

**PROVOST'S ATHLETICS OVERSIGHT COUNCIL**

Academic Integrity & NCAA Rules

Compliance Institutional Control

Student-Athlete Welfare

**PAOC Meeting Minutes of September 2, 2020  
Virtual Teams Meeting**

***In attendance***

Tariq Bradford, Austin Brown, Bret Cowley, Mindy Debruce, Patrick Devine, Mark Forehand, Mark Geil, Monty Horn, Amani Johnson, Randy Kennedy, Gloria Laureano, Daniel Niederjohn, Milton Overton, Wes Rhea, Richard Ruhala, Kathy Schwaig, Tiffany Sornpao, Patrick Vickers, Mark Warner, Jessica Watkins, Lisa Bauer

***Welcome & Introductions***

Dr. Dan Niederjohn, Chair, opened the meeting at 12:31 p.m. He welcomed the committee, announced the new bylaws, and thanked Dr. Devine for previous service as chair.

Dr. Kathy Schwaig, Provost, welcomed the committee and expressed appreciation to Drs. Niederjohn and Devine for their service and commitment to our athletes. The recent change in the committee name was a request from the President due to the academic focus of the committee. Dr. Schwaig welcomed Patrick Vickers and thanked him for his continuing role as alumni representative and his support and enthusiasm for KSU.

***Introduction of Student Athletes***

*Tariq Bradford (SGA President, former athlete), Amani Johnson (junior Women's basketball player, SGA rep, Co-President SAAC), Tiffany Sornpao (women's soccer, Co-President SAAC), Jessica Watkins (women's track and field, VP SGA), Monty Horn (baseball, Co-VP SAAC)*

***State of the Department***

Milton Overton, Director of Athletics expressed appreciation to committee members and Provost Schwaig and reported on Academic Performance. KSU had 51 spring student athlete graduates, 78% earning a 3.0 or higher. For the first time, 16 of 16 teams earned a 3.0 or higher and 73 of our student athletes had a perfect 4.0. Over 7 years, graduation rates increased by 33%.

He shared thoughts on changes to college sports since covid and the impact to KSU. Due to the economic situation, we must generate additional sources of income, operate more efficiently, and streamline processes to get long term sustainability. Although disappointed in cancellation of fall sports, our athletes still can showcase their talents in the spring. The Athletic Department is incorporating NCAA required testing protocols and adjusting workout schedules to keep our athletes safe. They are still waiting to find out if winter sports will start in November.

Mr. Overton shared some initiatives coming from our student athletes and SAAC including social justice, a voting initiative, diversity and inclusion, and anti-racism.

***Student-Athlete Welfare and SAAC Update***

Mindy Debruce, Senior Woman Administrator, reported that SAAC continued to meet over the summer and established sub-committees to include engagement, events, diversity and inclusion, and mental health. Ms. Debruce is focused on getting information, particularly mental health resources, to the student athletes. SAAC representatives, Amani Johnson and Tiffany Sornpao provided additional information about the sub-committees and how they are working to get more students to sporting events.

### ***Compliance Report and NCAA News***

Bret Cowley, Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance, reported that fall sport student-athletes (Cross Country, Football, Soccer, Volleyball) may receive an additional season of competition and an extension of their 5-year clock due to COVID-19. However, athletically related financial aid is not guaranteed for additional years of eligibility. The KSUAA remains committed to helping student-athletes obtain their first baccalaureate degree. If student-athletes do return for additional years of eligibility, they are still required to enroll full-time.

The NCAA is in the planning stages of assessing conducting fall sport championships in the spring of 2021. Uncertainty of conducting the championships and the likelihood of them being conducted at a reduced scale are the key factors of why the NCAA has already granted additional eligibility to fall sports, even if these sports compete in the spring.

Student-athletes that are receiving athletically related financial aid and choose to opt out of participating during the 2020-21 academic year due to concerns about contracting COVID-19, shall not have their athletically related financial aid reduced or canceled as a result of that decision. However, athletically related financial aid can still be cancelled, reduced, or non-renewed per the stipulations listed in the athletics financial aid agreement.

The health and safety of students is of utmost importance. NCAA has provided some guidelines regarding the return of student athletes and the Sports Medicine Staff and Trainers are working hard to put all in place.

### ***Student Athlete Academic Update***

Randy Kennedy, Director of Student-Athlete Success Services and Assistant Athletic Director, echoed Mr. Overton's comments on academic accomplishments and appreciates the leadership of our student athletes, SAACS and SGA. Most eligibility issues were resolved over the summer and the certification process through the compliance office is complete.

Dr. Kennedy shared some initiatives to improve student success and some of the challenges facing them for the upcoming spring semester. With changes to NCAA eligibility, students have many questions and concerns.

In response to a question, Dr. Kennedy shared that 60% of our student athletes are 80% online or higher. Discussion followed to include comments from our student athlete representatives about the challenges they face with online classes. These include organization and lack of motivation from not going to campus, not seeing professors, and seeing assignments piling up.

### ***FAR and Admission Advisory Committee Update***

Dan Niederjohn, Faculty Athletics Representative, reported that Spring End-of-Season Surveys

provided for consistent positive scores in all areas. They may not be as useful this year when comparing to previous years due to the unusual circumstances. Of interest is that students do feel like they have an opportunity to voice their concerns. 86% responded yes, compared to 82% last year. Also noted, was that some student athletes felt disappointed that they did not get recognized on Senior Day and graduation.

There have been changes in admissions testing requirements and the Admission Advisory Committee reviewed athletes from several teams that did not meet all academic requirements. Issues have been resolved and the committee will continue this work and keep coaches apprised.

Discussion followed about recognizing the seniors and utilizing our student athlete leaders to assist in finding ways to accomplish.

**Other Business:**

Next meeting is November 4, 2020.

Dr. Niederjohn encouraged student athletes to reach out to the PAOC or to him individually with any concerns or suggestions to improve their experience as student athletes, especially under the circumstances. Ms. Laureano shared her appreciation to be included and will continue efforts to help our students be more successful. Mr. Overton reiterated the extraordinary engagement of the student athletes, including SACS, SGA and other campus initiatives. Dr. Schwaig also expressed appreciation for our incredible student athletes and their commitment to the institution, their integrity, their passion, and their engagement.

The meeting adjourned at 1:29 p.m.

The Provost's Athletic Advisory Council approved the September 2, 2020 minutes on February 3, 2021.

DocuSigned by:  
*Lisa Bauer* February 10, 2021

427C8BB482624E7...  
Lisa Bauer

DocuSigned by:  
*Dan Niederjohn* February 10, 2021

B387E9F5E70F429...  
Dr. Dan Niederjohn, Chair