

**Committee on Equal Opportunity in Athletics Annual Report
Academic Year 2013-2014**

**Submitted to the University Athletics Committee;
Dr. William T. Lewis, Sr., Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion; and the
Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
June 3, 2014**

The information contained in this report is based on a set of requirements determined by the NCAA, a set of plans produced by the campus community for the Department of Athletics to address those requirements (the Minority Opportunity Plan), and a set of recommendations from the Committee on Equal Opportunity in Athletics (CEOA) as a result of reviewing the Minority Opportunity Plan. The Virginia Tech Department of Athletics' Minority Opportunity Plan (MOP) is a combination of requirements and recommendations stemming from Virginia Tech's NCAA Division I Athletics Certification Self-Study.

NCAA Requirement 1: Institutional and Athletics Department Commitment – Development and maintenance of **written statements that address the issues of diversity.**

Department of Athletics Plan for Addressing NCAA Requirement 1:

The Sports Marketing and Promotions staff, the Athletics Video Unit, and Athletics Communications Office will develop and implement a promotional plan to increase the **prominence of the Principles of Community** and other **statements of commitment to diversity and inclusion** in Athletics publications, HokieSports.com, video presentations, and other public outlets, such as prominent links from the HokieSports.com webpage to the university's diversity webpages; use of Principles of Community video on scoreboards, in Hokie Club and alumni presentations, and similar highly visible activities.

Actions taken during this review period:

Principles of Community – Video spots (1:30 video) ran throughout football season on the video board either pre-game or at halftime. Will continue video spots during men's and women's basketball seasons. Here is a link to the video - <http://vimeo.com/38666882>

The Publications Unit within Athletics includes a **brief version of the Principles of Community** in all major publications (**media guides**) and the **full video on hokiesports.com**.

Strong Together Campaign – Virginia Tech Athletics' marketing and promotions team continues to work closely with the Office for Diversity and Inclusion, to support the campaign, including **public announcements during every men's basketball game**. Announcement included information on the Strong Together initiative.

Strong Together – Civil Rights Act video – Virginia Tech Athletics’ staff and student-athletes produced a short video featuring The Civil Rights Act of 1964 (50th anniversary). Student-athletes participating included Ben Emelogu, Men’s Basketball; Adam Smith, Men’s Basketball; Malik Mueller, Men’s Basketball; Katie DeTuro, Women’s Soccer; Jazmine Reeves, Women’s Soccer; Jared Allison, Men’s Track; Carol Kahoun, Women’s Tennis; Lindsey Owens, Volleyball; Kenedy McGrath, Volleyball. The department will continue the Strong Together theme in future short videos. Our next project will focus on Title IX in Athletics.

NCAA Requirement 2: Evaluation – Periodic **review of athletics department activities** for consistency with goals and objectives set forth in the institution’s and athletics department’s **written commitments to diversity**.

Department of Athletics Plan for Addressing NCAA Requirement 2:

Annual reviews of athletic department activities for consistency with goals and objectives set forth in the Principles of Community will be conducted in a manner consistent with other areas of internal review including: Annual reviews of Title IX compliance, the University Athletics Committee annual review, and Virginia Tech’s Internal Audit Department’s review of rules compliance. **The Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity is the appropriate partner for review of this area** due to its broad-based representation of Virginia Tech departments and constituencies invested in issues of diversity. Alternatively, an external consultant knowledgeable in NCAA Equity and Student-Athlete Well-Being issues and standards could conduct the periodic review.

Actions taken during this review period:

May 5, 2013 – As required by NCAA Certification Self-Study, Athletics presented the **Committee on Equal Opportunity in Athletics’ annual report** to the Commission.

October 17, 2013, **University Athletics Committee Meeting**, Bowman Room. Reyna Gilbert-Lowry, Assistant Athletics Director for Student Life, presented the **Office of Student Life’s Annual Report (attached)**.

April 23, 2014, **University Athletics Committee Meeting**, Bowman Room. Subcommittee reports were presented by Chairs of those subcommittees (Bridget Brugger McSorley, Director of Compliance and Athletics Title IX, worked closely with the subcommittee membership to provide documentation and information; **Equity and Student-Athlete Well Being Subcommittee Report attached**).

NCAA Requirement 3: Organization and Structure – Policies, and/or organization, and/or activities of the athletics program and its activities to help enhance diversity.

Department of Athletics Plan for Addressing NCAA Requirement 3:

- The **Assistant Athletics Director for Student Life** will work with the Office of **Multicultural Programs and Services**, the **Cranwell International Center**, and continue working with the **Women’s Center** to **develop appropriate diversity programmatic initiatives that enhance the multicultural perspectives of our student athletes.**
- The **Associate Director of Athletics for Administration** will work with the Office of **Multicultural Affairs and the Office of Equity and Access** to develop and annually implement **trainings on diversity** and legally significant equity topics (e.g. **sexual harassment, discriminatory harassment**) for all personnel within the Department of Athletics. The Department of Athletics will also **provide opportunities for coaches and athletics administrators** to become familiar with University resources, particularly in the areas of **financial aid, student services, and disability services.**
- The Department of Athletics will work to **improve communication between minority student-athletes, athletics administration, and the university community.**
- The Department of Athletics will **encourage and support participation in campus organizations such as the Black Faculty Caucus and events sponsored by similar organizations.**

Actions taken during this review period:

On-Going - **All teams are required** to take part in the **Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) Program**. MVP is a national leadership and violence prevention program that challenges thinking by countering mainstream messages about race, gender, sexual orientation, disability and violence. Virginia Tech uses the program to **educate, inspire, and empower men and women to prevent, interrupt, and respond to sexist abuse.** **The Assistant Athletics Director for Student Life works with** Jennifer Underwood, **The Women’s Center Outreach Coordinator to schedule training sessions for student-athletes.** Sessions are **facilitated by staff from the Department of Athletics, the Women’s Center, Virginia Tech Police and various other departments on campus.**

March 26, 2014 – Jennie Zabinsky, Director of Sports Nutrition for Athletics, and Reyna Gilbert-Lowry, Assistant Director of Athletics for Student Life, **Virginia Tech Women In Business Leadership Lecture Series** with Joyce Roche at The Inn.

March 26, 2014 – Jennie Zabinsky, Director of Sports Nutrition for Athletics, attended **Get Real: Reforming Your Relationship with Food and Body Through Reality** held in Burruss Auditorium. Keynote Speaker was Amanda Mellowspring, Certified Eating Disorder Registered Dietitian.

March 3 and 4, 2014 – National Consortium for Academic and Sports' **Teamwork Leadership Institute provided diversity training to faculty and staff** during three (3) half-day workshops to accommodate all department employees. The goals of the workshop were to increase the comfort level to talk about diversity; create an environment where negative incidents are less likely to occur; provide a safe, participatory and confidential environment to address and understand a wide variety of complex diversity issues; explore personal and institutional perspectives concerning diversity issues; and develop personal and institutional action plans that will consider and act upon the expressed statements related to the various dimensions of diversity.

February 19, 2014 - Virginia Tech Baseball Presents: Will Heining in Merryman Auditorium. Will Heining, will speak about being a student athlete and dealing with **anxiety and depression**. Heining played with University of Michigan Football for five years and graduated in 2011. He played defensive end, and was a four time Academic All-American. However with all of his success on/off the field he still dealt with serious **depression issues that affected him during his time in school**. Mr. Heining will tell his story, as well as talk about the importance of **seeking help when needed**. Below is an ESPN Outside the Lines article and video on Will's story.

http://espn.go.com/espn/otl/story/_/id/10335925/awareness-better-treatment-college-athletes-mental-health-begins-take-shape

February 10, 2014 - The Virginia Tech Department of Athletics hosted **Myron Rolle, former Florida State University football student-athlete and Rhodes Scholar**, in Colonial Hall, Squires Student Center. Mr. Rolle spoke to Virginia Tech student-athletes and coaches and delivered a talk designed to inspire all in attendance toward achievement through scholarship and service. **All student-athletes were expected to attend unless they were enrolled in a class that was meeting during that time period.** *Sports enthusiasts and intellectuals alike know Myron Laurent Rolle as a gifted athlete, scholar and philanthropist. As a football student-athlete at Florida State University he excelled on the field as a safety and three-year starter with All-American credentials in his final season. In 2009 he started the Myron L. Rolle Foundation dedicated to the support of health, wellness, educational and other charitable initiatives throughout the world that benefit children and families in need. To date, Myron is most widely known for receiving the prestigious Rhodes Scholarship, which enabled him to study at Oxford University in England for the 2009-10 academic year. After Myron completed his studies, he entered the 2010 NFL Draft and was drafted by the Tennessee Titans in the 6th round.*

Myron is only the third Rhodes Scholar to play in the NFL to date. Myron is currently attending medical school at Florida State University with the hopes of one day becoming a neurosurgeon.

September 19, 2013 - The LGBTA at Virginia Tech, in conjunction with Virginia Tech Athletics, presented "No Look Pass" in Squires, Brush Mountain Room. "**No Look Pass**" is the **documentary film about Emily Tay**, a senior basketball player at Harvard University who makes the transition from student athlete to playing professionally overseas. The film follows Emily's journey into adulthood and documents the various obstacles she encounters- coming out to a traditional family, culture shock, and falling in love with a US servicewoman constrained by "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."

August 23, 2013 – Virginia Tech Athletics' Office of Student Life invited **Hudson Taylor, former University of Maryland wrestler and founder of Athlete Ally**, to speak to all head coaches and senior staff. His program focuses on educating, encouraging and empowering athlete allies to combat homophobia, transphobia and anti-LGBT bullying in sports. *During his final season as an NCAA All-American and team wrestling captain at The University of Maryland, Hudson Taylor decided that his closest-held values as a leader and student-athlete required that he stand up and say something about the homophobia and transphobia he experienced in locker rooms and on playing fields across the nation. As a straight athlete, Hudson shares his journey of becoming an ally for the LGBT community and helps others learn how they can be an integral part of the solution. Now an assistant coach at Columbia University, Hudson knows first-hand the importance of working to create a campus that is a safe space for everyone and celebrating the things we have in common as people, students, athletes and as citizens caring about fair treatment for everyone.* Hudson also spoke to freshmen and transfer student-athletes that evening during New Student-Athlete Orientation.

NCAA Requirement 4: Enrollment – Goals of the institution for **enrollment of minority students and minority student-athletes**. *Please note: An identified goal by number for the enrollment of underrepresented students is illegal; however, the mission of the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at Virginia Tech is to attract, recruit, and enroll a highly qualified, talented, and diverse student body in a manner that supports the university's well-being.*

Department of Athletics Plan for Addressing NCAA Requirement 4:

The institution will continue its recruiting and retention strategies.

Actions taken during this review period:

No actions necessary.

NCAA Requirement 5: Comparison of Populations – Examination of the **student population and comparison of the percentage of minority student-athletes in all sports, by sport, to ensure that there are no signs of discrimination** revealed through the recruitment practices of the institution.

Department of Athletics Plan for Addressing NCAA Requirement 5:

- The Department of Athletics will maintain its commitment to diverse representation among student athletes in each sport as one among many important considerations in recruiting student athletes.
- The Department of Athletics will annually compile data regarding the racial/ethnic composition of students within the Department of Athletics.

Actions taken during this review period:

No actions necessary. The **NCAA Sports Sponsorship and Demographic Forms, Pre-Submission Report for Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University** attached.

NCAA Requirement 6: Participation in Governance and Decision-Making – Involvement of **minority student-athletes in the governance and decision-making processes of the athletics department**, and provision of leadership opportunities (e.g., participation on the student-athlete advisory committee) for minority student-athletes.

Department of Athletics Plan for Addressing NCAA Requirement 6:

The Department of Athletics will continue its current practices to ensure diverse representation of student-athletes involved in decision-making.

Actions taken during this review period:

Women's Tennis student-athlete Kelly Williford served as a member of the Committee on Equal Opportunity in Athletics.

The **Student-Athlete Advisory Committee** consists of **two representatives from each athletic team**. Currently there are 21 females and 23 males on the roster, with 7 being ethnic minorities.

NCAA Requirement 7: Employment Opportunities – Establishment of **goals for minority employment opportunities** in the athletics department and the **encouragement of promotion and hiring of minority coaches and administrators**.

Department of Athletics Plan for Addressing NCAA Requirement 7:

- Hiring Practices
 - The Department of Athletics will use conference attendees to build relationships with promising people of color in athletics

- The Department of Athletics will contact officers in professional organizations that serve people of color for referrals
- The Department of Athletics will contact minority caucuses or sub-committees of athletics organizations to ask for referrals
- The Department of Athletics will contact leading minority coaches (and athletics faculty) to ask for candidate referrals
- The Department of Athletics will use the Black Coaches and Administrators and other appropriate associations or NCAA minority coach development programs to identify potential candidates for positions
- The Department of Athletics will market positions (current and future) at conferences and workshops
- The Department of Athletics will develop relationships with administrative/professional faculty at minority serving institutions who may assist in providing candidate referrals or nominations for the professional faculty positions in athletics
- The Department of Athletics will achieve greater ethnic and gender diversity of the staff within the department to enhance the excellence of the department and provide role models for student athletes (particularly women and people of color)
- Salaries
 - The Department of Athletics will review salaries of Athletics Department personnel to ensure that salaries for minority personnel are competitive
- Demographics
 - The Department of Athletics will annually compile data regarding the racial/ethnic composition of personnel within the Department of Athletics. Data will be used to examine trends
- Creating Interest in Intercollegiate Athletics Careers
 - The Department of Athletics will speak to current student employees/volunteers, on-campus minority student organizations, and related academic programs on campus to promote careers in athletics to diverse student populations
 - The Department of Athletics will create internship opportunities for student-athletes who wish to explore careers in athletics administration (particularly women and people of color)

Hiring Practices:

The Department of Athletics has been proactive in their approach in diversifying applicant pools in a number of ways. First, **searches have been active and the numbers of requests for search exemptions have been reduced.** Second, searches have been **national in scope and the postings have been advertised on various diversity websites, as recommended by University Human Resources.** Third, more **minority candidates are**

being considered in the interview pools though the number of minorities being offered positions remains low.

Salaries and Demographics:

The Department of Athletics compiles data regarding the racial/ethnic composition and salaries of personnel to examine trends in recruitment, selection, retention, equity and opportunities for development. **A review of salaries in athletics does not indicate a huge disparity that can be directly attributed to race or ethnicity; however, attention should be given to salaries at the director level and higher where few minorities exist to ensure salary disparities among functional roles or types of sports do not adversely affect minorities or women.**

Creating Interest in Intercollegiate Athletics Careers:

- The Department of Athletics will speak to current student employees/volunteers, on-campus minority student organizations, and related academic programs on campus to promote careers in athletics to diverse student populations.
 - The Office of Student Life has reached out to the Sports Business Club, for the second year in a row, to obtain interns. The Sports Business Club is a student-founded, student-run club that focuses on providing students with the opportunity to learn more about the sports business industry. This year three members of the sports business club served as interns for the Office of Student Life.
- The Department of Athletics will create internship opportunities for student-athletes who wish to explore careers in athletics administration (particularly women and people of color).
 - Softball student-athletes Jessica McNamara and Danielle Anderson have been selected to attend the 2014 Career in Sports Forum at the NCAA National Office in Indianapolis, IN June 5-8, 2014. McNamara and Anderson were chosen out of more than 1,100 applicants. The Career in Sports Forum (CSF) is an annual educational forum hosted by the NCAA that brings together 200 selected student-athletes for four days to learn and explore potential careers in sports, with the primary focus on intercollegiate athletics. The CSF is designed to assist student-athletes in charting their career paths, to give them the opportunity to network and to learn from current athletics professionals. This year the Athletics Office of Student Life nominated seven student-athletes. In 2011, women's swimmer Cara Murnan and track and field member Keith Ricks attended the forum. All fees including registration, airfare, transportation and meals will be covered for this event.

- By attending the Career in Sports Forum, participants will:
 - Consider how personal values intersect with career opportunities
 - Better understand how behavioral styles impact individual effectiveness
 - Develop actionable plans for personal growth and development
 - Gain an accurate view of the role of the intercollegiate coach or athletics administrator
 - Benefit from the opportunity to network with key decision-makers on campus and at the NCAA

NCAA Requirement 8: Programs and Activities – Establishment of **programs that address the needs and issues affecting minority student-athletes.**

Department of Athletics Plan for Addressing NCAA Requirement 8:

- Programmatic Initiatives
 - The Assistant Athletics Director for Student Life will work with the **Office of Multicultural Programs and Services**, the **Cranwell International Center**, and continue working with the **Women’s Center** to **develop appropriate diversity programmatic initiatives that enhance the multicultural perspectives of our student-athletes.**
 - The Office of Student Life will **increase awareness of on-campus programs intended to improve the experience of minority students.**
- Exit Surveys
 - The Office of Student Life will use the **exit survey more effectively to evaluate and improve programming.** The survey is a potentially useful tool for athletics administration to improve activities regarding minority issues.
 - The Department of Athletics should **utilize expertise from areas outside of athletics, specifically the Center for Survey Research, to improve the survey.** Survey design and implementation should consider bias related to placement of minority issues within the survey, issues of anonymity and confidentiality related to response rate, overall response rate, length of survey, and other issues influencing the quality of data collected.
 - The Office of Student Life will **disseminate results of the exit survey in key areas to groups beyond the University Athletics Committee.** For example, results on minority issues questions should be shared with the Office of Multicultural Affairs [now the Office of Equity and Inclusion].
 - The **Office of Student Life will annually survey minority student-athletes to gain insight into their experiences as well as issues and concerns associated with that experience.**

Programmatic Initiatives - Actions taken during this review period:

Please refer to Page 4 in the 2012-2013 Office of Student Life Annual Report (attached).

Exit Surveys – Actions taken during this review period:

Seventy-three (73) student-athletes completed the 2012-2013 Exit Survey.

- 87% were aware of the services offered by the Office of Student Life (OSL).
- 67% reported taking advantage of the programs/services offered by the OSL.
- 61% reported being encouraged by their coaches to participate in OSL programs.
- 12% sought advice about graduate/professional life from the OSL staff.
- 26% reported learning career development skills from career development programming offered by the OSL.