

Athletic Committee Meeting Minutes
February 10, 2010
3:30 pm

Krannert Center Room 251

Members Present: Mark Bloom, Todd Brooks, Lorenzo Canalis, Debbie Heida, Janna Johnson, JC Ndzomo, Stan Pethel, Mika Robinson and Christy Snider.

Members Absent: Stephen Briggs (ex-officio), Paula Englis (on sabbatical) and Jacque Smith

I. Athletic Committee Mission and Charge:

Todd Brooks provided an overview of the mission and charge of the Athletic Committee. The mission of the committee is to advise the president and vice president for student affairs in all matters concerning intercollegiate athletics and campus recreation. The committee's composition and charge has changed from previous years in response to the institution's transition to NCAA Division III. Todd Brooks also shared that members of the Athletic Committee will be utilized along with other college constituents in serving as a compliance committee. The compliance committee will assist the administration in documenting and evaluating compliance policies and procedures, communicate the importance of rules compliance to the campus community, assist in rules violations investigations and complete monitoring tasks.

II. NCAA Division III Transition & Departmental Update:

Todd Brooks provided an update on the progress which has been made relative to achieving NCAA Division III active membership and on the athletic department as a whole. The institution is currently in its first year of NCAA Division III provisional membership. The athletic administration is complying with all applicable requirements as mandated by the provisional membership process. The school underwent its required, first year on-campus visit by an NCAA national office representative and a member of the NCAA National Membership Committee this past October. Dr. Briggs, Dean Debbie Heida and Todd Brooks were also required to attend the NCAA National Convention this past January which they did. Todd Brooks, Janna Johnson and Mika Robinson are also required to attend a Regional Rules Seminar this year. They will be doing so this coming May in Indianapolis, Indiana. The institution is also required to submit an Annual Report and Institutional Self-Study by June 1. Todd Brooks shared that the completion of these reports is now underway and that periodic progress reports will be shared with the committee.

As an addition to the update on athletic personnel, Dean Heida shared that just like the rest of the institution; the athletic department has encountered frozen positions. The full-time assistant coaches that were planned for men's & women's swimming, men's lacrosse and women's lacrosse were not filled but replaced by graduate assistants. She also shared that one of the athletic training positions currently in place was actually supported by Advance Rehabilitation. They provide a 90% position at no cost to the institution.

The retention rate of student-athletes for this past fall was also reported. It was at 91%. The overall 2009 Fall GPA for student-athletes was also shared. It was a 3.14.

Todd Brooks also shared that the institution was continuing to strategically study other athletic offerings that could enhance campus vibrancy and increase enrollment. Two specific offerings that are to be studied are football and a full track & field program. It was stressed that no definite decisions pertaining to either offering had been made at this point and that it was only being studied. Dr. Snider shared that she had heard from other faculty members about these possibilities and that although there was a significant amount of pro sentiments about the addition of football, there is still some concern about the effect football would have on the campus culture. The committee was assured that that aspect would definitely be considered as a part of the ongoing study.

III. Eligibility Consideration - "Good Academic Standing":

Todd Brooks addressed how a definition of "Good Academic Standing" was established by Academic Council for athletic eligibility this past summer in order to comply with NCAA membership mandates. Academic eligibility is determined by each individual Division III institution. As a part of the application process, the institution had to establish its eligibility policy this past summer without significant research into what other peer and aspirant institutions were doing. Todd had research conducted since that time on what the twelve current member institutions of the Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference, which is the conference Berry hopes to gain membership in, were doing relative to athletic eligibility. This research was shared with the committee.

In response to the finding, Dr. Janna Johnson presented a proposal to change the current "Good Academic Standing" policy to be more in line with the other SCAC institutions and in order to provide a little more transitional latitude for incoming freshmen who are trying to adjust to the rigors of college work. The proposal was in agreement with the institution's current probation and suspension policies.

The discussion that followed included the question of whether or not students were currently allowed to continue participating in extra-curricular activities while on probation. The understanding of the committee members was that students are allowed to do so. The possibility of creating a review process to determine a student-athlete's eligibility that is on probation was inquired about and discussed. No motion was made on this point. The idea of establishing an appeals process for those student-athletes who find themselves ineligible academically was also brought up. It was strongly believed by the majority on the committee that such an appeal was not in the best interest of the student-athlete. No motion followed relative to this discussion.

Dr. Pethel moved to endorse the proposal and Dr. Snider seconded the motion. The proposal was endorsed unanimously. It will now be presented to the Academic Council for consideration.

IV. Post Season Conference Possibilities:

Todd Brooks shared that as provisional members of the NCAA, the institution's athletic teams are not eligible for post-season (national) participation with the NAIA or NCAA. This will be

the case until the 2013-14 academic year. This mandate is proving detrimental to the recruiting of new student-athletes. In order to combat this hardship, two other athletic associations were identified which would allow dual affiliation with the NCAA while allowing for post-season participation; the Eastern College Athletic Conference (ECAC) and the United States Collegiate Athletic Association (USCAA). Mika Robinson presented a facts sheet about both associations and presented a proposal originating from the athletics administration seeking to join both associations for the next three years in order to offset this hardship until full NCAA active membership is achieved. The rationale for joining both associations was so that all of the institution's athletic teams are provided some type of possible post-season participation. Only the ECAC provides post-season possibilities for all of our current sports offerings but the distance to the member institutions make it problematic. The selection criteria for the ECAC tournaments would most likely keep many of our sports from qualifying as it relies heavily on head to head competition with schools in the northeast, and our current travel budgets prevent us from traveling that extensively. The USCAA membership is much more accommodating geographically but it does not provide post-season opportunities for all of our offered sports.

Dr. Snider moved to endorse the proposal and Dr. Pethel seconded the motion. The proposal was endorsed unanimously. It will now be presented to the administration for possible approval.

The meeting adjourned at 4:36 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Todd Brooks
Athletic Committee Chair

February 11, 2010