



**Committee on Athletics & Recreation (AR)
Annual Report, 2021-2022**

Submitted by: Patrick McHugh, Associate Professor of Management (GWSB) and Srinivas Prasad, Associate Professor of Decision Sciences (GWSB)

2021-2022 Committee Roster

Patrick McHugh, Co-Chair (GWSB)* and Srinivas Prasad, Co-Chair (GWSB)*
Kim Roddis, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Liaison (SEAS)*
Hugh Agnew (ESIA)*
Robert Baker (CCAS)
Kate Carpenter (GWSA)**
Keith Cole (SMHS)
Matthew Hess (SON)
Ashley Darcy-Mahoney (SON)
Dhinu Jayaseelan (SMHS)
Cory Jorgensen (CCAS)
Karen McDonnell (GWSPH)
Beth Tuckwiller (GSEHD)
Tanya Vogel (Athletics)** and Andre Julien (Athletics)**
Peng Wei (SEAS)
Beverly Westerman, ex officio (NCAA Liaison)**

* Senate member

**Non-voting member

Committee Mission States:

The Faculty Senate Committee on Athletics and Recreation has the role of maintaining the faculty's presence in the intercollegiate athletics and recreational programs. The Committee has the following functions:

- 1. to receive information from the Department of Athletics and Recreation about its programs and any issues which may affect GW athletics and recreation;*
- 2. to serve as a forum for discussion and consultation regarding matters related to athletics and recreation;*
- 3. via the NCAA representative, to be apprised of NCAA rules and their interpretation, as they may affect this institution; and*
- 4. to recommend to the Faculty Senate changes in existing policies pertaining to athletics and recreation, and to develop new policies as appropriate, for consideration by the Faculty Senate.*

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee also identified the following tasks for AR:

- (1) Advise the Athletics department on the impact of reductions in varsity sports...

- (2) Engage with the Athletics department on issues around name, image, and likeness.
- (3) Advise the Athletics department on the status of campus recreation around reopening (including issues involving student participation and health/safety).
- (4) Advise the Athletics department on its broader goals.

Committee Actions

Members met (via WebEx) on October 1, 2021 and March 25, 2022.

Tanya Vogel, Director of Athletics provided several updates.

Reduction in Varsity Sports Update

Several forces brought together the decision to reduce the number of varsity sports from 27 to 20 in July of 2020, and the university considered multiple factors, as explained in the announcement and FAQs at the time. Some of those factors included: strong momentum to reduce the undergraduate footprint via the 20/30 plan; GW had the largest offering of varsity sports among their Atlantic 10 conference counterparts, so there was a desire to right-size the athletics offering; budgetary considerations and the most effective allocation of limited resources.

The following sports were eliminated: men's tennis, women's water polo, men's and women's squash, sailing, men's rowing, and men's indoor track – directly impacting about 120 students.

For students on scholarships, the university committed to funding scholarships through graduation. "Team Forward" – was established by the Athletics Department to provide a forum to discuss how best to support students impacted by the reduction. The impacted students were given access to the Smith Center and academic support through the Carbonell Center, as well as, continued participation in the leadership excellence program (LEAAP). Access to sports medicine, as well as given training plans on strength and conditioning. Access to the Adidas discount, student-athlete sash, and the creation of a "Legacy Project" to identify ways to memorialize and recognize the history of these sports at GW.

Name/Image/Likeness Update

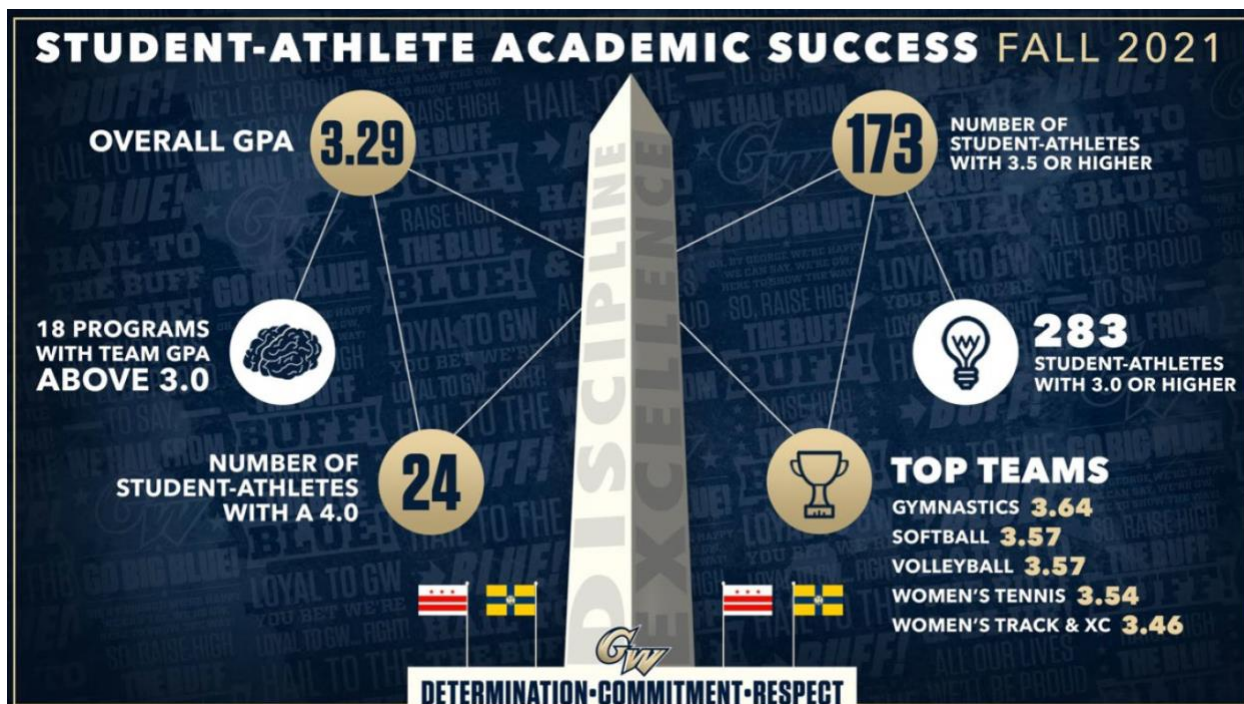
Student athletes can earn compensation for their name, image, and likeness. However, student athletes cannot be paid to play (e.g., for being a member of a team, or for performance on the field of play). Also, it can't be used as an enrollment strategy to get a student to come to campus or a retention strategy to get a student to stay. For example, a local business cannot offer a student athlete money to commit to coming or staying at GW. A concern of the Athletics Department is that there a number of "bad" actors who may take advantage of student athletes. Currently, about 10-15% of GW student athletes are more deeply involved in these opportunities. The current GW policy is that student athletes need to submit their plan seven days prior to signing an agreement so that our compliance office can review and make sure that it does not violate the pay-for-play limitation. Otherwise, the Athletic Department can only advise students against activities that may not be in the best interest of the student – but shying away from approving or denying proposals.

There is a tremendous amount of uncertainty surrounding the issue. The Athletic Department has taken the following steps: 1) created a partnership with "INFLCR" (a web based platform where students can learn to build their brand on social media, educational material on tax laws and contracts); 2) created partnership with "GamePlan" (an educational platform on managing career issues); 3) the Atlantic 10 conference partnered

with “Team Altemus” (educating student athletes regarding contractual arrangements and financial literacy); 4) working with Adidas who is launching a program in Spring 2023 to bring NIL opportunities to student-athletes; and 5) reaching out to alumni who could provide pro bono legal support to our student athletes.

Success in Academics

As the chart below shows, overall, student-athletes had an impressive academic performance in the Fall 2021 semester (overall GPA = 3.29). Almost 45% of the approximately 400 student-athletes had a GPA of 3.5 or higher. Twenty-four student-athletes had a 4.0 GPA. In terms of degree programs and majors, for the most part, student-athlete enrollment at the undergraduate level mirrors the general GW student enrollment. The exceptions being a slightly higher student-athlete enrollment in the Milken School, and slightly lower enrollment in the Elliot School. In addition, the Athletic Department hosts an annual alumni networking event to help integrate academic and professional development.



Success in Sports Competition

With the 50th anniversary of the passage of Title IX, it is important to note the recent successes of several of the women’s programs.

- Women’s cross-country won the Atlantic10 Championship (first time)
- Women’s swimming and diving won the Atlantic10 Championship
- Men’s swimming and diving won the Atlantic10 Championship
- Women’s gymnastics won the East Atlantic Gymnastics League Championship

Other Areas of Focus in Athletics

- Student-athlete mental health (stress, anxiety, depression) is a major focus for the Athletics Department. This has been a target for fundraising activities. This financial funding would be used to support programs to assist student-athletes dealing with mental health concerns.
- Coaching the coaches: The role and practice of coaching has changed significantly in the last 20 years. How can coaches be more effective teachers with student-athletes? The athletics department is in the process of identifying best practices for coaches. At the same time, expectations regarding team success is high, so identifying the right people to lead is an on-going challenge.
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: The Athletics Department has partnered with “Return on Inclusion” which is a sport-specific diversity and inclusion education platform dedicated to developing inclusive leaders and fostering a culture of belonging across social and cultural differences. All of the Athletic Department staff are being given access to this resource.
- Strategic planning: The Athletics Department is beginning the process of strategic planning. The Athletic Department would welcome the participation of faculty in this process. However, there is no clear path for faculty participation – for example, would faculty volunteer? Would the administration seek faculty volunteers? Would the Athletics Department seek faculty volunteers? Would the faculty identify participants?
- Presidential Search: The Athletic Department is an important constituency within GW. While there is not currently a formal role in terms of the search process, the Athletics Department could be an important consideration as potential candidates see various areas of strength and breadth of GW.

Andre Julien, Senior Associate Athletic Director, Recreation, Wellness and Club Sports provided an update to campus recreation activities.

Lerner Wellness Center Utilization

Faculty and staff memberships have significantly dropped as a result of the pandemic. Currently less than 100 faculty/staff members – whereas pre-pandemic the number was closer to 400. The department is considering ways to recover faculty and staff participation over the next academic year. Some type of incentive program and marketing will need to be done to increase faculty/staff interest and awareness. Student utilization for 2021 is still down from pre-pandemic levels. A major factor is the reduction in operating hours compared to the pre-pandemic hours of operation. This has been due to both budget limitations and staffing challenges. Finding venues for sports is an ongoing challenge. A relationship with the Saint James, which is an athletic complex in Virginia, has been established where some of the club sports teams utilize their facilities.

Lerner Wellness Center Shutdown/Restoration

The Lerner Wellness Center is 21 years old. Major restorations are needed (for example complete HVAC system replacement). Lerner will be closed around May 15, 2022 with a target reopening in early October 2022. However, this timetable may be optimistic given supply chain problems and labor shortages. Consideration is being given to repurpose and renovate some areas of the facility during the shutdown (for example, repurposing racquetball courts for high intensity training or repurposing some the squash courts for cycling studios).

During the time students do not have access to Lerner, other spaces on campus may be used to house some elements of campus recreation opportunities (e.g., space in District House, and Mitchell Hall). There has also been outreach by the department to local fitness facilities and studios to possibly offer temporary membership options for students in the fall 2022 semester.

The committee discussed the need to communicate to students well in advance of the Lerner closure prior to students returning to campus for the fall 2022 semester. In addition, clearly communicating the alternative options for fitness and recreation that will be available to them.

In terms of the summer 2020 semester, there are no current plans to provide access to faculty/staff to the locker and shower facilities in the Smith Center.

Bev Westerman, Faculty Athletics Representative provide information regarding the role of the Faculty Athletics Representative

- All NCAA institutions have faculty athletics representatives. Bev was appointed to the role by President LeBlanc in the spring semester 2019. It is a three-year term that expires in June 2022, with the possibility of an extension. Broadly speaking, the role involves: championing academic integrity, promoting the welfare of student-athletes, help insure institutional control. Specifically, Bev chairs the Atlantic 10 committee of faculty athletics representatives. In addition, serving on the Atlantic 10 Committee on Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. At GW Bev communicates with faculty and staff regarding student-athlete activities, oversees elements of NCAA compliance and eligibility, as well as compliance with university standards. A significant amount of time is spent interacting with leadership in the Athletics Department. At times, the role involves being a liaison between faculty and student-athletes.

- There is a lack of clarity regarding how the process for selection of the next Faculty Athletics Representative will be conducted. In the previous selection process, a small working group, led by Professor Chris Deering called for nominations among the faculty. The working group then submitted a list of potential nominees to the University President for consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick McHugh
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Co-Chairs