

NC State Council on Athletics
Friday, December 8, 2023 – Talley 3285
12:00 pm

Attendees:

Joel Pawlak – Faculty, Forest Biomaterials (*Chair – Council on Athletics*)
Laura Bottomley – Faculty, Engineering
Keith Edmisten - Faculty, Soil & Crop Sciences
Cathy Crossland - Faculty, TELS
Tara Mullins - Faculty, Performing Arts and Technology
Marion Martin - Faculty, Chemistry
Kanton Reynolds - Faculty, E.P. Fitts-Industrial & Systems Engineering
Steven Lechner - Faculty, History
Christopher Roland - Faculty Senate, Physics
Ralston Turner - AAR, Alumni Association
Katie Graham - Academic Support for Student Athletes - Ex-Officio
Bayne Bennett - Student-Athlete, SAAC
Megan Aljian - Student Senate Representative
David Elrod - Associate Vice Provost, OIED (*attending for Sheri Schwab*)

Guest Attendees:

Stephanie Menio, Todd Stansbury, Colin Hargis, Carrie Doyle, Ben Broussard, Paige Timberlake, Emily Gaskins (Guest Coach - Gymnastics), Josh Johnson (Guest Student-Athlete), Emily Vespa, Kate Denning, Ethan Bakogiannis

Online Attendee:

Grant Johnston, Buzzy Correll

Unable to Attend:

Sheri Schwab, Kimberly Bush, Amanda Edwards, Chris DePerno, Jason Osborne, Wendy Crumpler, Boo Corrigan, Shawn Troxler, Catherine Carter

1. Welcome. Joel Pawlak welcomed the group and called the meeting to order at 12:02 pm.
2. Previous Minutes. The minutes of the October 27 meeting were reviewed.

It was MOVED to:

“Approve the minutes of the October 27, 2023 Council on Athletics meeting”
(*APPROVED - Unanimously*)

3. Guest Head Coach. Emily Gaskins, Assistant Coach for Gymnastics, filled in for Kim Landrus (Head Coach). Emily is a former National team member and gymnast at Alabama. She is in her first season with the Wolfpack. Drawn to NC State because of the team chemistry and interactions with the coaches from last year’s regionals. Main focus is artistry and to help the

team grow their confidence. First year back with an ACC Gymnastics conference and it has added an extra layer of grind to the workouts. Have three super-seniors on the team and are special leaders continuing to get better and raise the standard. Want to go from good to great and from great to excellent this year. Spoke about the impressive staff and how they are creating a competitive team full of loyalty, honesty, respect and hard work. Coaches also focus on creating an atmosphere to grow and prepare the student-athletes for success outside of the gym. Season starts in January with 12 regular season meets, 5 of which are at home. Encouraged the Council to come out and support NC State Gymnastics because the student-athletes feed off of the crowd's energy. Was asked how recruiting needs to change with the added ACC schools and said it could be used to NC State's advantage because it means recruiting to a larger conference and raising the standards. Was also asked about the main competition in the recruiting process and mentioned the other ACC teams (Clemson, Pitt, UNC) as well as all SEC schools. Asked the difference in being on the National team versus college and spoke about the highly pressurized and individual atmosphere of the national team versus being a selfless teammate on the college team.

4. Guest Student-Athlete. Josh Johnson is in his second year on the Wrestling team from Miami, Florida and is majoring in Communications and Media. Chose NC State because his dad had a relationship with Coach Popolizio and because NC State's entire coaching staff reached out to him during the recruiting process. No other college had done that. Has had an incredible experience so far and the highlight has been getting to know the guys on the team and letting them know about him. Spoke about the work ethic and culture of the Wrestling team and how everyone is on the same page and very accepting. Talked about the Wrestling team's training regiment and how it is very intense but the coaches know when to back off and they have 2 days off per week. Was asked the difference between high school and college wrestling and said in college you are wrestling grown men and the commitment is different - it's a job now. Also asked about the psychological pressure of making a weight class and the Mental Health and Performance Psychologist are utilized and important to find a rhythm throughout the week. Said the nutrition element is demanding as well but the staff and coaches do a great job on educating what you can and cannot eat and have been a great resource. Spoke about the home schedule and how it's the best one the team's had in a while and everyone is excited to see what the guys go out and do this year. Team is disappointed they aren't going to Italy to wrestle Oklahoma State but excited to have that match at home in January on ESPN.
5. Athletic Department Update. Stephanie Menio, NC State Deputy AD, provided the update. Talked about the David Thompson Statue unveiling and how Michelle Lee worked with the art committee, artist, and David Thompson for over two years to make sure it was what he wanted. Was able to raise the money for the statue in 8 days. Seeing the emotion from David when it was unveiled and the positive reaction from the public made it one of the best days at NC State so far. Talked about how we were able to surprise Payton Wilson with the Butkus Award (best linebacker in the country) during the Men's Basketball Heritage Game in Reynolds. Also mentioned we tied our mark at 92% for GSR. Spoke about the incredible November NC State Athletics' had with the Women's Basketball win over UCONN, Football going undefeated, Women's Cross Country winning its 3rd National Championship by one point, and Volleyball winning. Spoke about how Volleyball went 22-7 and didn't make the NCAA Tournament and

how it came down to PRI, KPI, Strength of Schedule. Historically ACC schools got in with 20 wins but didn't happen this year. Only one graduating so are using this adversity to their advantage for next season. Talked about the PopTart Bowl and how it will be a great atmosphere for NC State and based on ticket sales, it will be very red in Orlando. Was asked about the Men's Soccer Head Coach search and said we are hoping to make an announcement in the next few days. Winter sports have four teams (Wrestling, Men's and Women's Swimming, Women's Basketball) in the top 3 in the country and excited to see how they do.

6. Wolfpack Club Update. Ben Broussard, Executive Director of the Wolfpack Club, gave the update. Left LSU and started at the Wolfpack Club in May 2020 after hearing everything good about Raleigh and NC State. Said NC State is miles ahead of LSU in academics but similar institutions. First thing to tackle once he started was keeping the lights on and thanks to the donors NC State was one of the only Power-5 schools that came out of the pandemic with no debt. Spoke about his staff of 25 that ensures NC State is able to generate annual dollars so our student-athletes can get an education and provide the assets to make sure they have the best time while they are here. Said the fanbase is awesome and the donors care about the student-athletes' success. Was asked about fundraising for major projects and said the Wolfpack Club makes sure the projects are meeting needs and adding value before they take it to the donors. Used the example of the Women's Basketball locker room and said they reached out to 25 donors who indicated Women's Basketball was important to them. Want to make sure we are being reasonable and affordable with our requests. Was also asked the difference between the Wolfpack Club and the Collectives and said the Wolfpack Club is a 501c3 and the Collectives sole purpose is to generate NIL money to get student-athletes. Said there is collaboration between the two and it doesn't cut into overall fundraising and have actually gained some new donors that have given to the Collective.
7. NCAA's Visions. Carrie Doyle, Senior Associate AD - Compliance, gave the overview of the letter from Charlie Baker that went to the Oversight Committee members. Went over three ideas introduced in the letter that aren't in effect yet but could be significant changes:
 - a. Make it possible for all Division I colleges and universities to offer student-athletes any level of enhanced educational benefits they deem appropriate.
 - b. Rules should change for any Division I school, at their choice, to enter into NIL licensing opportunities with their student-athletes.
 - c. Create a subdivision comprised of institutions with the highest resources to invest in their student-athletes...

Was asked if we have any clarity on process to go from concepts to actual legislation and said we assume there is a lot of work left to be done before the January Convention where the Council and Board of Directors will meet to adopt concepts and figure out a timeline. Was also asked if universities would be required to honor scholarships even if the student-athletes didn't compete and said it wouldn't change for us as an ACC school, just for the Group of 5 schools. Mentioned that schools with a lot of money can do so much more than what a lot of institutions can do and that the cause and effect in the document doesn't make sense. The appendix includes more specific details on the ideas introduced.

8. SAAC Updates. Update provided by Bayne Bennett. ACC SAAC had a meeting in November and the main conversation was about student-athletes being considered as employees and what this entails for each individual student-athlete. Had very mixed opinions and the group leaned toward not agreeing with it because it's complicated and unfair to all student-athletes. SAAC was encouraged to write a letter to Congress to state their opinions on it and there will be more discussions in the future. Talked about the SAAC retreat and how to invest more in the student-athletes and building leaders. Jaiden Thomas met with the Student Government about hosting a student-athlete meet and greet with students on campus to get more students to show up at the other athletic events (aside from football and men's and women's basketball). Will be bringing this idea up to SAAC in January and hopes it will boost popularity and get connected on campus.
9. Sub-Committee Updates.
 - Faculty Academic Committee - Laura Bottomley gave the update. Eligibility meeting will be held on December 18th in Case Academic Center.
 - Student-Athlete Health and Wellness - Keith Edmisten gave the update. Met with Katie Graham and Tara Mullins to go over different mental health workshops that could include the arts such as the NC State Hug Group and resources during high stress times. Focusing on what are different things and experts on campus that can bring help to the student-athletes.
 - Legislative - Kanton Reynolds gave the update. North Carolina is one of 7 states suing the NCAA over transfer eligibility rules. Also a group of athletes suing the NCAA and Power-5 conference over pay for play. Planning to sit down with Carrie Doyle and figure out the landscape and then meet as a committee going forward.
10. Adjournment. Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:41pm.