

## **Faculty Athletics Committee Annual Report to the Faculty Council September 2014**

This annual report on the activities of the Faculty Athletics Committee (FAC) during the 2013-2014 academic year was prepared by FAC Chair Joy Renner.

### **Overview of Committee's Purpose and Structure**

**Charge:** "The Faculty Athletics Committee is concerned with informing the faculty and advising the chancellor on any aspect of athletics, including, but not limited to, the academic experience for varsity athletes, athletic opportunities for members of the University committee, and the general conduct and operation of the University's athletic program" (Faculty Code § 4-7[b]).

#### **Members 2013-14:**

Term expires 2014: John Stephens, School of Government; Barbara Osborne, Exercise and Sports Sciences; Beverly Foster, School of Nursing

Term expires 2015: Paul Friga, School of Business; Layna Mosley, Political Science; Andrew Perrin, Sociology

Term expires 2016: Kim Strom-gottfried, School of Social Work; Debbie Stroman, Exercise and Sports Sciences; Joy Renner, Radiologic Science

Lissa Broome served as Faculty Athletics Representative to the ACC and the NCAA, and thus served as an *ex officio* member of the FAC. Director of Athletics Lawrence Cunningham, Senior Associate Athletic Director Vince Ille, Director for the Academic Support Program for Student Athletes, Michelle Brown, regularly attend the FAC's meetings and interacted with the FAC to seek advice or provide information. Chancellor Folt attends FAC meetings as her schedule permits.

**Meetings:** The FAC held 10 monthly meetings during the 2013-14 academic year and held two half day retreats in May. We provided Faculty Council with monthly reports on the activities of FAC. All meetings were open and the Committee was pleased to have additional faculty as well as media join us.

**Chair:** Joy J. Renner, Clinical Associate Professor, Allied Health Sciences, Director of the Division of Radiologic Science served as FAC Chair and was re-elected to serve as FAC Chair for 2014-2015. As Chair, Professor Renner attended meetings of the ASPSA Advisory Committee, the Title IX Committee, Athletics Department Drug Policy Review Committee, Athletics Council, Student Athlete Advisory Council, and multiple individual meetings with groups and individuals involved with our students participating in sports.

### **Annual Report**

For comprehensive coverage of information regarding the activities of FAC for 2013 – 2014, the minutes of the meetings are the most appropriate source. This report will provide an overview of the Committee's year.

## Roles for members of the Committee

In an effort to develop a sustainable and comprehensive role for this Committee to fulfill its charge, more structure and guidance was provided to the members.

Each member is responsible for representing three perspectives while in our Committee meetings. The obvious one is the perspective of a UNC faculty member. The second one is to become the topic expert in one area of athletics, lending a more thorough analysis of that topic and bringing issues or concerns or suggestions for the Committee to discuss. The third perspective is representing members of the various teams. Each faculty member was assigned to specific teams to become familiar with their schedules and the culture and philosophy of the teams.

For 2014 – 2015 – each FAC member will add an additional role of liaison with assigned departments and schools to improve the flow of information to and from the Committee. In addition, FAC members will have contact information for the academic counselors assigned to each of their teams.

## Team Perspective

We continued to discuss how this role would evolve into a functional yet time sustainable responsibility. All those involved in the relationships, FAC members, students, and coaches, feel this is an important component toward an understanding of the inter-relationship between academics and athletics.

Team Assignments:

Renner – Football Men’s basketball

Strom-gottfried – Football Baseball

Perrin – Men’s basketball and Gymnastics

Stroman – Women’s basketball Women’s tennis Men’s tennis

Osborne – Field hockey Men’s soccer Softball

Foster – Swimming and Diving Wrestling

Mosley – Women’s soccer Track and field

Stephens – Fencing Men’s golf Women’s golf Volleyball

Friga – Women’s lacrosse Men’s lacrosse Rowing

## Topics Experts

Topic leaders would seek out information and have meetings with pertinent individuals or groups to bring a higher level of understanding to the Committee on their topics than would be possible for everyone on the Committee to do. Division I Athletics at a Research University is very complex and requires an appropriate amount of attention paid to all the aspects to insure a broad and encompassing understanding. This allows for change development or proposed solutions with lower risk of unintended outcomes.

Topic Assignments:

Foster and Stroman

Admissions

Mosley and Stroman

Academics

Perrin and Strom-gottfried

Student Athlete Experience

Osborne and Strom-gottfried

Advising

Stephens and Strom-gottfried

Policies and Procedures and Alignment

Friga and Stroman

Administration and Operations

## Our Work

For a monthly review of our discussions, please see the posted minutes.

### **Overview –**

May retreats summary:

**Perspectives from Students** - The discussion focused on take-aways from the SAAC focus group discussions conducted by FAC members earlier in the spring. The general topics discussed and opportunities for improvement are below.

Educating student-athletes and faculty about how to best communicate and interact with one another.

#### Opportunities

- i. Prepare documents and powerpoints to help guide students and faculty in these areas.
- ii. Collaborate with the Center for Faculty Excellence on a pamphlet and/or a short course on strategies for teaching student-athletes and dealing with excused absences.
- iii. Have a short guide for faculty about NCAA rules that may pertain to their interactions with athletes (i.e., extra benefits).
- iv. Expand opportunities for students to invite professors to practice or competitions to build relationships and allow professors to observe the demands on and benefits to students from intercollegiate athletics.
- v. Train student-athletes on professional etiquette.
  1. Talk to the professor during office hours or make an appointment if office hours are not convenient; do not try to catch professor to sign a travel letter right before or after class.
  2. Discuss with student-athletes their responsibility for their academic success and relationships with faculty and how college may differ from high school with regard to personal responsibility.
    - a. Examine what we continue to do for student-athletes and reduce assistance given to student-athletes when appropriate.
- vi. Help student-athletes who arrive off-cycle (summer school or in January) understand the role of Loudermilk and other campus resources available to assist them in their transition to college.
- vii. Encourage student-athletes to take advantage of First-Year Seminars and the opportunities these afford to form bonds with a faculty member and other students and to help dispel the negative stereotypes about student-athletes.
- viii. Consider the special challenges faced by black student-athletes
  1. Encourage student-athletes to explore the role of the black Greek system in developing leaders and a service mentality.
  2. Consider other resources for all student-athletes that might be akin to a social worker or clergy person.

- ix. Explore options to help ease the burden of student-athlete travel such as recording classes for students (including student-athletes). Some buildings on campus have the technology to do this already, but many may not.
- x. Consider standardizing all travel letters so that student-athlete letters resemble those of other student groups who receive official excused absences. Although the student-athlete travel letter should spell out information about options for the student to take an exam while traveling.

Student-athletes may not have opportunities to engage in study abroad, internships, or other career exploration

Opportunities

- xi. Allow student-athletes to return for a fifth year or a ninth semester in order to pursue these opportunities once their athletic eligibility had ended. For instance, Nursing allows students more time to complete their degree because of time demands associated with getting practical experience.
- xii. Consider how this relates to the University goal of graduation in four years and the University rules on when a second major may be added. Also, consider NCAA rules that opportunities must be available for all students, and not just student-athletes, to avoid this being characterized as an extra benefit.

Emphasize culture of academic success among the coaches.

Opportunities

- xiii. Encourage students to engage the coach and professor in a three-way conversation to mediate situations like this.
- xiv. Help coaches and professors understand that chemistry and bonding is important in the classroom as well as on an athletics team.

Involve student-athletes in FAC and other bodies.

Opportunities

- xv. Use the monthly SAAC meetings more strategically to inform students and get feedback and reactions from them.
- xvi. Inform SAAC members of the meeting schedules and agendas for FAC, the ASPSA Faculty Advisory Committee, and the Working Group so they might consider attending.
- xvii. Consider whether one or more voting student members should be added to FAC.
- xviii. Students who have completed their eligibility might have more time for these issues but also be able to represent the student-athlete perspective.
- xix. Students who compete in individual sports may be able to attend afternoon meetings more easily than students in team sports that have conflicting practice times.
- xx. Check with Notre Dame on how it incorporates student-athletes into its Athletics Council.

**Perspectives from Faculty and Staff**

The FAC held open forums for faculty and staff members on April 23 and April 24

Improve communications with faculty and staff.

Opportunities

- i. Hold a FAC forum each semester.
- ii. Involve interested groups like the Retired Faculty group and faculty groups on campus. Consider more FAC statements and resolutions when needed.
- iii. Use the Carolina Commitment website.
- iv. Use the Faculty Governance FAC page to aid in communication
  1. Post searchable FAQs.
  2. Provide a mechanism for faculty/staff to ask additional questions that would then be addressed in the FAQs.
- v. Provide links from GoHeels.com to Carolina Commitment, FAC page, and the Latest from Loudermilk updates.
- vi. Celebrate student-athlete academic successes. The recent lunch was quite successful and honored 10 faculty members who were invited by the top 5 male and top 5 female student athletes by GPA.
- vii. Consider circulating a letter to fans about positive academic experiences from a student-athlete.

Concerns about courses in which student-athletes are enrolling.

Opportunities

- viii. Continue and refine role of FAC in course clustering and grade review.

Concerns about student athlete course selection

Opportunities.

- ix. Track when students are taking English 100. Should be first course or one of first courses they take.

Concerns about student-athletes integrating more into campus and taking advantage of campus resources.

Opportunities.

- x. Encourage student-athletes to take advantage of resources on campus like Advocates for Carolina First.
- xi. Help student-athletes become aware of other resources on campus.

### **Perspectives from Athletics**

FAC members shared their observations from discussions each had with the coaches and students on their assigned teams about issues facing the coaches and the students.

Negative recruiting by competitors based on media coverage related to the paper courses and media reports about literacy levels of student-athletes.

Opportunities

- i. Provide coaches the information they need to counter the negative recruiting.
- ii. Be sure they are aware of the Carolina Commitment website and that it explains clearly the facts relating to these concerns.

Limitations on communications between coaches and faculty. Some coaches expressed concern that current policies prohibited them from communicating with faculty.

Opportunities

- iii. Clarify policy to ensure that limits on communications are clearly specified. Perhaps any policy should be limited to the coach talking to a faculty member about a student-athlete's academics, noting that communication with faculty about a student's academic performance should be through the ASPSA staff.
- iv. Encourage opportunities for general interaction with coaches and faculty through guest coaching or professors at practice events.

Sensitivity of coaches to academic calendar and academic demands on student-athletes

Opportunities

- v. Bubba Cunningham can work with FAC to identify these times in the semester and communicate with the coaches and administrators that they should be sensitive to the academic demands on students during these periods by reducing practice obligations when possible.

Some coaches are concerned that student-athletes at other institutions have fewer academic demands on them than students at UNC-CH.

Opportunities.

- vi. Learn the facts regarding the requirements from other institutions and educate our coaches, but more importantly about the requirements at UNC.
- vii. Learn the facts regarding the missed class limits at other institutions and educate our coaches and communicate UNC-CH expectations regarding class attendance.

Enhance communication opportunities between FAC and the coaches.

Opportunities

- viii. Should we have focus groups with Coaches?
- ix. Identify and disseminate successful strategies for coaches in considering academics in recruiting and creating a culture of academic success among their students.

### **Time Commitments**

Discussion related to approval of competition schedules based on missed class time.

Opportunities

- i. Coordinate this with the Working Group which is looking at these issues also.
- ii. Learn how competition schedules are constructed.
- iii. Compile missed class by team each year on a consistent basis and compare (if possible) missed class time before and after ACC expansion.
  - 1. Add summer school to the schedule request form and the missed day calculation.
  - 2. Consider whether men's basketball, women's basketball, and football should complete schedule request forms.
  - 3. Standardize the way that coaches count partial missed days.
  - 4. How is missed class time calculated for sports where not all students travel to all competitions?

5. Should the maximum number of missed class days be based on M-W-F and Tu-Th counts, instead of an overall day limit?
  6. What is the procedure for approving an exception from any stated limit?
- iv. Discuss policies related to competition during the final exam period.

Concerns about course and major selection. Some student-athletes may not pursue certain majors or pre-professional programs because they perceive that the programs do not fit with their practice and competition schedules. Some student-athletes may be foreclosed from taking courses that meet only during practice times or may forego enrollment since missed practice time may mean reduced playing time.

#### Opportunities

- v. Consider the work of the Education and Medical Professions Task Forces formed by FAC in previous years and whether these groups are still working, whether they need to be reactivated and whether other task forces need to be created.
- vi. Encourage three-way conversations between the student, the professor, and the coach to work through class conflict issues.
- vii. Encourage ASPSA and Academic Advising to bring to FAC's attention special difficulties that student-athletes may have in major and course selection.
- viii. How is practice time set and can the student-athlete time commitment be reduced or streamlined?
- ix. Educate coaches about how practice and competition times may limit student-athlete course and major choices.

To further delineate the role of FAC, a FAQ on FAC will be posted on our web presence in Faculty Governance. Final draft will be reviewed at September 2014 meeting then posted. The document will include Purpose of the Committee; Authority/ Jurisdiction/ Scope (Primary roles, advisory roles, and where there is no role); Composition; Description of meetings; Activities/Responsibilities; Key topics/Items we monitor;

A discussion related to a sustainable model for FAC was part of the continuing evolution of the Committee. The document could also help those nominated for the Committee to have a clear understanding of the work of the Committee. The list of important groups who meet related to admissions, academic support, and other topics was reviewed and discussed as to when FAC members should be joining those groups for discussions. This type of communication in and across all groups will promote clarity of policy and consistency with implementation for all students not just the students who are athletes.

FAC will continue to monitor data such as student athlete academic performance and course clustering and other metrics.

The decision was made to ask for Student Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC) to send a representative to our FAC meetings and serve as a liaison with that group. This is a continuation of the Committee's desire to have more students involved in the development of the questions that should be answered and the issues that should be addressed.

Dates for the 2014-2015 meetings were selected. A move to post updates from the FAR and AD before the meeting and just have time for discussion will aid with the time crunch found during the past meetings.

### **Plan for 2014 – 2015 meetings**

Format – Review of updates and current issue/topics; a review topic and a moving forward topic. The Review Topic will review areas already comprehensively discussed but need monitoring for continuous quality improvement purposes and reporting purposes. The Moving Forward Topic will be focused on areas we think present opportunities for enhancement and may cover multiple meetings.

#### **Draft Plan of Work**

September 16 – *Preparation* – plan campus open forum for October; plan focus group with coaches; *Activity* – Meet with topic related groups and individuals and make or reestablish connections with coaches and teams; *Review*- Working Group Processes; *Moving Forward* – Faculty/student athlete communication, understanding and healthy culture development; Finalize resources for faculty

October 14– *Preparation* – Forum assignments and process; *Activity* – Open forum (s), topic experts on advising meet with colleagues in advising; collect data on missed class time for competitions, standard the way partial days absent are counted; consider classes missed instead of days missed; *Review* – Advising of student athletes and missed time; *Moving Forward* – Faculty/student athlete communication, understanding and healthy culture development

November 11– *Activity* - summary of open forum(s) discussions; admissions and academics topic experts meet with admissions colleagues and academic record colleagues; *Review* – Status of 2012, 2013, and 2014 admissions and academic progress information on classes matriculating in 2012 and 2013, voices of our campus community; *Moving Forward* – Faculty/student athlete communication, understanding and healthy culture development

December 11 – *Activity* – academic topic experts meet with campus colleagues and review data on major and course distributions; *Review* – major and course distributions; *Moving Forward* – student-athlete time distribution and commitment

January 13 – *Preparation* – focus groups with coaches and staff; *Activity* – student athlete experience topic experts meet with athletics staff; *Review* – analysis and reporting on student athlete experience surveys and interviews; *Moving Forward* – Student-athlete time distribution and commitment

February 10 – *Preparation* – Set date, time, location for spring open forum(s); *Activity* – Academics and advising topic experts meet with ASPSA; *Review* – Status of ASPSA and outcomes with the MAP; *Moving Forward* – Student athlete time distribution and commitment

March 3 – *Preparation* - SAAC focus groups; *Activity* – SAAC focus groups, open forum,



discussions with our black student athletes, select Chair for next academic year; *Review* – Voices of black student athletes, first generation college students, and other groups that may be marginalized; *Moving Forward* – student athlete integration into campus life and in governance and leadership

April 14 – *Activity* – Summary of SAAC focus groups and summary of campus discussions; *Review* – Voices of our student athletes and coaches and campus community; *Moving Forward* – Student athlete integration into campus life and in governance and leadership

May 5 – *Review* – financial report, including resources allocated for student support; status of UNC Athletics from FAC perspective; activities during the year, decision and recommendations; *Moving Forward* – Work Plan for 2015 - 2016

### **Conclusion**

The Faculty Athletics Committee made significant progress toward identifying what has occurred at UNC related to all aspects of the experience of a student who chooses to participate in athletics from recruitment to graduation. The addition of the Working Group on Athletics from the Provost' Office will have much more detailed information on which future work can be determined. We are evaluating the significant changes occurring to ensure we are strengthening the bond between athletics and academics. As we moved through the year it was important that we work toward our University community regaining a pride in the successes of all of our students and to rebuild trust within our community related to our processes, policies, and philosophy.