

UTK Faculty Senate
Athletics Committee

Final Report for AY2014-15

The Athletics Sub-committee had six (6) meetings over the course of AY 2014-2015. The committee met this year's goals in the following ways:

1. *Become acquainted with the academic support services provided by the Thornton Athletics Student Life Center for UT student athletes.*
 - **Joe Scogin**, Director of the Thornton Athletics Student Life Center, provided an overview of the center and led a tour of the facilities at our September 22, 2014 meeting.
 - **Kari Alldredge**, Assistant dean & Director Office of Undergraduate Admissions, provided an overview of academic admission for student athletes. **Sarah Beth Clark**, UT Athletics Compliance Office, complemented the discussion with admission requirements and rules set forth by the SEC and NCAA.
 - **Brian Russell**, Associate Director of the Thornton Athletics Student Life Center, provided additional information about the role of the center in academic and career counseling for UT's student athletes at our April 20, 2015 meeting.
2. *Tour facilities associated with the Thornton Athletics Student Life Center and other facilities within the Athletic Department which provide academic and other support services to UT student athletes.*
 - We toured the Thornton Athletics Student Life Center on September 22, 2014 (Joe Scogin).
 - We toured the Anderson Training Center on October 27, 2014 (Todd Dooley).
3. *Consult with compliance and administrative personnel within the Athletic Department for information regarding the most recent rulings by the NCAA on autonomy and athlete compensation to determine the potential impacts on UT student athletes.*
 - **Todd Dooley**, Associate Athletics Director for Compliance within the Athletics Department, provided an overview of the recently adopted NCAA autonomy ruling and the proposed structure for Division 1 athletes in the major athletic conferences at our October 27, 2014 meeting.
4. *Consult with administrative personnel with the Athletic Department and tour facilities on the UTK Campus associated with the newly formed SEC Network to determine the potential impacts on UT student athletes and/or other students that may benefit from the network.*
 - We were unable to meet this goal, but it is at the top of the list for AY2015-2016.
5. *Brief the executive committee and the members of the Faculty Senate on any current issues affecting UT student athletes.*
 - One activity of the committee included being a liaison to the Athletics Department in an information gathering capacity in support of the request made by Dr. Michelle Christian on behalf of UTK faculty supporting the Accord on Building and Fire Safety in Bangladesh. The Accord has been supported by the Faculty Senate and is being sent to upper administration.

In addition to our meeting schedule, we were very fortunate to interact with several invited speakers on subjects directly related to our committee.

- On November 14, 2014, Dr. **Charlie Clotfelter** of Duke University met with our committee for a Q&A related to his critically acclaimed book, *Big-Time Sports in American Universities*. The meeting was held in the HBB building in the Brinkley Room and was a highlight for the year.
- On February 9, 2015, Dr. **Jim Brosnan** and **Adam Thoms** of the Plant Sciences Department provided a description of the research and outreach projects conducted at the Center for Athletic Field Safety, part of the University of Tennessee's Institute of Agriculture.
- On March 6, 2015, **Mary Willingham** and Dr. **Jay Smith** discussed their recent book, *Cheated – The UNC Scandal, the Education of Athletes, and the Future of Big-Time College Sports* in the Mary Greer Room of Hodges Library. The session was attended by several members of our committee and was very insightful as to the consequences of improper management of student athletes.

The chair and committee members wish to thank **Donna Thomas**, Associate Athletics Director, and Dr. **Don Bruce**, Faculty Athletics Representative, for their help and support in arranging speakers and locations for the committee meetings this year. The committee also thanks **Cameron Brown** and **Julie Eckel** for taking valuable time out of their busy schedules to serve as student athlete representatives on the committee this year. A special thank you is also extended to all the staff within the Thornton Center and UT Athletics for their support and help this past year.

Final report submitted April 30, 2015

Dean A. Kopsell, *Professor*
Chair – Athletics Committee