

University Athletics Committee
March 17, 2022 – Virtual Meeting Highlights
3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

Present: Danny White (for Whit Babcock), Tom Burbey, Travis Burns, Walker Culver, Robert Denton, Kimberly Smith (for Rachel Holloway), Jennifer Irish, Maria Keener, Sarah Jane Lynch, Debbie Greer (for Ken Miller), Bridget Ryan-Berman, Susan Short, Kevin Carlson (for Robert Sumichrast), Anna Taylor, Joseph Tront

Absent: Allison Bowersock, Patrick Finley, Heather Gumbert, Joe Marcy, Jay Poole, Robin Queen, Terry Rakes, Frank Shushok, Becki Smith, Zach Speizer, Eric Stanley, Ken Stiles, Brad Wurthman

Guest: Sarah Armstrong

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 February 10, 2022

Anna Taylor 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. Academic Update – SAASS Communications – Sarah Armstrong, Director, Student Athlete Academic Support Services (see attached slide deck)

- Navigate is used as a tool for informal communication with faculty about student athletes.
- Navigate is also used to run progress reports to share with the coaches.
- Some faculty still contact the SAASS office by phone, email, and/or Navigate.

4. Faculty Athletics Representative Update – Jen Irish, Virginia Tech FAR

NCAA

- Division I Transformation Committee working on Division I bylaws; not known yet how this committee will prioritize and tackle changes.
- Two items related to new NCAA constitution that require attention/review:
 - UAC committee make up review to ensure alignment with new constitution: New NCAA Constitution (effective 1 Aug 2022) states: “If an institution has a non-governing athletics board or council or an athletics advisory board, administration, faculty members and student-athletes shall constitute at least a majority of the board.” Our current composition appears to align with new NCAA constitution, as well as University Council constitution. Susan Short and Anna Taylor will review make-up UAC committee membership with Jen to confirm compliance.

- There's a need to develop a process for student concerns/complaints to align with new constitution. The new Constitution states "The president or chancellor of each member institution shall appoint and support the Faculty Athletics Representative as the principal point of contact to whom student-athletes can report any action, activity or behavior by anyone associated with athletics programs inconsistent with this Constitution's principle of student-athlete health and well-being. In this role, the Faculty Athletics Representative is a reporting contact for student-athletes independent of the institution's athletic department, but not a legal advocate for student-athletes. The Faculty Athletics Representative, in this capacity, shall report directly to the member institution's president or chancellor." ACC FARs gathering input and may develop some common language. Will ask for UAC input on VT-specific process.
- Recently released a Transfer Portal training video as required viewing for all student-athletes intending to enter Portal.
- Number of legislative proposals under consideration, including one related to a shift in men's soccer playing season from a fall season to an academic year season.

ACC

- Three outstanding VT student-athletes received ACC Postgraduate Scholarships
- ACC-wide Transfer portal analysis available

University

Introduced proposed topics for missed class policy - subcommittee will review.

5. Athletic Competition Schedule Oversight/Athletic Travel Letters – Jen Irish, UAC Sub-Committee, Co-Chair (provided PowerPoint)

Three areas for the subcommittee to review are:

- 1) Absences associated with university-sanctioned events.
- 2) Faculty and student expectations for make-up work associated with university-sanctioned events absences.
- 3) Unexcused absences.

6. Athletic Director Update – Danny White, Senior Associate Athletic Director, Student-Athlete Services/University Affairs reported on behalf of Whit Babcock (see attached)

Danny provided updates regarding:

- a. Weekly senior staff meeting agenda and discussions
- b. Athletic Director's honor celebration scheduled for March 21
- c. Mental Health Awareness Month – May
- d. Winter championships and spring competitions
- e. High Fives

- f. Head Coaches Meeting
- g. Concur – a tool that allows coaches to make travel arrangements without staff involvement

7. Announcements/Adjournment

The group wrapped up the meeting 4:50 p.m.

MEETING DATES FOR 2022:

All meetings will be held from 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 14, 2022

Thursday, May 5, 2022



FACULTY COMMUNICATION

Student-Athlete Academic Support Services

March 17, 2022

STUDENT CENTERED COMMUNICATION

Faculty



Student-Athletes



SAASS



NAVIGATE PLATFORM

☐ Semester “Kick-off” Letter

☐ Progress Reports

☐ Athletic Travel Letters



Student Athlete Academic Support Services
3rd Floor Lane Stadium, Westside
Blacksburg, VA 24061-0502
Phone (540) 231-6165 Fax (540) 231-9848

Dear Professor 

We hope this letter finds you well as we begin the second week of our spring semester. You are receiving this letter because you have one or more student-athletes enrolled in your class(es) this semester. There is no action needed at this time, as this letter is simply a way for Student Athlete Academic Support Services (SAASS) to share a few notes about our student-athlete population.

Our student-athletes had another very successful Fall 2021 semester; over 400+ student-athletes earned a 3.0 or better GPA and were recognized with a spot on the Athletic Director Honor Roll.

We are asking our student-athletes who are in-season, to provide faculty a copy of their Athletic Travel Letters. As we continue to address the impacts of COVID on travel, we will also send real-time information for those student-athletes on the final travel roster through [Navigate](#).

We plan to send out Faculty Progress Reports via [Navigate](#), twice during the semester:

Week of February 21

Week of April 25

We always encourage open lines of communication between our SAASS staff and faculty members. Our contact information is available [here](#). Please feel free to reach out to us at any point in the semester, and let us know how we can best support you. We look forward to another semester, partnering together!

Sarah Armstrong

Director, Student Athlete Academic Support Services


NAVIGATE PLATFORM

☐ Semester “Kick-off” Letter

☐ Progress Reports

☐ Athletic Travel Letters


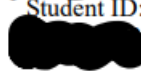
Student Feedback

 Your information is secure.
Security measures allow your school to adhere to government rules and regulations concerning FERPA and overall student privacy.
Thank you!

Professor 

You have been asked to fill out progress reports for students in the following classes. Update each student based on your best knowledge of their performance at this point in the term. *For students who are not at-risk, you can simply indicate current grade in the class, no need to select anything else.*

ARCH-4705-202009-80950 Qualifying Design Seminar

Student Name	At-Risk to Fail Your Class?	Alert Reasons (You must choose at-least one if the student is at risk)	How Many Absences?	Current Grade (Required)	Comments (e.g. classroom engagement, attendance, etc.)
 1 Student ID: 	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<div><div>Alert Reasons</div><div>No matches found</div></div>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

NAVIGATE PLATFORM

☐ Semester “Kick-off” Letter

☐ Progress Reports

☐ Athletic Travel Letters



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Dear [REDACTED]

In an effort to enhance communication regarding Athletics related travel and missed class time, I am reaching out to make you aware of potential class absences beginning Thursday, March 3, 2022 at 12:15pm ET. The team will return at 11:45pm ET on Sunday, March 6, 2022.

Students	Courses
[REDACTED]	CHEM-1036-202201-12554 - General Chemistry

Student-athletes have been asked to address any concerns that may arise from team travel with faculty.

Please feel free to reach out to me with any concerns or questions.

Thank You,

Emily Patton



INFORMAL COMMUNICATION

- ❑ Phone calls, emails, Zoom meetings

- ❑ Immensely beneficial

- ❑ Cultivating relationships

- ❑ Developing trust



FACULTY ENGAGEMENT

Past Ideas

- Guest Coaches Program
- SAASS Presentation + Office Tour
- Game-based Appreciation Events
- Athletics Summit
- Staff Meeting Presentation
- Outreach Tables

Future Ideas

- Department Staff Meetings
- Coffee & Donuts @ SAASS
- Suggestions?

New NCAA Constitution

UAC COMPOSITION



UAC Composition

“If an institution has a non-governing athletics board or council or an athletics advisory board, administration, faculty members and student-athletes shall constitute at least a majority of the board.”

2021-2022 UAC Roster

- 7 from university administration
- 3 from athletics dept
- 11 faculty
- 1 staff
- 4 students:
 - 2 student-athletes
- 1 alumni



“administration, faculty members and student-athletes”
= 74% > “majority of the board”

Transfer Portal Analysis

ACC TRENDS



Missed Class Policy Subcommittee

CHARGE & PROPOSED TOPICS



Missed Class Policy Subcommittee: Charge & Proposed Topics

Members: Gwinn (co-chair), Irish (co-chair), Burbey, Gumbert, Queen

Charge: Review and update Virginia Tech's missed class policy for student-athletes for UAC review and approval.

Proposed Topics:

1. Missed class for competition and related travel
2. Unexcused absences
3. Athletics Department/NCAA/ACC constraints on competition/travel

Missed Class Policy Subcommittee: Charge & Proposed Topics

1. Missed class for competition and related travel

- Absences associated with university-sanctioned events. **Ten of 15 (67%) ACC institutions define university-sanctioned events as excused absences.**
- Faculty and student expectations for make-up work associated with university-sanctioned-event absences. **Seven of 15 (47%) ACC institutions provide such clarification.**
- Maximum allowable absences for university-sanctioned activities.
- Process for review of competition and travel schedules as it relates to missed classes.

Missed Class Policy Subcommittee: Charge & Proposed Topics

2. Unexcused absences

- Student-athlete unexcused absence policy. **Three of 15 (20%) ACC institutions have such policies.**

UAC March 17, 2022

AD Update

- Athletic Director's Honors Celebration – March 21, 6:30pm, The Inn
- Mental Health Awareness Month – May
- Winter Championships and Spring Competition – 14/22
- High Fives – Dr. Irish (Policy) and Sarah (Faculty)

Head Coaches Meeting Agenda – March 2, 2022

- ✂ Update – Whit
 - Name Image and Likeness
 - Analytics
 - Summer School
- ✂ Licensing – JC Whidden
- ✂ INFLCR Launch – Derek
- ✂ Concur – Danny
- ✂ Closing remarks-Whit