timely evaluation of transfer credits. Susan will follow-up with Rachel Holloway and will schedule this as a specific topic for a future meeting.

4. **Athletic Director Update** – Danny White presented on behalf of Whit Babcock (PowerPoint provided and is in the Google drive)

COVID-19

Danny shared the COVID Sports med testing map and explained the process and daily testing protocol. NCAA Risk categories – high/med/low risk as detailed by NCAA and MAG. Contact tracing and VDH guidelines are followed.

Winter Sports Competition Dates

NCAA granted “extra year” for winter sport eligibility – granting 5 years of eligibility on a 6-year clock. Significant details and questions remain in relationship to implementation.

Mental Health

ACC Mental Health working group and communication with Sports Medicine, SAASS, Student-Athlete development, Cook Counseling, and other athletic department support units. Implementing new programs and are on the verge of partnering with app companies and hopefully will usher the conference into the deal as well.

Social Justice

- “Breakfast with Babcock” info (October 26 and 28)
- Andre Davis (October 28) Activating your Allyship
- Jerry Gaines interview with Jon Laaser – Jerry is the first African-American athlete to attend Virginia Tech and the first African-American to be inducted into the Virginia Tech Sports Hall of Fame. Jerry spoke with the football team this summer via Zoom.

5. **Student-Athlete Academic Support Services** – Sarah Armstrong, Director, Student Athlete Academic Support Services (see PowerPoint slide provided in Google drive for data and averages).

Sarah reviewed the PowerPoint slide of SAASS updates.

Spring 2020 review – students performed very well academically. Out of 567 student athletes, 493 earned 3.0 GPA, and 407 earned 3.4 GPA. For the first time ever, all teams earned a 3.0 GPA or better for the semester.

Currently, the SAASS office is physically staffed at 50% at one time in the office. They continue to offer tutoring. The Tutor Coordinator worked closely with TLOS to navigate the challenges of tutoring online through the use of Zoom. Currently, the office is in a good place as far as numbers of tutors, but may need a geoscience tutor for freshmen.

Trends this semester:

- Students feel there is an increased workload in their classes.
- Some syllabi continue to change, or the format of class continues to change.

- Students are challenged with managing their time.
- SAASS representatives continue to push utilization of faculty office hours.
- Increased communication with faculty.

With spring course request coming up next week, the goal is to have each student meet with their advisor.

Academic watch list – composite report. This report is to proactively communicate any possible NCAA continuing eligibility concerns and what the student needs to earn in the current semester to meet the benchmark. This information is provided to head coaches, sport administrators, Rachel Holloway, Whit Babcock, and Joe Tront. Midterm grade reports and summaries are provided to head coaches, sport administrators, Rachel Holloway, Whit Babcock, and Joe Tront.

Career jumpstart event was hosted by the Student Athlete Development Office. Hokie Mentorship Connect, a Career and Professional Development Office initiative has been developed to provide an opportunity for Hokie Alumni to connect with current students.

COVID testing for SAASS staff is every two weeks for those who are involved with in-person study hall sessions.

Rachel Holloway noted that that we have seen what is perhaps our highest ever shared midterm grades through the Hokie Spa platform.

6. **Comments/Reflections –**

Ester Talamazzi, Student Representative for Women’s Sports - Volleyball

Ester is a fifth-year student interning with Student-Athlete Development Office.

She earned ACC all academic in her freshman year, top 10.

Volleyball is always in the top 5 GPA. Being an international student, she said recruitment may have looked different from other student athletes. When she first arrived, she said she barely spoke English, but she found everyone to be very helpful and especially the Student Athlete Development Office helped greatly. Mental Health is doing a great job to talk to students about their struggles. With everything being online, she has had a chance to do more office hours. Attendance has been increasing due to virtual meetings. Very grateful to be at Virginia Tech. When asked why she selected Virginia Tech, she said she actually did her first year at home, but the first time she ever came to the United States, was to visit Virginia Tech and she loved it.

Tom Crow, Student Representative for Men’s Sport - Golf

Tom is a fifth-year student interning with SAASS.

He earned all-academic ACC team, SACS advisor last three years.

Tom attributes the SAASS tutors for his success his freshman year.

Group study hall as a whole, is somewhat used as a punishment. When group study hall went away, more people studied on their own and he thinks had better success.

An app would be easier than Navigate.

Mental health – Dr. B (Bennett) is a wizard.

One concern he has is when athletes voice a concern about personnel it should be examined closely.

When asked why he selected Virginia Tech, he said he comes from a family of Hokies and always knew this is where he wanted to be.

Tom is a finance and real estate major. Next step – starting a sports production company.

Comments –

There is a formal and informal process for student-athletes to voice their concerns.

Formally, they do a survey and initiate feedback. Noticed that five years ago they were doing an exit survey, also do a 3-5 survey each semester “Would you like to talk to _____ to discuss anything further?”

Informally, a sport administrator is around and attends practices and events.

7. **NCAA Update** – Joe Tront, Faculty Representative to NCAA

Joe was unable to join the meeting. An update will be provided during a future meeting.

8. **Adjournment** – Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

MEETING DATES FOR 2020

(All meetings will be from 3:30 – 5:00 p.m. and will be conducted via Zoom):

Thursday, November 19, 2020

Thursday, December 17, 2020