Committee Members Present:


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

Guests:   J. Sarsynski, J. Sinnett, M. Whipple

Absent:   D. Barstow, A. Moore, P. Vittum

I. Call to Order

Co-Chair Schoenadel called the November 21, 2014 meeting of the Academic Council to order at 11:32 a.m. and welcomed guest speakers, Coach Whipple and John Sinnett to the November meeting held in the Football Performance Center.

II. Approval of the Minutes of October 31, 2014

Co-Chair Schoenadel opened the floor to discussion of the Athletic Council minutes from October 31, 2014. There being none, it was so moved by George Richason and seconded by Ed Ward to accept the motion. All were in favor of approving the Minutes from the October 31, 2014 meeting.

III. Meet the Coach: Mark Whipple, Head Coach of Football

Co-Chair Schoenadel thanked Coach Mark Whipple for speaking to the council at the November Athletic Council Meeting. Coach Whipple welcomed the Athletic Council to the Football Performance Center and explained what a huge difference the Football Center makes in their successful recruiting efforts. At a recent recruiting function in July, a young man from Suffield Academy and his father said, “We didn’t know the Performance Center was this nice!” After touring the facility and speaking with the Coaching staff, this talented offensive lineman recruit cancelled his visit to Vanderbilt and accepted Coach’s offer. Coach Whipple is confident his team is making great progress this season even though they played their worst game last week at Akron, which was brutally cold. Akron’s defensive line is the most talented defense in the MAC. Over 40 text messages flooded in from across the country after the televised Wednesday, November 12 home game vs. Ball State saying how great the team, football field and Performance Center looked on TV. During the televised November 12th game against Ball State, team Quarterback Blake Krohnafpel broke his leg which was a big setback for both Blake and the team down the stretch and end of season.
Coach Whipple said his team fought hard at BC and Colorado, but lost steam in the second halves. "We need faster and bigger guys". Overall, Coach is proud of his team’s progress and looking forward to next season. Coach answered questions on his team’s high APR, careers for players after graduation, developing career skills, and Division I Conference affiliations. Coach answered questions on the following many topics including recruiting, games, and the new facilities at the Football complex.

IV. Guest Administrator - John Sinnett, Assistant AD for Media Relations

John Sinnett described his role as a spokesperson for the Athletic Department as he pitches stories on UMass Athletics to outside media sources. John builds a strong working trust with the area media sources as their valuable resource. John anticipates the story that the media is looking for - keeps in constant contact with all the media locals and Boston media sources. John answered questions about Meet the Player/Student-Athlete – human feature stories that feature the success and lives of our student-athletes. John discussed advertising revenue, social media sources/Twitter and weekly coverage in the Boston Globe and Boston Herald every week.

V. Athletic Department Update by AD John McCutcheon

- Jaime Seguin’s departure has left a large vacancy in the Business Office with general accounting, EADA reports and NCAA reporting. The Finance Sub-Committee will have all of this information for their sub-committee report.
- We've received two capital gifts for $200,000 for the Football Performance Center.
- The Football Schedule has been our biggest challenge looking for the more home games in 2016. Currently, there are 9 football games contracted for 2016 and 2017.
- Men's Hockey is in full swing and plays Boston College tomorrow at home.
- Garber Field Complex Capital Campaign is underway and doing well.
- Conference affiliation opportunities remain a topic of conversation.
- There is an urgent need for indoor courts. Our tennis team can no longer practice in the winter at the Hampshire College indoor tennis facility on Bay Road since they are shutting down.
- November 28th is Family Fun Day at UMass Football vs. Buffalo as well as Faculty and Staff Recognition Day.

VIII. New Business

- Ed Ward asked to revisit the feasibility of the Bubble Project for an indoor practice facility for football and to address the next steps to further its cause.
- The Athletic Council was invited by John Sinnett to tour the new Jacobsen Media Press Box after the meeting.
Co-Chair Schoenadel called for a motion to close the meeting. Bob Goodhue so moved to close the meeting at 12:48 pm. Ed Ward seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned at 12:45 pm. Members of the committee toured the new press box facility and the Champions Center.