

**PROVOST'S ATHLETICS OVERSIGHT COUNCIL**

**Academic Integrity & NCAA Rules**

**Compliance Institutional Control**

**Student-Athlete Welfare**

**PAOC Meeting Feb. 6, 2025**

**12:30-1:45PM**

**Location: ALC4103**

In Attendance: Lisa Bauer, Patrick Vickers, Matthew Iwanski, Randy Kennedy, Milton Overton, Daniel Niederjohn, Austin Brown, Selena Patterson, Tamica Jones, AJ Johnson, Ronald Briggs, Megan Stoltzfus, Coach Jerry Mack

Dan Niederjohn, Chair and Faculty Athletics Representative, opened the meeting at 12:32 p.m. and made introductions. Minutes of November 7, 2024 PAOC meeting were approved.

Coach Jerry Mack, Head Football Coach, shared his background and his philosophy on coaching. Coming from a two parent (college graduates) home, he saw how sports affected them, and it got him interested. Married with a child when he went for a master's degree, he learned how doing both academics and sports can influence your life. He sought the KSU position with Milton for some time and shortly after starting on Dec 1, 2024, the transfer portal opened. It has been an exciting time.

He praised KSU for the open arms the university had for him and his staff. The young people he has brought on campus are impressed; this is helpful from a recruiting standpoint. Because of how they feel when they get on campus, it has allowed them to move quickly. He and his coaching team are looking for athletes who place a premium on education. He wants to make sure that they understand that we will make this the best experience possible for them.

When he arrived, he was asked to address two things, nutrition and recovery. With regards to nutrition, they have started a catered breakfast for the athletes. They continue to work on other avenues to improve the nutrition opportunities for the student athletes. In the recovery area, he is focusing on access to appropriate facilities, even if they are off campus. This is the first month that the coaches will get to be around the athletes, and they will focus on what our athletes need.

He is happy and excited to be here. In response to questions, Coach Mack highlighted some athlete and coach statistics. Meghan S. shared that she is seeing positive demeanor changes in our student athletes. Ronald Briggs, Student Affairs offered support to Coach Mack and the students.

Milton asked AJ Johnson to discuss a machine learning application. AJ is working on a website application that gathers information about players. KSU can use this information to analyze players and predict how successful they will be, whether they might transfer, etc. Milton shared that he is always looking for ways to give our coaches a competitive advantage and this is a way to use machine learning to compare teams and players and to analyze the possibilities available. These predictive analytics give us a head start to understand more.

Milton Overton, Director of Athletics, opened his state of the department address by thanking everyone for what they are doing. He appreciates that at Coach Mack's first meeting with the athletes, he asked them what was important to them and what they needed. Nutrition, training room, recovery were all prominent issues. This ties into all the things he is working on regarding recruiting and retention.

Milton addressed the need for a lab at the stadium to continue improving available data. This can help prevent injury, help recovery, and improve nutrition. He spoke of his hope for a new dining area near the stadium and hiring additional nutritionists. The new Sports Performance Center should break ground in summer or fall. He anticipates the research coming out of this facility to be groundbreaking. The search for the Inaugural Director of this facility will be starting shortly.

In response to a question, Milton responded that our coaches and students are adjusting well to moving conferences. They are doing well with the resources we have now, but we will need to add more. AJ commented on the increase in travel due to the conference change. The track team has already flown twice this year, and they have not even gotten outdoors yet. His roommate is a basketball player and is also going to be traveling a lot this year. Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of flying out of Cobb airport and Milton is looking into this.

Meghan commended the athletics staff. They are making many appointments with students and keeping the coaches informed. They do some traveling with the students and continue to be a resource for them. They continue to increase what they are offering to keep the students from getting behind.

AJ Johnson began the SAAC update by sharing the success of their recent event and thanked all for attending. SAAC may not do the baseball tailgate this year due to the construction and will be electing officers soon. SAAC wants to get more involved with the campus community including events like the Miracle Dance Marathon. Meghan Stoltzfus, Director, Student-Athlete Development, provided the student-Athlete Welfare Update. We have a new sports psychologist/therapist, Latrice Lewis, who has been

introduced to all the teams. Dr. Lindsay is still contracted with us. We continue with the mental health screening initiative and so far, there is nothing major to report from completed screenings.

February focuses on nutrition; in March and April, it will be career readiness, resumes and networking skills. There are two upcoming events in the planning stages, a Securities and Exchange Commission session on fraud and identity theft and an additional educational session by Fifth Third Bank. AJ recommended the financial literacy sessions and shared that he and another student had decided to open a Roth IRA based on the information shared. Milton suggested a video of AJ talking about this to encourage others to participate in these sessions.

Matthew Iwanski, Associate Athletic Director, Athletics Compliance and Risk Management shared that currently, the big push is to override the eligibility restriction. Settlement resources and planning are in a lull until April. He is monitoring the national news on that piece. There seem to be new lawsuits every day. In response to a question, Matt reviewed the junior college (JUCO) ruling.

Randy Kennedy, Associate Athletic Director of Academic Services shared that the fall semester was highly successful and the spring semester is off to good start. They just submitted numbers to the conference office so our athletes should soon be getting recognition. Randy is considering a recognition event at a basketball game.

Student athletes are going to see their campus advisors as registration is a month away. It is also time to get practice times from coaches, etc. so they can get students registered. They are working with AA to see that the new football coaching staff is up to date on how things work at Kennesaw State and determining if there are things that we can do better.

Dan Niederjohn, Faculty Athletics Representative and Associate Professor of Psychology, began his update by thanking all for their response to the exception vote sent in December. PAOC voted to accept the exception, and this has been communicated to Coach Coe. He shared a slide presentation (attachment a) on the current "End of Season" Survey and thoughts for making it more helpful. He requested suggestions for the survey and will present a new, more action-oriented draft at the April meeting.

In other business, Dan shared that it is difficult to get student participation at our meetings and that Stacy Delacruz resigned her faculty representative position.

The next Meeting is April 3, 2025. The meeting was adjourned at 1:48pm.