

Minutes: Faculty Senate Athletics committee meeting of March 11, 2013

Present: Don Bruce (FAR), Wanda Costen, John Koontz (Chair), Susan Martin (Provost), Fritz Polite, Susan Ratliff, Steven Waller, Mike Ward, Donna Thomas.

Absent: Mark Baggett, Chris Clark, David Cobb, Todd Dooley, John Haas, Michael Jones, Kurt Lamour, Karson March, Lane Morris, Rex Pringle, Mark Windham

Dr. Martin presented an update on the Special Consideration Admissions Committee (SCAC). There are four voting members of the committee as well as several ex officio members. The voting members are the Provost, the FAR and two faculty members, Andy Wentzel and John Koontz. Ex officio members include Monique Anderson, Richard Bayer, Ruth Darling, Todd Dooley, Susan Ratliff, Cynthia Sweet, and Donna Thomas.

The committee has an annual limit of 25 students who can be admitted with an institutional rating of 0.55 and above and an additional 10 who can be admitted with an institutional rating of from 0.47 to 0.54. The institutional rating is calculated as follows: add the core GPA/4 together with the ACT/36 and divide the total by 2. It should be noted that this admission process is inclusive of all students, not just student athletes. Usually the student records that are brought forward to the committee are for those individuals involved in performance, whether it is athletics, dance, theatre, music or something else. The material presented to the committee for consideration includes:

- an academic plan put together by the coach in consultation with the Thornton Center staff
- a letter from the coach in support of the applicant
- a description of the at risk qualities of the student under consideration and how those will be addressed
- the student seeking admission usually provides a letter explaining their situation and how they will work to be successful as students in their coursework as well as in their area of performance
- a record of the coach in working with and expressing concern for student's academic performance
- a record of an interview of the student by the Thornton Center staff

The remainder of the discussion about special consideration focused on the efforts to support these students once admitted. One question asked was how faculty might get involved, for example, within a specific discipline to enhance the likelihood of student success. One of the most significant areas of assistance that faculty can provide is to inform the Thornton Center staff and other responsible parties if and when it becomes apparent that a student athlete in their class is struggling. This might be in relation to grades but it could go beyond just grades and classroom performance. This can be done through the Grades First program or by direct contact with the Thornton Center staff or counseling services.

What about the student athlete who is struggling in spite of acceptable admissions data? The Thornton Center staff does not make any assumptions about the potential or likely success of any student athlete and monitors the progress of all student athletes. This is most intense in the first year as the student begins to build a record of performance.

When asked about the "level of intensity" applied to get students back on a successful academic track the response was that it is tailored to the specific student. It can include missing a practice, missing an event or more. There is a very strong emphasis placed on class attendance. One of the more successful incentives regarding attendance is that after the third missed class no more comp tickets are awarded. Apparently the athletes affected by this don't like to have to explain to their parents why they no longer get free tickets for them.

The second topic of discussion was in regard to the search for the Director of the Thornton Center. Two candidates have been interviewed and the search committee, chaired by Doug Blaze (Dean of the College of Law) met with the Provost to

offer recommendations. Both candidates interviewed, Joe Scogin from the University of Missouri and Tommy Powell from Iowa State, were judged capable of doing the job.