

**University Athletics Committee**  
**April 8, 2021, 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.**  
**Zoom**

**Present:** Ally Bowersock, Tom Burbey, Bob Denton, Patrick Finley, Trish Hammer (for Ron Fricker), Heather Gumbert, Rachel Holloway, Art Keown, Joseph Kozak, Joe Marcy, Ken Miller, Michael Nappier, Jay Poole, Bridget Ryan-Berman, Susan Short, Chris Wise (for Frank Shushok), Becki Smith, Zach Speizer, Kenneth Stiles, Ester Talamazzi, Anna Taylor

**Absent:** Whit Babcock, Katie Boes, Tom Crow, Mike Madigan, Danny White

**Guests:** Mike Swanhart (for Sarah Armstrong), Gary Bennett, Natalie Forbes, Samantha Stewart

Susan Short called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. A quorum was present.

**1. Adoption of Agenda**

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda. The motion carried.

**2. Announcement of approval and posting of minutes of March 11, 2021.**

Susan Short noted that these minutes have been voted on electronically and can be publicly accessed on the Governance Information System on the Web (<http://www.governance.vt.edu>).

**3. Athletic Director Update – a video was provided:**

The Mary Griffin story on <https://hokiesports.com>

**4. CAMP Staff and Mental Health Services - Gary Bennett, Associate Athletic Director, Sport Psychologist**

- There are three members on staff: one full time, two part time.
- Number of visits continue to go up every year.
- A lot of the issues this year are not that different from other years. Stress and anxiety might be a little higher from COVID, but there was more anxiety even before COVID, more panic attacks, more symptoms of panic disorder this year than we've probably ever had. VT Athletics has come light years ahead with mental health issues.
- Looking for ways to connect with student athletes outside of offices: Hokies Helping Hokies Heal. THRIVE, A different way to connect with the student athletes.
- The CALM app is being used to provide resources outside of typical counseling.
- Very proud of our staff. The shift from meeting with student athletes in offices to Zoom was handled fairly seamlessly.
- Services are provided over the summer for students who are on-campus. There are some licensure issues with students out of state, but they will look into this since they could meet via Zoom.
- Social media has opened a can of worms that may never be shut off. More athletes with suicidal thoughts than ever. We tell them to call us.
- The new Nutrition Center will be great for student athletes to get together.

**5. Football Player Engagement – Samantha (Samm) Stewart, Assistant AD of Player Engagement**  
PowerPoint provided

- Build relationships with football players, early, during, and after – recruiting to alumni.
- Player engagement – Whole Hokie.

- Community service - Areas of focus – teamwide community service, making cards for seniors at Richfield Center in Salem.
- Career explore – professional career (HOKIE E.D.G.E) Real Estate, Sales – Pro to the League.
- Mentoring – Athlete to Athlete, Professor to Athlete, Alumni Football Players
- The Huddle – e-newsletter, played video, push to get current contact data, then went to the Zoom events, include past players who are on staff. We look for opportunities to be extra.
- Rachel – trying to get internships, we are pushing for athletes to get the internship experience.
- Heather shared an undergraduate program in Liberal Arts.
- Coming from a smaller school, they were a little quicker to shift. Maybe not as quick, but it is shifting, everyone is in. The department is people-centered.

**6. ACC Postgrad Scholarships** – Natalie Forbes, Senior Director, Student Athlete Personal Development  
PowerPoint provided

- Oversees lots of moving pieces, the scholarship is the Weaver-James-Corrigan scholarship.
- Nomination/selection process, then goes on to the ACC – the FARs make the final decision, then the students are invited to a luncheon.
- Recipients have five years to use this scholarship.
- This year four students were selected as nominees and all four were recognized (three scholarships and one honorary).
- A list from the last few years at Virginia Tech, variety of sports, variety of majors, some took off to play professionally, or to work.
- The Virginia Tech application has made the GPA requirement higher than required to be sure that Virginia Tech nominees have a better chance of the ACC award.
- On any given year a university could receive three scholarships, but it is rare.
- The dollars sit in the ACC, not at Virginia Tech
- Rachel – very proud of the Hokies that they are well placed in the ACC.

**7. Announcements**

- Rachel Holloway shared that the Student Athlete Academic Support Services office will be hosting a Senior Sashing Send-Off/Drive-By Parade for student-athletes on Thursday, May 6<sup>th</sup> at 2:45 p.m. Watch for an invitation from Sarah Armstrong in the very near future.
- Confirmed: Next meeting will be held virtually (Zoom) on Thursday, May 13, 2021 from 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.
- On next month’s agenda is a visit from one of our coaches and a debriefing from Whit regarding the university’s relationship with Nike.

**8. Adjournment**

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 4:50 p.m.