

Committee on Equal Opportunity in Athletics

Minutes

Wednesday, November 17, 2010, 1:30 p.m.

Members Present: John Beach, Francesca Galarraga, Jermaine Holmes, Larry Killough

Members Absent: Karisa Moore

Guests: Reyna Gilbert, Pam Linkous, Penny Martin, Sharon McCloskey

Welcome and Introductions

Pam Linkous opened the meeting at 1:35 p.m. Introductions were made and new members were welcomed.

Review of past Accomplishments

Pam began the meeting by reviewing actions taken since our last committee meeting. The following actions were reviewed and recommendations were made by the committee membership.

NCAA Requirement 1: Institutional and Athletics Department Commitment

Pam indicated that 3 nicely framed Principles of Community posters are currently on display in highly visible areas within the department (entrance to the Merryman Center, outside the Olympic Sports weight room—first floor, and entrance to the Bowman Room). The POC are also available through a link on the department website (hokiesports.com; Compliance link). The department's publications unit has included the entire POC in football game day programs and the men's and women's basketball game day programs. Additional consideration is being given to include the POC in Olympic Sports media guides. Due to media guide size limitations by the NCAA, a brief version of the POC may be considered.

NCAA Requirement 2: Evaluation

The committee will meet again in January or February to review a draft of the annual CEOA report which will be presented to the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity in early spring.

NCAA Requirement 3: Organization and Structure

Pam mentioned the previous link established by EO to the online Sexual Harassment and Anti-Discrimination tutorial/test has been disabled; therefore, the yearly email asking employees to link to this site and take the test has been suspended. The department is currently addressing these topics at annual meetings (mandatory departmental April Workshop is April 19-20, 2011) and consideration will be given to inviting Maggie Sloane from Equity and Compliance to come and speak with managers and supervisors, and then to non-supervisory employees.

While there is no set departmental policy regarding the reporting structure for timely reporting of student life and employee issues concerning equal opportunity, the department does follow university reporting procedures. Pam mentioned that we have had no reported discrimination or sexual harassment issues within the past five years.

NCAA Requirement 4: Enrollment

No discussion from committee regarding enrollment.

NCAA Requirement 5: Comparison of Populations

Pam distributed the racial/ethnic composition data of student-athletes in relation to the entire Virginia Tech student community and other Division I schools. She will provide 2010 data to the committee once it is compiled.

NCAA Requirement 6: Participation in Governance and Decision-Making

No discussion from committee regarding participation.

NCAA Requirement 7: Employment Opportunities

Increase the number of minority applicants - Pam mentioned that several of our sports, namely lacrosse and men's basketball, have recently advertised for Division I playing experience versus Division I coaching experience to attract women and minority candidates. Two lacrosse coaches were hired with Division I playing experience, along with the men's basketball director of operations being promoted to an assistant coach position.

Recruit from the pool of candidates in the NCAA Internship - Jermaine Holmes suggested that, along with recruiting from the NCAA Internship Program and the NCAA Division III Ethnic Minority and Women's Internship Grant Program, we also look at the NCAA Leadership Institute for Ethnic Minority Males and Females. Jermaine went on to say that this program has a good source of candidates with experience in academic advising, compliance, coaching, development, budget, hiring, and facilities. Pam will check with this program to see if there is a mailing list or listserv available. She will continue to make these groups aware of Virginia Tech Athletics' employment opportunities.

To implement retention strategies to keep minorities in the department - The mandatory April Workshop agendas include diversity training elements; suggestions are welcome. Pam has spoken with Jim Weaver about inviting Steve Robbins (<http://slrobbins.com/v2/>) to provide the keynote address at our 2011 April Workshop; however, Mr. Robbins' fee for a 45 minute keynote is \$10,000 plus expenses. Pam indicated the department would be willing to include other departments to off-set the cost. Francesca Galarraga mentioned that inviting other areas to the "keynote" and then possibly having an Athletics open house might attract other departments and it would advertise the department's diversity efforts.

Implement retention strategies to keep minorities in the department – Francesca mentioned, as a new employee, she was invited to an "Evening with the President". She indicated it was a very nice reception with the president, deans, and other university leaders shared valuable information on Virginia and the community—not just Virginia Tech.

Continue to attract minorities and women into athletics administration – John Beach stressed that the committee **highly recommends** the department head implement gradual progress towards mandatory attendance by senior staff to sessions facilitated by the National Coalition Building Institute. He said this is an extremely valuable program and although it is expensive, it is well worth the costs. This institute is well known for its development of leaders within organizations to deal effectively with discrimination and prejudices. John went on to suggest that trainers from NCBI might be willing to come to Blacksburg if we could share the costs with other interested departments. Doing this would highlight the department's efforts to eliminate discrimination and prejudices throughout the university community.

Priority on cultivating student-athletes for positions in coaching and athletics administration – Pam noted that the department will hire a football student-athlete for an HR internship, working with her, from May to August 2011. The student-athlete will have direct experience with job postings, searches, hiring, and attending HR meetings.

Explore internships for non-student-athletes - the department will notify Multicultural Academic Opportunities Program, Black Business Council, Career Services Multicultural Outreach, Upward Bound, and Talent Search, when an internship position is available. Some internships are paid (Athletics Communications).

NCAA requirement 8: Programs and Activities

Department of Athletics Office of Student Life Annual Report – The most recent annual report was provided to the committee for their information.

Explore opportunities for student athletes to have ad hoc seats on various student committees- Reyna Gilbert indicated that Whitney Davis (softball student-athlete) will serve as the student-athlete representative for the University Unions and Student Activities Advisory Board for the 2010-2011 academic year.

THE Forum event; “Myths of Being a Student Athlete” – The following ideas came from committee members relative to dispelling myths and publicizing student-athlete’s personal and academic commitments.

- When the Summit is revamped, suggestion was made that student-athletes be included to denounce the most common myths associated with being a student athlete, i.e., extra/better food, not attending classes, expenses being paid, etc.
- Have a speaker series and have athletes participate in an open forum (such as the Principles of Community speaker series).
- Have administrators and coaches dispel rumors regarding student-athlete myths during speaking engagements to Hokie Clubs, lunch bunch groups, community groups.
- Have a student-athlete video tape “a day in the life of” and have a link featured on the Virginia Tech main web page.
- Invite University Athletic Committee members to Student-Athlete Advisory Committee meetings. These meetings are attended by athletes from every sport. Meetings provide information from student-athletes regarding what is happening in their particular sport, and input is provided on policies and regulations being implemented for all teams.

Start a common book project for Student-Athletes - Send information to the Athletes to ask them to read. Invite them to attend book readings and have them report back to Reyna.

Work closely with the advisors of the UCSO - Reyna will provide feedback to the committee on UCSO. She will contact the UCSO to find more about the organization and what it is all about.

Expand the current outreach programs in local schools- Francesca will work with Reyna on other ideas on how student-athletes can be more involved in these type projects.

Student-Athlete Exit surveys - Reyna is working with Steve Culver, Office of Academic Assessment to determine a more effective survey tool. Committee suggested having a more consistent survey for documentation purposes during personal interviews with supervising associates. Each supervising associate should be asking the same questions.

Explore how many minority and women student athletes are given opportunities to take leadership roles on their respective team – SAAC provides an excellent opportunity for minorities and women to take on a leadership role. Coaches and administrators need to continue to ensure that necessary steps are taken to have female and minority representation on this committee.

Pam concluded the meeting by asking the membership to **use email as an interactive tool to communicate ideas and recommendations.**

A draft report will be available during our next meeting (most likely February) which will be reviewed and approved for presentation to the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity.

The meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m.