

University Athletics Committee

October 14, 2021

3:30-5:00 p.m. (Virtual Only)

Present: Tom Burbey, Travis Burns, Patrick Finley, Heather Gumbert, Rachel Holloway, Jennifer Irish, Joe Marcy, Ken Miller, Terry Rakes, Bridget Ryan-Berman, Susan Short, Eric Stanley, Ken Stiles, Chris Wise (for Frank Shushok), Becki Smith, Kevin Carlson (for Robert Sumichrast), Joseph Tront

Absent: Allison Bowersock, Bob Denton, Maria Kenner, Jay Poole, Robin Queen

Guests: Sarah Armstrong, Brandon Senior, Kristen Skiera, Danny White

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 September 9, 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. Susan Short introduced and welcomed **Brandon Senior** to the meeting. Brandon is a first-year doctoral student and was observing the meeting as part of his EDHE 6054 course requirements (with a focus on university governance).

4. **Coaches Corner** – UAC members welcomed Kristen Skiera, Head Coach, Women's Lacrosse. Coach Skiera arrived at Virginia Tech at the end of July. She previously served as the head women's lacrosse coach at Army West Point. She was a two-time All-American performer as an attacker at Duke. Her coaching philosophy includes the following themes: professionalism, communication, accountability, preparing for success in life. Skiera and her coaching staff are focused on student-athlete mental health, academic success, watching film, and managing a roster of 43 players.

5. **Athletic Director Update** – Danny White, Senior Associate Athletic Director, Student-Athlete Services/University Affairs. Danny provided an update on Whit Babcock's behalf. Topics included: Fall Sports Update (UAC will receive an update in "standings" during our November meeting – Learfield and Commonwealth Cups);

announced that Whit has completed his annual visit with university Deans; COVID testing for Fall Championships (following state protocols); The Compliance Group (TCG) is conducting a compliance audit (occurs every four years at ACC institutions) – they are looking at Virginia Tech protocols and policies. He encouraged us to consider inviting Reyna Gilbert-Lowry, senior associate athletic director, student-athlete development/SWA and Derek Gwinn, senior associate athletics director, compliance to a future meeting to provide additional updates. White responded to members' questions related to stadium safety and athlete housing in the new residence hall at the Creativity and Innovation District Living – live-learning community. The athletic department filled between 166-168 beds in the new residence hall. He welcomed additional insights regarding the student entrance to Lane Stadium (Section 7).

6. Academic Update – Sarah Armstrong, Director, Student Athlete Academic Support Services (PowerPoint provided) Highlights provided by Sarah included the following:

- Announced that the number of “open tutoring” appointments has been reduced. Sarah thanked members of the committee for their assistance.
- Shared an overview of SAASS support that included Learning Assistance Program, Faculty Progress Reports, and Academic Watch List.
- Provided an overview of credit hour requirements and degree progress.
- Shared that the Learning Assistance Programs were fully staffed with three (3) learning specialists.
- Provided an update on GPA distributions from Spring 2021.

7. Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR) Reflections – Jen Irish

Jen provided the following updates:

- She has met with student-athletes, Rachel Holloway and Sarah Armstrong.
- In addition, Jen has met with Juan Espinoza, associate vice provost for enrollment management and director of undergraduate admissions. She shared that 80-90% of our athletes go through the standard VT admissions progress.
- She is eager to help remove barriers for our student athletes. She is thinking about ways to better communication with faculty members. She is considering providing faculty with a semester update.
- Jen and Joe Tront mentioned the completion of the NCAA Constitutional survey. Summary results will be shared during our next UAC meeting.

8. Committee Member Comments/Updates

Susan encouraged members to provide recommendations for future meeting topics and locations for meetings. In addition, she shared that the December 9th meeting will include a tour of the ACC Network Studio. Susan will include 2-3 articles that have been shared with her during the past several weeks as a part of the meeting minutes. These include the following: NLRB decision paves way for college athlete rights (Inside Higher Ed – 9/30/2021); While some NCAA athletes cash in on NIL, others lose out (Inside Higher Ed – 10/12/2021); The Impacts of COVID-19 on Collegiate Student-Athlete Training, Health, and Well-Being (American College of Sports Medicine, 2021).

9. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 5:05 p.m.

MEETING DATES FOR 2021 (All meetings will be held from 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.)

Thursday, November 11, 2021 (Virtual Only)

Thursday, December 9, 2021 (ACC Network Studio Tour)

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Academic Update Slide Deck (Armstrong)
2. NLRB decision paves way for college athlete rights (Inside Higher Ed – 9/30/21)
3. While some NCAA athletes cash in on NIL, others lose out (Inside Higher Ed – 10/12/21)
4. The Impacts of COVID-19 on Collegiate Student-Athlete Training, Health, and Well-Being (2021)