University of Massachusetts
Athletic Council Committee Minutes
January 31, 2014
Recreation Center Conference Room

Committee Members Present:

Co-Chair N. Lacey, Co-Chair T. Schoenadel

Guests: J. Sarsynski, J. Seguin, J. Smith

Absent: T. Anderson

I. Call to Order
Co-Chair Schoenadel called the January meeting of the Academic Year to order at 11:32 a.m. and welcomed guest speaker, Jeff Smith.

II. Approval of the Minutes of December 6, 2013

Co-Chair Schoenadel opened the floor to discussion of the Athletic Council minutes from December 6, 2013. There being none, it was so moved by George Richason and seconded by Bob Goodhue to accept the motion. All were in favor of approving the Minutes from the December 6, 2013 meeting.

III. Report from the AD and FAR – NCAA San Diego Meeting

AD McCutcheon and Faculty Athletic Representative Rebecca Spencer highlighted the NCAA Meeting in San Diego on January 16 attended by 168 Division I Athletic Directors and FARs. This steering committee (consisting of seven university presidents led by two facilitators) discussed NCAA Governance issues and the division of authority and roles between University Presidents and their Athletic Directors in relation to NCAA governance. One version of the proposed governance reform would involve ADs and a committee of other parties (including FARs and SWAs) working together on legislative changes and other general operating decisions with a committee of Presidents overseeing these decisions. No final decisions were made; however, the framework for change appears to be set in motion and some recommendations are likely to be implemented with some attention to re-organization among various sets of universities.
IV. Guest: Jeff Smith, Associate Athletic Director/Head Athletic Trainer

V. Jeff Smith overviewed the division of responsibilities and training care for student-athletes. The extensive care available for student-athletes’ health and welfare is under the umbrella of the following providers: Jeff Smith, Head Trainer with his staff of 8 certified athletic trainers; Team doctors, Dr. Pierre Rouzier and Dr. Greg Little; Hampshire Orthopedics’ Dr. Fallon, Dr. McBride; Chiropractic Care with Dr. Adam Wilburn; Acupuncture and Massage Therapy; Nutritional Counseling with Nutritionist Caren Weiner; Athletics Counselor Jim Helling and Athletic Academics Counselors; Mental Health Counselors CCPH on campus; Orthotics care with Dr. Mark Fournier; Cooley Dickenson’s Radiology, X-Ray, MRI Departments on University Drive. Jeff Smith praised the present training work space in Boyden (8400 sq. ft.) and the planned rehabilitation space in the Champions Center. Both offer great morale boosters for rehab treatment including hydrotherapy (hot and cold pools) facilitating better return to play for student-athletes. Jeff also reviewed the process of assessing and monitoring high risk student-athletes. Sports psychologists and mental health teams watch for any behavioral red-flags like noise violations or open container violations which may be indicators of potential drug or alcohol abuse. Jeff Smith recently presented this Athlete Health and Welfare Committee Model (which he brought from UCLA) to the Eastern Athletic Training Association.

Gender Equity/ Diversity Report (Jaime Seguin)

Jaime Seguin, SWA will be responsible for the report on the Gender Equity/Diversity that was formally under Elaine Sortino’s oversight. The Gender Equity Report with participation numbers will soon be completed pending input from the Carr Sports Study report which will include a full department gender equity review and assessment. The student-athlete minority numbers, scholarship figures, and department staffing will also be assessed within the Gender Equity/Diversity Report. Jaime also discussed the student-athlete wellness group that implements ideas for diversity through the “Blackmer Student Project”. Co-Chair Schoenadel noted that gender equity was lagging within Isenberg Sports Management with only a small percentage of students being female versus male students and it has been declining for several years.

VI. Annual Report Status Update for the Athletic Council for 2012-2013, Rod Warnick, Secretary to the Council

Rod Warnick is collecting subcommittee reports electronically for the Annual Report 2012-2013. Rod also noted that this year’s report would be highlights and a summary rather than the extended version of Academics, Vision, Compliance, Gender Equity, Finance, and Facilities subcommittee reports.

VII. Report from the Athletic Department – AD John McCutcheon

John McCutcheon reported that the Athletic Department went through a thorough and healthy process with the Carr Sports Consulting Group review of Gender Equity/Diversity within the Department.
AD McCutcheon updated the council on the Football Search. After studying a large candidate pool, the search committee interviewed four candidates and it was a full consensus that Mark Whipple was the unanimous choice as the new Head Coach for UMass Football. Coach Whipple’s support staff will include Ted Daisher, Liam Cohen, Marcel Shipp, Mike Cassano, and David Sollazzo with two other spots to be filled. The costs for the football transition of staff will be met from external sources and not from within the University’s reserves. The entire debt from the transition will be paid within a couple of years.

Other Athletic Department Activities of note, included:

- Football Signing Day will be February 5, 2014.
- The University has contracted with Kathleen Hessert as a Sports Consultant for Social Media i.e. Twitter. Ms. Hessert, whose other clients include Peyton Manning and P. Ditty will help verse all Coaches with the power and usage of Social Media.
- AD McCutcheon reviewed progress on Capital Projects: the Football Stadium Building will be ready for occupancy in July 2014 and the Champions Center is steadily moving toward completion for next year.
- This winter’s snowstorms had prevented AD McCutcheon attending both Philadelphia A-10 Winter Meeting and last week’s Cleveland’s MAC Meeting. AD McCutcheon participated in both meetings via conference call due to his cancelled flights.
- The Carr Report will be completed soon which will include a full analysis of current and potential conference alignments.
- The Compliance Sub-Committee review led by Susan Pearson as the administrative contact for the Chancellor’s charge to review practice and student athlete welfare and experiences is still review. This charge was a byproduct of the football wrestling video aired on YouTube™.
- Lacrosse seasons and all Spring sports will be underway soon.
- Hockey has been improving despite it being a young team and has had some positive outcomes over the last 10 game stretch.

VIII. New and Old Business:
Co-Chair Schoenadel mentioned that Mike Slive, Commissioner of Southeastern Conference (SEC) will be on campus visiting with his daughter Anna who was a student in the highly ranked Mark E. McCormack Sports Marketing Department. Mike Slive could be a potential guest speaker for the Council Meeting in March if the dates align well.
JC Schnabl reviewed upcoming alumni events to connect Alumni to the new Football Coach and reviewed data. A number of questions were posed regarding he outcomes of sources of information used by alumni contact with the University.

The remaining 2014 Spring Athletic Council Dates are:

February 28  
March 28  
April 25  

Ed Ward moved to close the meeting. George Richason seconded the motion. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 12:54 p.m.