

UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS COMMITTEE Minutes

Thursday, April 17, 2025 (virtual, 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.)

Zoom Meeting - <https://tinyurl.com/UAC-April> Passcode 895926

Members Present: Ken Stiles, Phil Miskovic, Angela Page (for Simon Allen), Jen Irish, John Galbraith, Paul Knox, Brent Kremer, Mark Feldman, Eric Martin, Lisa Karlisch, Alex Efird, Emma Atkinson, Frank Thompson, Christopher Wise, Brad Wurthman, Rachel Holloway, Amy Ingram.

Absent: Dan Thorp, Leanna House, Liesel Ritchie, Robin Queen, Dirk Buengel, Joe Tront, Whit Babcock, Simon Allen, Travis Burns, Brad Whitney.

Guests: Emily Patton, Bridget Brugger-McSorley.

1. **Approval of Agenda.** Group
2. **Electronic Approval of March 6, 2025 Meeting Minutes.** Posted on the Governance web page (<http://www.governance.vt.edu>). Galbraith
3. **New Business** – Bridget Brugger-McSorley will be replacing Danny White as Athletic Department liaison to the UAC. She introduced herself to the group. John Galbraith is completing his term on the UAC at the end of this semester. A new chair will be needed. John encouraged others to contact Bridget Brugger-McSorley if they would like to apply. The May meeting is cancelled.
4. **Faculty Athletics Representative Report- House vs. NCAA:** Jen Irish provided an overview of the pending House vs NCAA settlement based on the following online resources. A summary is appended.
5. **Athletic Director Update:** Bridget Brugger-McSorley and Brad Wurthman added comments about the athletic department resources and potential sources of revenue going forward.
6. **Faculty Athletics Representative Report – Academic Success:** Jen Irish reported that the Academic Success subcommittee had met with three teams that have been over the allowed 17% missed class limit. A mitigation plan was developed for each team to minimize the impact of practice and travel to competitions to students. She mentioned that the missed class policy may need to be revised again next year. The Provost's Office approved a home competition for Women's basketball on Reading Day (12/11/25).
7. **Student-Athletic Academic Support Services Update:** Emily Patton spoke for Sarah Armstrong reported about upcoming team competitions and transfer windows. They are monitoring student success and soliciting progress reports from faculty. The staff have a watch list of athletes who may be in danger of missing an academic benchmark. She mentioned that 113 of the approximately 600 athletes will be graduating this semester. The athletic Department will be hosting a faculty appreciation night, a senior recognition

event, and an appreciation breakfast for the teams with the highest GPA (Men's and women's golf).

8. **Guest Presentation:** Brad Wurthman spoke about the upcoming May 7 Metallica concert in Lane Stadium. He explained the costs and benefits from hosting the concert, with potential to clear \$1-2 million. He mentioned that we had no choice in the date (last day of classes). Brad explained the enormous amount of work left to be done to temporarily modify the stadium and then restore it afterwards. He expects about 70,000 in attendance and mentioned that parking will be in high demand that day.

9. **Adjourned at 4:58 pm.**

10. **May meeting cancelled.**

State of College Athletics at Virginia Tech

Talking Points, Spring 2025

Content herein is adapted from the following sources:

- ACC FAR Jenna Jordan's 2024 Georgia Tech faculty senate report
- Virginia Tech's Director of Athletics Whit Babcock's media interviews and presentations to the University Athletics Committee
- ACC FAR Sheila Vélez Martínez's 2025 University of Pittsburgh faculty senate report
- Virginia Tech Board of Visitors and University Governance committee minutes

As of 4/29/25 - House Case Settlement is still pending

Why is College Athletics Important?

- Athletics builds community, giving students, faculty, staff, and alumni a shared experience.
- Athletics is our largest brand and advertisement.
- Athletics enhances our community. **A few examples at Virginia Tech:**
 - Virginia Tech Athletics competitions brings in over 500k visitors per year:
 - Economic benefit to southwest Virginia economy is approximately \$100M annually, which in turn sustains businesses, jobs, K-12 education, etc.
 - Student-athletes act as role models and engage in local community service
- Athletics events are shared experiences as part of a positive student experience creating a sense of belonging for our students and leading to increased philanthropy and alumni participation. Athletics is a great way to support the emotional and mental health of all students.
- Strong athletics program helps with the recruitment and retention of all students – not just student athletes, but all students who want to experience the camaraderie that comes with expressing school spirit through athletics.

Academics in the ACC

- The ACC prioritizes and takes pride in our academic achievements. It is an important part of the conference's identity.
- We are the most academically prestigious of the A4 conferences, and this sets us apart from other A4 conferences (SEC, Big 10, Big 12).

Academic Performance of Virginia Tech's Student-Athletes

(see <https://governance.vt.edu/assets/UAC-20240912.pdf> for supporting information)

- While in season, Virginia Tech's student-athletes balance 20 hours per week of athletics commitments with a full-time academic course load.

- Student-athletes succeed in majors across all Colleges. In 2024, the most popular majors are in the following Colleges:
 - Liberal Arts & Human Sciences (38% of student-athletes)
 - Business (25% of student-athletes)
 - Engineering (11% of student-athletes)
 - Agriculture and Life Science (10%)
 - Science (9% of student-athletes)
- Virginia Tech student-athletes perform well academically.
 - Average student-athlete cumulative GPA at 3.24 in Spring 2024 is statistically the same as that for Virginia Tech's student body as a whole (cumulative GPA of 3.25).
 - By College, student-athletes out-perform the general student body in Agriculture & Life Science; Architecture, Art & Design; Business, and Engineering.
 - Over 70% of student-athletes earned a term GPA above a 3.0 in both Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 semesters.
 - In Spring 2024, no student-athlete earned a cumulative GPA below 2.0, while in Fall 2024 just 1% had a cumulative GPA below 2.0.

What Will Be New After House vs. NCAA Antitrust Settlement

- To maintain competitiveness at the highest level of Division I athletics in the post-House era, programs will need to allocate up to \$20.5 million annually (escalates 4% each year) that will fund student-athlete revenue sharing and new scholarships, and this is alongside a projected \$1.05 million annual reduction in ACC distributions due to the payment of back damages.
 - New payments(and overall revenue sharing), new scholarships provided to SAs all count against this ~\$20 million.
- There will be a change from scholarship limits to roster limits. As a result of roster limits associated with the settlement, there will be a reduction of 15-17% in the overall student-athlete population affecting most teams sponsored by Virginia Tech.
- There will be new systems in place to manage NIL. This is a new opportunity to maintain institutional control, integrity and compliance of the entire process.
- The House vs. NCAA settlement is scheduled to be finalized in April or May 2025 (still pending) mean there is still uncertainty in what college athletics will look like post-House

Virginia Tech's Planned Implementation

- Virginia Tech plans to share the maximum allowed in AY25/26, \$20.5 million and plans to add approximately 40-45 new scholarships across a number of sports, including football. Any new scholarships that are added up to \$2.5 million count against the \$20.5 million cap.
 - Revenue share component will primarily focus on three sports: football, men's basketball and women's basketball.
 - Investment in Olympic sports will primarily be in the form of additional scholarships.

Virginia Tech's Investment in College Athletics

Pre-House

- This year's Athletics Department annual budget is \$125M, puts us 14th of 18 institutions in the ACC and about 55th of 68 peer institutions in the A4.
- University's investment in Athletics has also historically been very low compared to other public institutions in the state: university support has been just 14% of athletics budget, compared with 80% at JMU, 56% at ODU, and 18% at UVA.
- We have historically ranked last among state public institutions in terms of our current Athletics Fee: JMU & ODU are over \$2k/student/yr, UVA Is \$763/yr and we're \$437/year.

Post-House, Year 1

- Additional budget is pieced together with increased student fees, athletic department reserves, and scholarship assistance from the university:
 - Approximately \$10M will be generated by reallocation of some of the existing Comprehensive Fees and an increase in the Athletics Fee. The increased 2025-2026 Athletics Fee still remains the lowest among the state's public institutions: \$732/yr/student.
 - In the short-term and as a strategic investment, the university will invest approximately \$4M annually from its investment yields.
- Funds are not being redirected from the academic/research mission's budget.
- The first year working through the revenue-sharing will provide an opportunity to learn a lot, and will help to firm up plans for following years.

Post-House, Longer-Term

- The Athletics Department is working with the university's President, CFO, COO, and legal counsel to develop a sustainable model.

Background on the House vs NCAA Antitrust Settlement

How We Got Here

Alston

- Alston case stemmed from a lawsuit filed by former college athletes against the NCAA, challenging the association's rules regarding payments above the cost of attendance for student-athletes.
- Plaintiffs argued that the NCAA's restrictions on education-related benefits were anti-competitive and violated antitrust laws.
- In June 2021, the Supreme Court ruled that the NCAA's restrictions on education-related benefits violated antitrust laws. The Court emphasized that the NCAA's model of amateurism did not justify the limits on benefits.

Collectives

- Because NCAA rules prohibit institutions from making name-image-and-likeness (NIL) payments currently, entities called “collectives” were formed to raise money and pay student-athletes for their NIL rights. Some collectives, like Triumph NIL—the collective supporting VT student-athletes—attempt to provide legitimate NIL products, services, and experiences to consumers.
- Earlier in 2024, the NCAA was prohibited from (court-ordered injunction) enforcing NIL rules prohibiting student-athletes from negotiating with third parties, including boosters and booster-led collectives.
 - The NCAA issued an open letter to all member institutions acknowledging the decision and stating that the NCAA would not punish conduct consistent with the court’s injunction.

House Antitrust Legislation

- For over a decade, the NCAA and the Autonomy Conferences faced waves of federal antitrust class action lawsuits by the same plaintiffs’ lawyers in the same federal court in California, each one successfully chipping away at various NCAA restrictions on compensation of student-athletes. The most recent suits (with House v. NCAA being the most prominent) sought
 - Elimination of all rules limiting payments to student-athletes, and
 - Monetary damages for past restrictions (with potential damages of several billion dollars).
- In May 2024, the NCAA and Autonomy Conferences entered into a settlement of the House case:
 - Pay \$2.8 billion in back damages,
 - Permit institutions to make payments directly to their student-athletes up to a uniform cap of approximately \$20.5 million annually per school (including up to

\$2.5 million annually in new scholarships/cost-of-attendance). This number is determined by looking at 22% of combined A5 revenues from defined revenue sources (external) divided by the number of A5 schools.

- While the settlement is only preliminarily approved, it is expected to take effect by this summer–July 1, 2025.

What Will Not Change After House vs. NCAA Antitrust Settlement

Title IX

- Institutions still need to remain in compliance with Title IX in terms of scholarships and participation.

Academics

- The academic standards that all student-athletes must uphold is not expected to change, both at the NCAA level and here at Virginia Tech.
 - These standards are often more stringent than those applied to many of our non-student-athletes.
 - We have exceptional academic support for our student-athletes through the Provost's office's Student-Athlete Academic Support Services (SAASS) and we expect to continue offering this excellent support.
- Credit Hour Requirements:
 - All of our students-athletes must be enrolled full-time, namely in 12 credit hours each fall and spring term.
 - This includes student-athletes in graduate programs, which is very challenging during competition season. At most universities, graduate students need only enroll in 9 hours to be considered full time.
 - A student-athlete must pass at least 6 credit hours toward their degree during the preceding regular academic term (fall or spring) to be eligible for competition in the next term, (football 9).
- Progress Towards Degree
 - After 4 full-time semesters - Completed 40% of their degree
 - After 6 full-time semesters - Completed 60% of their degree
 - After 8 full-time semesters - Completed 80% of their degree

Links to Additional Information and Media Releases

- Athletic Director Whit Babcock's April 2025 interview:
 - https://roanoke.com/sports/college/basketball/virginia-tech-hokies/men/article_0f58892c-5e23-4f2a-a19e-2d5e2feac06b.html
 - <https://www.pilotonline.com/2025/03/26/david-teel-on-hokies-struggles-ad-says-i-m-where-the-buck-stops/>
- Tuition and Fees proposal to Board of Visitors in March 2025:
 - <https://bov.vt.edu/assets/Minutes-March%2024-25,%202025-374.pdf> (starting on p. 24)
- Athletic Director Whit Babcock's December 2024 interview:
<https://hokiesports.com/news/2024/12/6/virginia-tech-building-for-the-future-hear-from-whit-babcock>
 - Transcript:
<https://virginiatech.sportswar.com/article/2024/12/06/full-transcript-hokies-ad-whit-babcock-conversation-bill-roth/>
- College sports litigation tracker: <https://www.collegesportslitigationtracker.com/tracker>
- NCAA press release on proposed House vs. NCAA settlement:
<https://www.ncaa.org/news/2024/7/26/media-center-settlement-documents-filed-in-college-athletics-class-action-lawsuits.aspx>
- ACC press release on proposed House vs. NCAA settlement:
<https://theacc.com/news/2024/7/26/general-settlement-documents-filed-in-college-athletics-class-action-lawsuits.aspx>
- [Gallup Study: Undergraduate Experiences and Post-College Outcomes of NCAA Student-Athletes](#)