

GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS
UNIVERSITY SENATE COMMITTEE ON ATHLETICS
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 21, 2013

I. Call to Order

Kristen Varjas called to order the meeting of the University Senate Committee on Athletics at 11:41 a.m. in Room 235, University Center.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion was presented to approve the minutes from September 26, 2013. Peggy Gallagher noted a revision to the minutes. Jamie Boggs agreed to make the recommended changes. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Attendees-

Jamie Boggs, Allison Boyd, Richard Fendler, Peggy Gallagher, MaryAnne Gaunt, Kerry Heyward, Cheryl Levick, Shelly Linens, Erik Paz, George Pierce, John Portland, and Kristen Varjas.

III. Standing Reports

A. Athletic Director's Report

- i. Department Update – AD Cheryl Levick announced that Georgia State Athletics had the top Graduation Success Rate in the Sun Belt Conference at 86 percent. She also announced that the women's cross country team won the top academic award in the Sun Belt Conference from the previous year with a fall grade point average of 3.64 and a spring grade point average of 3.66.

Levick announced that men's soccer received presidential approval to become a Sun Belt Conference sport. Currently, there are three Sun Belt institutions that sponsor men's soccer. Three more institutions with men's soccer need to be added in order for this to happen by fall 2014.

The Mandatory Student Fee Committee recommended a \$14 increase to complete the original football financial plan, to allow the athletics department to be in compliance with Title IX, and to fund the growth of the marching band. Levick also stated that the institution needs to be in compliance with Title IX and is planning on adding women's swimming and diving with a projected cost of \$500,000. The marching band would like to increase their members from 185 to 225 if the recommendation is approved. Levick announced that the Student Mandatory Fee Committee approved the recommendation on October

18, 2013 and that the FacP Committee approved the recommendation on November 11, 2013. The recommendation now sits with the President and upon his approval, will go to the Board of Regents in the spring of 2014. If approved, the recommended increase will be a \$1.1 million shift in the athletics budget.

Levick announced that the Athletics Department is working on five facility upgrades and that the money raised from the current campaign will go towards these projects. As Georgia State enters the Sun Belt Conference, facilities are the weakest link. Levick also announced that the \$1.4 million locker rooms for men's and women's basketball were completed efficiently, on time and on budget.

Levick discussed the addition of a strength and conditioning center to the football facility at 188 MLK. All 350 student-athletes currently share the weight room at the Sports Arena, but football takes up the majority of the space. The new facility will be located next to the existing football facility and the cost is estimated to be \$2.5 million. Levick said that the building will initially have one floor and she will look to add a second floor in the future. The Strickland gift of \$350 thousand is earmarked for this project.

Levick announced that athletics is planning to renovate the third and fourth floors of Courtland North into an Academic Center at the estimated cost of \$375,000. This center will include tutor rooms and study halls and will provide optimal academic space.

Levick stated that athletics is working on a plan to convert the old aquatics center into a Sports and Academic Performance Center. That area is currently used for storage and equipment, but she wants to convert it into a practice court for basketball and volleyball. Levick stated that Georgia State is the only Sun Belt institution without a secondary practice court. There are plans to also move the Academic Center into this space.

The last facility upgrade priority is the softball and baseball complex in Panthersville. Levick said that she is looking to move baseball and softball closer to campus, but there will be recreation fields available in 2017 that she would like to convert into a softball and baseball complex. The University has plans to move student recreation fields to a location closer to campus in 2017 and that the land currently used will be given to athletics. Levick explained that currently, baseball cannot host Sun Belt Championships; there is no internet source because of the location of the field.

- ii. Sports Update – Levick announced that the Sports Update is located in everyone’s folder for their review.

B. Internal Operations Report

- i. Academics-Organizational Update – Jamie Boggs announced that there are currently two open positions in the academics department. Dena Freeman-Patton accepted a position elsewhere, but all of the sports are covered and are provided the same level of attention as before. Boggs announced that we are currently interviewing for the Associate AD-Student-Athlete Development position which will be filled by next week.
- ii. Transfer Appeals Committee – Boggs announced that currently, student-athletes must have permission from the Athletics Department to transfer to another institution and be immediately eligible. NCAA rules require that a student-athlete who is denied permission must receive the opportunity to a hearing. A Transfer Appeal Committee has been established to ensure compliance with this rule. Dr. George Pierce (FAR) is assisting with the guidelines for the committee. Pierce announced that appeal cases with compelling need requests are generally accepted and would not go to the committee. Pierce also announced that the committee would look at appeals on a case-by-case basis. The committee will treat student-athletes as individuals and focus on their well-being.
- iii. NCAA Academic Cabinet Update – Boggs announced that she currently serves on the NCAA Academic Cabinet. The Cabinet recently recommended guidelines for defining academic misconduct. Boggs said that the Athletics Department will educate the University about the new guidelines once they are approved.

C. FAR Report

- i. Sun Belt Conference Meeting Update – Pierce announced that the biggest issue addressed at the meetings was faculty not responding to requests for student-athlete progress reports. Pierce said that some schools are using electronic communication and they are only receiving about a 30 percent response rate from the professors. These schools are going back to hard copy communication. Pierce suggested that it is the faculty members’ responsibility to ensure communication about the student-athletes’ progress.
- ii. NCAA Governance – Pierce announced that he will have more updates regarding NCAA Governance in January after the NCAA Convention.

He explained that FARs will be vocal about the topic of NCAA Governance and that the process will be taken very seriously with a focus on student-athlete well-being.

- iii. Class Scheduling – Pierce announced that student-athletes feel that they do not have an adequate opportunity to take the necessary classes to graduate within a reasonable timeframe. He explained that this is due to the dates and times the classes are offered, as well as classes only offered in a certain sequence. Pierce said that he will meet with the Provost soon to discuss the situation. Levick stated that from a Football standpoint, the student-athletes take morning classes due to their practice schedules, but some departments do not offer classes before 1:00 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays. Levick stressed that football needs consistency and would benefit from having more class offerings on Monday and Wednesday mornings. Pierce added that he is looking into class attendance now and that he should have projections for spring. His focus will be on finding out if there is a demand for more morning class offerings and if so, if there is an obligation to meet that demand. Pierce suggested that the underutilization of facilities is not contributing to the issue, but that there might not be enough faculty to teach the classes. Varjas asked if student-athletes take longer to graduate and if so, that information would be helpful. Levick responded by stating that student-athletes with financial aid tend to take longer to graduate. Peggy Gallagher mentioned that the class schedules have been the same forever and that the departments may be willing to change if the needs were voiced. Levick asked if the information provided to the Provost would be enough to remedy the situation in time for the fall 2014 semester. Pierce said that classes are currently being scheduled for next fall, but that he thinks there is flexibility.

IV. Old Business

A. Drug Testing Policy

Boggs announced that the updated Drug Testing Policy is in effect and has been communicated to the coaches. Varjas asked when the committee would get the report of any suspensions. Boggs said that there have been no cases to date, but that athletics would report to the committee if a student-athlete is not suspended for the next immediate competition.

V. New Business

A. FBS Transition/Compliance Review

Boggs announced that athletics is planning for the compliance review on April 10 and April 11. In late April or May, the Senate Committee on Athletics will review the report. Levick stated that Georgia State had not had an outside firm come in to review since she has been here and it is important that we do well. The Sun Belt Compliance Office and the Compliance Group will come to Georgia State and conduct the review together.

B. New Legislation

Erik Paz reviewed new NCAA legislation in a PowerPoint presentation. Varjas asked if coaches can conduct skill instruction for men's and women's basketball during the summer. Paz confirmed that the entire team can participate in skill instruction during the summer.

IV. Future Meetings

A. Spring Dates

- i. February 6, 2014 or February 13, 2014 – Committee members were in agreement on a February 13, 2014 meeting date.
- ii. April 24, 2014 or May 1, 2014 – Committee members were in agreement on an April 24, 2014 meeting date.

V. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:42 p.m.