

Minutes

Committee on Equal Opportunity in Athletics

November 17, 2014, Noon to 1:15 p.m.

Members Present: Aaron Bond, Bridget Brugger McSorley, Jed Castro, Alicia Cohen, Reyna Gilbert-Lowry, Derek Gwinn, Chris Helms, Pam Linkous, Pat Mason, Karisa Moore, Carol Robertson, Joe Tront, Kelly Williford, Jennie Zabinsky

Absent: Terry Swecker

Special Guest: Tim Parker

Pam Linkous **called the meeting to order** at 12:02 p.m. Pam thanked the membership for coming out to the first meeting of the academic year and especially welcomed the new members.

Introductions of membership were made.

Charge was given by Pam. Pam indicated that the purpose of the committee will most likely change over the upcoming year due to **implementation of Institutional Performance Program (IPP) which will replace the NCAA certification process.**

Update on NCAA Division I Institutional Performance Program

Tim Parker spoke to the membership about the **IPP and how it will replace the NCAA certification process.** Parker explained he was in Greensboro a few weeks ago in a Compliance member's ACC meeting and received an update from members of the NCAA's IPP committee via conference call.

All Division I institutions are **expected to continue to make progress on any plans for improvement made/submitted during the most recently completed self-study.** The new program is designed to function as an on-going review of an athletics program; more of a report

card than a certification/accreditation. No self-study will be created; rather, all institutions will regularly review data in four areas of focus: **Academics, Fiscal Management, Inclusion (diversity and gender), and the Student-Athlete Experience**. The new program will require an annual review / sign-off by the President and the Athletics Director (and perhaps others). If an institution **falls below an identified benchmark** in one of the four key areas, it must then take action to improve. Corrective actions may include: developing a remediation plan, hosting a "peer expert" or visit, or attending an in-person hearing with the IPP Committee.

Parker went on to explain relative to this Committee, in the area of inclusion, the IPP Committee has **recommended every Division I institution's athletics department complete a one-in-four-year gender equity review and a one-in-four-year inclusion review** (which do not need to concur concurrently). IPP believes this recommendation aligns with the NCAA core values and the purpose of the IPP to enhance the student-athlete experience.

Review of 2014-2015 Initiatives

Reyna Gilbert-Lowry updated the membership on diversity initiatives from January 2014 to current (attached).

Pam asked the membership to provide recommendations on future initiatives for Athletics, including, ideas from other schools, departments, etc.

InclusiveVT and Recommendations / Suggestions for Future Initiatives

Pam mentioned that InclusiveVT may be the **basis for committee discussion and planning in the future**, depending on what direction certification/IPP moves.

Derek Gwinn then began his presentation as Athletics' representative to InclusiveVT. Derek provided the committee with InclusiveVT's background, which is a new organizational structure **to advance and revitalize inclusion and diversity efforts and to expand and enhance its commitment to the values expressed in the Principles of Community**. The initiative will be led by a newly established President's Inclusion and Diversity Executive Council. The Council is chaired by President Sands, and will offer **guidance, support, and be accountable for advancing inclusion and diversity efforts throughout the University**.

The Council has asked each vice president, dean, and senior leader to engage their faculty, students, and staff in identifying **three initiatives to focus attention**. The initiatives **should be based on Virginia Tech's Diversity Strategic Plan and the four areas in the inclusive excellence framework: Access and Success, Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations, Education and Scholarship, and Institutional Infrastructure**. Initiatives should be designed to address and advance the needs of the unit's particular area.

Our three initiatives need to be **completed online by November 21 for presentation to the Council at their December 1 meeting.**

Derek recommended to the membership that our three initiatives **align with the committee's annual report.** Tentative initiatives are: **Programs and Activities, Organization and Structure, and Promotion of Institutional and Athletics Department Commitment Among the Community.**

Derek indicated, based on the committee's annual report, he believed our **exit surveys** with our student-athletes might fit well under one of the initiatives, along with any way we can use **multi-media** (HokieVision and hokiesports.com) to reach out to the community on diversity and inclusion. He also suggested using the **programs we offer to our student-athletes and personnel on diversity and inclusion topics** through speakers and other programs.

Karisa Moore asked if our exit surveys are completed for personnel or student-athletes. Derek responded he is suggesting using the student-athlete surveys since there are no exit interviews for personnel.

Reyna stated we **currently survey our seniors.** The survey has 60 questions. Students are asked about their **experience with the student-athlete development office, strength and conditioning, sports nutrition, compliance, coaches, academics, etc.**

Pam asked if there is a **diversity element in the survey.** Reyna responded that she actually met with **LGBTQ Assistant Director, Mark Smiley, for input.** She wants to provide more information and training to our student-athletes and coaching staff on LGBTQ issues. Reyna asked the membership to let her know of ideas/changes and will gladly update survey as necessary. Last summer she visited with representatives from the Office of Assessment and Evaluation to ask for feedback on our survey.

Pam indicated that we have been asked by members of the University Athletics Committee to make sure we follow up on our surveys. Collecting and information is one step, but publicizing outcomes is necessary.

Joe Tront indicated he was at the national **Faculty Athletics Representatives Association meeting** last week and one of the sessions was on **student-athlete surveys.** He indicated everyone at the session was struggling with getting high response rates. He said the **Naval Academy has 1200 student-athletes in 31 sports and they have a 99% response rate because their student-athletes are instructed it is mandatory to respond.** He said they also have an exit interview for anyone who is leaving and the student sits down with the FAR before they leave. He said no one seems to have a magic bullet to collecting the information from student-athletes. Reyna said we have done better with the survey, but not necessarily with the exit interview process. Joe said that on the academic side of campus, they've gotten away from a paper survey where the students felt obligated to complete before leaving class, to an

electronic survey where they either have something very negative to say or something very positive. **Pat Mason suggested the Athletic Director make it mandatory for head coaches to ensure surveys are being returned. This would definitely increase survey participation.**

Committee then discussed the InitiativeVT program and expectations.

Alicia Cohen and Aaron Bond added their input on the InitiativeVT program from the Commission meeting they attended earlier. They recommended we **indicate specific items that are measurable.** They do not need to be brand new initiatives, but need to **show that the initiatives will make a difference.** Need to see what is working in different places across the university community. Aaron highly recommended we **have really concrete initiatives, or the Council will bounce them back. The reason the University has not been very successful in the past is because we have not held units accountable.** Initiatives have to be very intentional and they have to make a difference.

Derek will send our spreadsheet of initiatives to Aaron and Alicia for review and suggestions before submitting it to the Council.

Bridget asked if we can develop our three initiatives on one dimension or if we have to spread the three initiatives over several of the dimensions. Alicia said we can use one dimension for our three initiatives. Alicia offered that if we decide to go with an **LGBTQ presentation initiative, focus on that, with one speaker/one program to increase awareness and understanding of what it is to be an athlete or coach, etc.** Alicia said we can also continue our initiatives from year to year.

Kelly Williford suggested we **update our survey on diversity/inclusion and send it out to all the athletes with a deadline of when it is to be completed, along with polling to ensure surveys are being completed.** Suggested we **survey freshman about what's going on in their dorms, LGBTQ issues (does not hear much about it).**

Jennie Zabinsky said that she wants to add a **diversity element to Training Table,** adding cuisine from other cultures with **information about the food and the culture.** Committee thought this would be a good idea as an initiative. Jennie also offered centering the cuisine around specified months.

Jed Castro offered that it is important to share diversity information through HokieVision but wondered if there are **other ways to get information out,** maybe through the coaches' shows or other multi-media areas throughout the university. Pam sked if IMG could be a resource to show "It's on Us" and other campaign videos during Bill Roth's show or other Virginia Tech spots. Chris Helms offered that we can always give coaches a script to include in their spots, such as Coach Mason on radio shows. Also on Monday nights, coaches **could capitalize on their spots and push diversity initiatives/elements.** Joe Tront also indicated that are **other video outlets on campus.** The new engineering building has numerous video screens (no audio), and

it would be a way to get information out about diversity initiatives from Athletics. Parker suggested the **video screen in Burruss**. Alicia agreed that this would be a **good idea to reach sport fans and non-sport fans**. Pam added that we have been diligent about reinforcing the **Principles of Community** on our video boards and media guides, programs, etc.

Karisa Moore stated as the affirmative action person for the University, we do have to document and memorialize the things we do as a university. She said we do not do a good job about praising ourselves for the good things we do. She said she is **amazed at the volume of initiatives Athletics undertakes**.

Chris Helms suggested we use **Hokie Village as a resource to showcase diversity**. Reyna asked if we are using Hokie Village during basketball season. Jed said he did not think we were. Aaron said he was impressed with Hokie Village and really enjoyed it, very family friendly. The **kids enjoyed interacting with the soccer players**, etc.

Carol Robertson suggested we think about possibly **using the rubber wristbands to promote diversity**. The student-athletes love them. May be a small token to promote a program or initiative.

Joe added that during his FAR national meeting, the **University of North Carolina – Greensboro** has developed **training modules on line called MyPlaybook**, which is focused on **sexual assault**. UNC-G is looking for people to pilot test the modules. Reyna said we are involved and have already **looked at drug / alcohol / substance abuse in the fall**. Pam suggested **sending out our "It's On Us" campaign to some other University websites** (HR, etc.).

Pam asked the membership to follow up with her with any additional recommendations. Advised the committee that minutes would come out for review within a few days. **Committee's next meeting will be in February.**

Meeting adjourned at 12:52 p.m.

After the CEOA meeting, Bridget, Reyna, Derek, and Pam met to work on the three initiatives for the InclusiveVT project.

Committee on Equal Opportunity in Athletics

Virginia Tech Athletics shall promote Virginia Tech's Principles of Community, including an atmosphere of respect for and sensitivity to the dignity of every person. It is the policy of the department to refrain from discrimination with respect to its governance policies, educational programs, activities and employment policies, including on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law.

As a core value, the department of Athletics, believes in and is committed to diversity, inclusion, and gender equity among its student-athletes, coaches, and administrators. We seek to establish and maintain an inclusive culture that fosters equitable participation for student-athletes and career opportunities for coaches and administrators from diverse backgrounds. Diversity and inclusion improves the learning environment for all student-athletes and enhances excellence within the department.

This committee will provide or enable programming and education, which sustains foundations of a diverse and inclusive culture across dimensions of diversity including, but not limited to, age, race, sex, class, national origin, creed, educational background, disability, gender expression, geographical location, income, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, and work experience.

Purpose

The Committee on Equal Opportunity in Athletics (the Committee) was created to fulfill a requirement stemming from the University's NCAA Division I Athletics Certification Self-Study Process (the Certification). This requirement states that Virginia Tech is required to conduct a "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." By forming the Committee, the Department of Athletics is ensuring that the requirement is met through periodic, comprehensive, and documented reviews. This kind of in-depth evaluation exceeds the Certification requirement by including a broadly representative group of campus citizens in the review process.

The purpose of the Committee is to evaluate and update the department's primary written commitment to diversity: the Department of Athletics' Minority Opportunity Plan. The Committee will use the University's mission statement, the Department of Athletics' mission statement, the Principles of Community, appropriate portions of the Virginia Tech NCAA Division I Athletics Certification Self-Study Report, and other relevant University policies and procedures as a basis for evaluation. The Committee will annually report findings to the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity (CEOD) and to the Director of Athletics. Both parties will have an opportunity to review the report and provide comments or recommendations. The Committee will consider all comments and recommendations and will finalize the report accordingly. A final report will be provided annually to the CEOD, the Director of Athletics, the Office for Equal Opportunity, and the University Athletics Committee.

Membership (2014-2015)

Bridget Brugger McSorley, Director, Compliance and Athletics Title IX
Reyna Gilbert-Lowry, Senior Associate AD, Student-Athlete Development
Chris Helms, Senior Associate AD, Administration and Sports Programs
Pam Linkous, Senior Director, Human Resources (Chair)

Jed Castro, Associate Director, HokieVision (2013-15)
Derek Gwinn, Assistant AD, Compliance, and representative to Inclusive VT Initiative (2014-16)
Pat Mason, Head Baseball Coach (2013-15)
Carol Robertson, Head Women's Golf Coach (2013-15)
Kelly Williford, Women's Tennis student-athlete (representative from Student-Athlete Advisory Committee) (2013-15)
Jennie Zabinsky, Senior Director, Sports Nutrition (2014-16)

Aaron Bond, Representative from Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity (2014)
Michele Deramo, Representative from the Diversity Development Institute in University Organizational and Professional Development/Human Resources (2013)
Karisa Moore, Representative from Affirmative Action and Employment Equity; University Human Resources (2013)
Terry Swecker, Representative from the University Athletic Committee (2013)
Joe Tront, Faculty Athletics Representative (2014)

Diversity Initiatives August 2013-2014

January 14, 2014, Advancing Diversity

Senior Director of Human Resources and Diversity Initiatives, attended the Advancing Diversity Conference, hosted by AdvanceVT and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. Terrell Strayhorn, who received a doctorate in higher education from Virginia Tech in 2005, was the event's keynote speaker. Strayhorn currently serves as associate professor of higher education and director of the Center for Inclusion, Diversity, and Academic Success at The Ohio State University, where he is also attending law school. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Virginia. "Diversity requires intentional efforts and resources," said Strayhorn. "It should be viewed in the same way that we invest in other aspects of higher education, such as teaching and learning, research, faculty, staff, and students." Strayhorn challenged participants to change their understanding of diversity, looking beyond just outward signs of diversity, and to use community to foster an environment of inclusion. "All people want to belong, want to feel wanted, want to feel significant," said Strayhorn. Breakout sessions were held on topics such as: enhancing graduate program diversity; communicating health information to diverse audiences; the scholarship of diversity; COACHE survey findings; supporting veterans on campus; Graduate School diversity scholars; and 50 years of civil rights in America.

March 3-4, 2014, National Consortium for Academics and Sports (Teamwork Leadership Institute)

On March 3 and 4, Athletics contracted with the National Consortium for Academics and Sports to host Teamwork Leadership Institute (TLI). TLI fosters a safe environment for participants to discuss issues of race, ethnicity, and gender. The department hosted three sessions for faculty and staff (those staff who work closely with student-athletes) over the two-day period. Invitees were expected to attend one of the sessions in its entirety. Seventy-six faculty/staff participated unless they were excused for a prior commitment (competition).

March 10, 2014, Senior Management Staff Meeting

During the first meeting of the Senior Management Staff (consisting of 32 staff), under new direction of Whit Babcock, the athletics director presented an ESPN video featuring Richie Parker, who overcame being born without arms to become a chassis and body component designer for Hendrick Motorsports. The athletics director plans to include a diversity element in each senior management staff meeting.

March 12, 2014, Civil Rights Act of 1964 – STRONG TOGETHER Video Project

Athletics' production of the first in a series of diversity videos was released on March 12. In honor of the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, department staff produced a short-video. Student-athletes were involved in the process, along with head football coach, Frank Beamer, and athletics director, Whit Babcock. The department plans to produce 3-4 videos each year which are relevant to diversity, such as, Title IX, LGBTQ, Transgender Athletes, etc. The Civil Rights video was featured prominently on the hokiesports.com webpage, Virginia Tech Athletics Facebook page, and with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion's webpage.

March 26, 2014, Virginia Tech Women in Business Leadership Lecture Series: Joyce Roche. Two members of Athletics administration attended Dr. Roche's lecture. As a trailblazer in the corporate world for 25 years, Joyce Roché mentored women by encouraging them to find their voices and take bold career risks to excel. Her vision for empowered businesswomen carried over into her work on behalf of girls when in 2000, she assumed the role of President and CEO of Girls Inc., the nonprofit organization whose mission is to inspire all girls to be strong, smart, and bold. Before joining Girls Inc., Ms. Roché served as President and Chief Operating Officer of Carson Products Company, and Vice President of Global Marketing at Avon Products, Inc. During her tenure at Carson, an African American personal care company, sales increased over 130 percent. While at Avon, Ms. Roché broke new ground, becoming Avon's first African American female vice president, the first African American vice president of marketing, and the company's first vice president of global marketing.

March 26, 2014, Get Real: Reforming Your Relationship with Food and Body Through Reality (Burruss Hall Auditorium). Two members of Athletics administration attended. Body Matters Project is a campus-wide program to promote positive body image and overall physical and emotional wellness at Virginia Tech. Numerous campus departments, student organizations, and community groups participate in the Body Matters Project. The project focuses on preventing body issues and eating disorders with a realistic approach to nutrition, exercise, self-esteem, and overall wellness.

August 8 and 9, 2014 - Janet Judge, a nationally-known authority on Title IX, spoke on Social Media, Leadership, and Branding (to all student-athletes) on August 8; Title IX, Social Media, Due Process, Team Rules, and Other Areas of Risk in College Sports (to entire staff) on August 8; Key Issues in Collegiate Sports: Current Litigation, NCAA Governance, Team Rules, and Coaching Discipline on August 9 (Athletics Leadership Teams). Judge used real-life examples to discuss the risks and implications associated with social media and the underlying behaviors students and college athletes share online. She also plans to talk about alcohol and drug use, hazing, leadership and sports ethics. Judge is president of Sports Law Associates LLC where she concentrates her practice on intercollegiate sports and employment law counseling. Judge is also an NCAA grant speaker and a trainer at Division I, II, and III colleges and universities. She was a three-sport Division I athlete and athletic administrator.

August 23, 2014 - Richie Parker, engineer with Hendrick Motorsports, spoke to our football team and coaching staff regarding his personal challenges and achievements. Richie was born with bilateral amelia, a non-genetic birth defect in which limbs aren't formed. Richie is employed as an engineer (chassis and body components) for Hendrick Motorsports, NASCAR's most winning organization.

August 28, 2014 - George Raveling, Nike's Director of International Basketball spoke with our men's basketball student-athletes and staff. Mr. Raveling is a former college men's basketball coach and FOX Sports Net color commentator. He was the head coach at Washington State University (1972–1983), the University of Iowa (1983–1986), and the University of Southern California (1987–1994). The Washington, D.C. native attended St. Michael's High School in Hoban Heights, Pennsylvania, and was an assistant coach at his alma mater Villanova, and at

Maryland. In 2013, he received the John W. Bunn Lifetime Achievement Award by the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

August-September 2014 - Virginia Tech Athletics assisted the Virginia Tech Office of Procurement in their efforts to support Small, Women, and Minority (SWaM) owned businesses. A representative from the athletics business office met with the Assistant Director for Supplier Diversity in the Virginia Tech Procurement Office, to discuss the office's initiatives and programs involving SWaM vendors. They also developed a strategy for contacting local SWaM companies, encouraging them to reapply for their SWaM certification. The business office representative then contacted five New River Valley Catering companies- Professional Catering, Custom Catering, Due South Barbeque, Blue Ridge Mountain Catering, and Champs Sports Bar- to check and see if they had an opportunity to start their SWaM recertification process. Three out of the five companies said they had already submitted their paperwork and were waiting for it to be processed by the State of Virginia. The other two companies (who are under the same ownership) did not respond to our inquiries.

September 2014 – Submission of an application on behalf of Virginia Tech from Athletics (Student-Athlete Development and Human Resources) for the Minority Opportunities Athletic Association (MOAA) Award for Diversity and Inclusion. This award represents a partnership formed by the NCAA and MOAA to recognize and celebrate initiatives, policies and practices of institutions, athletics departments, and/or conference offices that foster diversity and inclusion within the intercollegiate athletics community. Successful nominees will demonstrate their contribution to diversity and inclusion in many forms including community service, professional development, hiring practices and/or programming activities that enhance opportunities for people of diverse cultures, backgrounds and experiences.

September 9, 2014 – As part of their educational series, Student-Athlete Development in Athletics sponsored a visit from Dr. Tim Elmore. Dr. Elmore spoke with a select group of leaders from our student-athlete body (50 student-athletes). This complies with our on-going association with Growing Leaders, Inc. (Dr. Elmore's non-profit organization) and our internal work with student-athlete development.

September 10, 2014 – Summit on Student-Athlete Success sponsored by the Office of the Provost and the Department of Athletics. The theme was "Mental Health and the New Millennial Student" with Dr. Chris Carr, Dr. Gary Bennett, and Dr. Tim Elmore. Dr. Tim Elmore presented Beyond Artificial Maturity and Understanding and Connecting with Generation Y <http://growingleaders.com/tim-elmore/> <http://growingleaders.com/blog/about>; Dr. Chris Carr and Dr. Gary Bennett highlighted the mental health challenges facing student athletes, as well as University mental health and support resources available for all students.

<http://www.stvincent.org/St-Vincent-Sports-Performance/Performance-Psychology> ;

http://www.hokiesports.com/staff/bennett_gary.html

September 15-17, 2014 - MVP (Mentors in Violence Prevention) training for freshmen student-athletes. 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.

September 29, 2014 – Two members of the Senior Management Staff attended the President’s Open Forum on Inclusion and Diversity at The Inn.

October 2014 – It’s On Us White House initiative. Based upon this startling statistic and others, President Obama created a White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault. The NCAA, the USOC, and the Atlantic Coast Conference have signed on to be a part of this initiative. Institutions like ours will support this initiative to increase awareness regarding sexual assaults on college campuses. Athletics will support this initiative by: Student-athlete-led short video messages; requests to take the It’s On Us Pledge; public address announcements at various home sporting events; and a social media campaign aimed at getting the word out on social responsibility.

October 11, 2014 - Jerry Acuff has been consulting and speaking extensively on the issues of sales and marketing excellence for over 20 years. Mr. Acuff spoke with our men’s basketball student-athletes and coaching staff on goal setting and relationship building. In his twenty-year career at Hoechst-Roussel Pharmaceuticals, Jerry was Salesman of the Year twice and District Manager of the Year three times. Jerry founded Delta Point, Inc. based on his desire to share his knowledge and expertise, building on his experiences in sales that led to his position as Vice President and General Manager of Hoechst-Roussel Pharmaceuticals. A prolific reader who is always learning, Jerry shares his insights in his three bestselling books: *The Relationship Edge*, *The Relationship Edge in Business* and *Stop Acting Like a Seller and Start Thinking Like a Buyer*. Business students in 11 colleges and universities use his book *The Relationship Edge in Business* as part of their marketing curriculum.

October 12-13, 2014 - Hokie Women Connect Initiative. Created in the fall of 2014, the goal of this initiative is to create purposeful interactions between veteran administrators and talented up-and-coming women in the department which enhance career satisfaction and foster opportunities for career advancement. Female members of the department will meet on a monthly basis to discuss topics such as leadership, financial management, and personal safety and also engage in social events to enhance camaraderie. The kick-off event provided four mentors and mentees an opportunity to attend the NACWAA Convention in Louisville, KY on

October 12-13, 2014. Registration fees and travel costs were covered for all Women Connect Mentoring Initiative participants.