University Athletic Committee  
September 20, 2007  
Bowman Room

**Members Present:** Susan Anderson, Hap Bonham, Richard Cothren, Mike Dame, David Ford, Rosemary Goss, Kelsey Hoffman, Mike Kelly, Larry Killough, Adam Kress, Mary Ann Lewis, Margarita McGrath, Steve McMullin, Scott Pleasant, Ken Stanton, Eileen Van Aken, Jim Weaver.

**Members Absent:** Bryan Collier, Sam Easterling, David Lowe, Lu Merritt.

**Representatives:** Alex White for Leon Geyer, Alan Glick for Zenobia Hikes, Greg Jenkins for John Maher, Melinda West for Dwight Shelton.

**Guest Present:** Chris Helms, Director for SAASS, Jon Jaudon, Associate Athletic Director, Administration, Sharon McCloskey, Senior Associate Athletic Director/SWA.

**Recorder:** Joyce Wynn, Athletics

I. Call to Order  
Rosemary Goss, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 3:35. Rosemary reviewed and distributed the charge to the committee, which was written in 1988. She also explained the typical role of this committee. Jim Weaver reminded the committee our student athletic academic support services reports to the Provost’s office and not to the Athletic Director.

II. Approval of Agenda  
The agenda was accepted as presented.

III. Approval of Minutes—May 2007  
Minutes for the May 2007 meeting were approved.

**BUSINESS**

IV. Welcome, introductions and committee charge (Rosemary Goss) Handout

V. Future meeting schedule for fall semester (Rosemary Goss)  
- October 11 (Note change of date)
- November 28

VI. NCAA Athletics Certification Self-Study (Jon Jaudon) Handout  
- Will have a site visit on November 12-14 from NCAA certification team; this team would like to meet with the Athletics Committee from 2:30-3:00 on Tuesday November 13
- Rosemary to clarify with Natalie whether they would like to meet with all members including ex-officio members.
- NCAA certification is a ten-year review – we last did this in 1998. Have been working on this process since May 2006. Hope to conclude in next 6-8 months with final certification.
- This review encompasses three areas of intercollegiate athletics: rules compliance, academic integrity, equity and student well-being.
• Have three sub-committees preparing review in each of these areas; have submitted a self-study report to NCAA. They have reviewed this self-study and have shared initial findings with us. We recently met with Minnis Ridenour, who is chairing this entire effort, and the sub-committee chairs. We are working on preparing responses to initial findings. Submitting these responses to NCAA on October 26.

• The outcome will be: certify completely, certify with conditions, or not certify. We should find out the outcome in February 2008.

• There are at least 100 people involved in this effort. There has been an editor and four graduate students working on the self-study. The self-study document has to be in a specific format.

• Jim Weaver commented about the thousands of person-hours (and cost) to become certified; there are questions as to whether it is cost effective.

• Q: what happens if we do not get certified? Jim Weaver: they give you a timetable to respond to the findings. Resubmit in order to get certified. I will be extremely disappointed if we do not get certified. The effort has been very thorough and outstanding.

• Q: Do we know what the onsite team will expect? Might be worthwhile to extract a section of the report for the UAC to review before the onsite meeting.

• Q: How often do universities go through this process? Every 10 years.

VII. Student Athlete Academic Support Services Review (David Ford) Handout
• David Ford is the chair of the Academic Integrity Sub-Committee.
• We learned that we need to have in place a formal process for a three-year program review for Student Athlete Academic Support Services (directed by Chris Helms). We had done a study on SAASS in 2003, which was a review of the SAASS program and a benchmarking study. We have used that study to improve the SAASS program over the last three years. In order to be in compliance, we wrote an improvement plan that stated we would formalize this process in 2007-8 and begin a three-year cycle. That seemed appropriate to the Steering Committee.

• When NCAA came back with their initial findings, they stated that they would like to have this study done by December 14, 2007.

• David is sharing a change to that initial improvement plan to put us in compliance, so that when the site team comes, we will have conducted this review.

• Refer to handout distributed by David Ford:
  o There are six documents listed here (under Process section) relating to review of the SAASS program.
  o The sub-committee and the overall Steering Committee has recommended that we bring to the UAC a suggestion to convene a new sub-committee to review these documents (separate from the Academic Integrity sub-committee).
  o If we did not do this, we would not be in full compliance when the onsite team comes. We would otherwise have this review hanging out there in order to be certified. Since we have this documentation (listed on the handout), we thought we should move forward with this. This way, we will be in compliance when the onsite team comes in November.
  o There is a timetable in the handout as well

• Mary Ann Lewis, Larry Killough, Rosemary Goss, Hap Bonham, and David Ford (who will chair) will be on this sub-committee.

• The UAC agreed that the approach suggested by David Ford should be adopted.

• This sub-committee will bring a report to the UAC at the October 11, 2007 meeting.

VIII. Team Schedules and Missed Class Time (Jon Jaudon) Handout
• Refer to handout distributed by Jon Jaudon on missed classes expected for students based on the fall and spring competitive schedule.
• The policy does not want any single student to miss more than 9 classes. We are in compliance with the policy with the exception of Golf in the spring. The numbers listed are the maximum theoretically possible for an athlete to miss, although extremely unlikely for more than 1-2 athletes (due to the group of athletes taken to tournaments, athletes qualifying, etc.).
• Q: How concerned are we about the 1-2 golfers who would miss more than 9 days? Jim Weaver: if you look at the GPA of these students, you’ll see it’s a not an issue. It’s the nature of this sport that many tournaments are typically during the week (vs. on weekends). The country clubs hosting these tournaments are not willing to give up weekend revenue.
• Q: Is it a practice of all coaches to make sure the athletes notify their professors on the days missed for all sports? We tell students it’s their responsibility. How they carry that out varies based on each student’s willingness to carry out that responsibility. We tell them to let SAASS know if there is a problem; if the student has failed to notify their professors, then we side with the faculty every time.
• The UAC accepts the report provided by Jon Jaudon on team schedule and missed class (this motion was proposed, seconded and unanimously approved).

IX. Student-Athlete Academic Performance (Chris Helms) Handout
• At the beginning of each academic semester Chris Helms reports to the UAC on student academic performance.
• As we all know the spring 2007 was unlike any other semester. 70% of athletes achieved 3.0 or better in spring – this is unprecedented. Fall 2006 was also very strong.
• This is the first occasion where the average team semester GPA and cumulative GPA was above 3.0.
• 18 of our 21 teams achieved a 3.0 or better in spring.
• Top GPA’s: tennis (men) and tennis (women)
• We had two Academic All-American athletes last year – one from track and one from softball.
• We had six student athletes with a cumulative GPA less than 2.0.
• The handout also includes historical data on spring semesters the last 8 years.

X. Graduation Rates 2006-2007 (Chris Helms) Handout
• At beginning of each year, also present data on graduation rates.
• APR (Academic Progress Rate) – gives a current picture of how student athletes are doing.
• The way the NCAA reports this is by sports categories (baseball, etc.) (refer to handout).
• In the columns, you see the year in which the data are reported and the year in which that cohort of students began at VT (e.g., “2003 and 1996-1997”).
• The general student population has a graduation rate of 79% - this is reported by Institutional Research.
• If a student transfers to another university and graduates from there, they do not count in our graduation rate.
• On men’s basketball, it was 0% for a few years. Those students transferred to other institutions.
• Later this year when Chris reports data on GSR (graduation success rate) it takes into account other factors that Fed Grad Rates do not. It factors in students that transfer in as well as out.
• Whenever a student leaves, we do work with them to try to get them to come back and finish up their degree, regardless of whether it is within the six year window.
• David Ford commented that the results for graduation rates indicate the success of SAASS program, but also the coach’s emphasis in recruiting and retaining student-athletes (not just athletes).
• Q: Do these categories reflect those defined by NCAA? Yes.
XI. Questions for the Athletic Director

Jim Weaver

- Comment: There has been some good publicity about the first game and how the people from ECU were treated. Jim Weaver: We have had a lot of letters from ECU fans about their experiences. We started four years ago our Hokies Respect campaign. I think it has made a difference. I received two emails today from Ohio University fans and how positive their experience was, and how they were treated.

- Jim Weaver shared that VT has confirmed March 18 as the date for the New York Yankees to come here and play our baseball team. This should be a very exciting opportunity for our program. There will be a release out on this next week. It will be played at our baseball stadium. We had options to play in Richmond and in Salem but the game is for the community and for the students. Our field was rebuilt two years ago with a new drainage system and it’s appropriate enough. We will use wood bats that day, as will the Yankees. There are some places in NY that have outlawed the use of aluminum bats altogether – there is a trend going in this direction.
  
  Q: How will ticketing work? We don’t know yet, we’ve been focusing on getting this on the calendar. A lot of donors away from Blacksburg would like to come. There was a suggestion to televise it; another suggestion was to allow one group in for batting practice and a different group for the game. The capacity of the field is 1350, although we’ll put some temporary seats in. We had some plans to add seating for both the baseball and softball fields.

- Comment from Ken Stanton: Would like to congratulate you on the first game – have had a lot of positive feedback from students. Would like to raise the issue of the “stick-it-in” cheer. We have results of an informal survey (see handout distributed). Don’t know how this decision could be made without a broader poll of people. Both the graduate and undergraduate student body are spending a lot of time on this.
  
  JW point 1: This came up 2-3 years ago; we tried to eliminate the body gestures that accompanied the cheer (this is more of the problem). I told the cheerleaders and the band that if that came back, that we would eliminate the cheer. It was not a quick decision. Point 2: There was an incident last year at the Boston College game during a timeout that led to a great deal of negative publicity – did not want this type of publicity to occur for this issue as well. Point 3: 17,000 of the 65,000 game attendees are students, the rest are alumni which provided negative feedback.

- Q: What about the problem of alcohol during the game? That seems to be a much bigger problem than this cheer. Q: We have been working on this for a long time. We do throw out some fans for this, but we cannot search everyone everywhere for alcohol.

- Q: On the Let’s Go Hokies cheer – it has not gone anywhere (it was not decided to eliminate this cheer). The band director had suggestions to use “We are Virginia Tech” to honor the shooting victims and tried it out. The Let’s Go Hokies cheer will be present at the next game.

Announcements

XII. Request for Future Agenda Items (Rosemary Goss)

- Rosemary has as a future agenda item to hear more information about facilities.
- Rosemary asked UAC members to provide input on future agenda items, including coaches. It might also be interesting to have Drew Weaver come in to share some of his experiences and recent successes.

Rosemary Goss adjourned the meeting at 5:07 p.m.