

**UTK Faculty Senate
Athletics Sub-Committee**

Minutes for April 20, 2015 Meeting

Present: Dean Kopsell (chair), Ray DeGennaro, Andy Puckett, Cary Staples, Donna Thomas, Songning Zhang, Joe Scogin, Chris Magra, Vicki Mayfield, Brian Russell (Associate Director, Thornton Center).

The meeting was located in the Thornton Athletics Student Life Center and called to order at 3:30 pm by Dean Kopsell. Old Business was discussed: minutes from last meeting. New Business: year-end report for committee due by April 30th; agenda suggestion for next year – inviting student tutors to address committee on working with student athletes was recommended.

Agenda for the meeting was a discussion on academic counseling by Brian Russell, Associate Director at the Thornton Center. Brian directs counseling for football and women's basketball. Highlights of the overview included:

- The center's philosophy of academic counseling.
 - Focus on the entire process: starts at 1st year level orientation to college and sports program; extends to academic and professional development in middle years; concludes with career counseling to prepare student athletes for the time when sports ends.
- Big picture difference between academic counseling and campus advising.
 - The staff at the center have a very individualized approach to each athlete. Scheduling includes academics, sports activities, and related activities such as travel and media interactions.
- Challenges student-athletes face.
 - All activities must comply with university, SEC, and NCAA rules.
 - Preparing student athletes for what to expect while in college and what to expect after graduation.

The meeting was very informative and provided a very candid conversation about the challenges faced by the staff at the center in advising and counseling UT's student athletes.