

Athletic Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, February 12, 2026

Time: 4:00 PM

Location: Boyd Conference Room

Members Present: Mr. Ryan Bailey, Ms. Cathy Deeb, Mr. Josh Grubb, Dr. Darrin Martin, Mr. Tim McKenzie, Ms. Felicia Oakes, Mr. Shannon Remines (Virtual), Mr. Anthony Tolley

Guests: Dr. Sudhakar Jamkhandi, Mr. Ansel Ponder

1. Call to Order

Mr. Anthony Tolley called the meeting or order at 3:50 PM in the Boyd Conference Room

2. Athletics Update

- CIAA week is scheduled for the week of February 22, with competition beginning on Tuesday, February 24 in Baltimore, Maryland. Indoor track and field championships for both men and women were announced for the upcoming Sunday and Monday.
- An overview of exit interview data from 102 student athletes was presented. Students are not primarily leaving due to academics, safety, or NCAA compliance. The primary factors affecting retention are dissatisfaction with facilities, dining and housing concerns, perceived inequities among athletic programs, and inconsistent coaching experiences.
- Facilities and resource concerns were discussed. Some of the concerns expressed include inequities between programs, lack of on-campus facilities for certain teams (particularly women's soccer), and baseball and softball facilities. Travel distance, time, and fuel costs were cited as significant concerns for off-campus practice sites. Discussion emphasized the need for future capital planning and long-term infrastructure investment.
- In regard to coaching and program experience, some students reported poor communication, feeling misled during the recruiting process, and dissatisfaction related to playing time expectations.
- Students have requested healthier dining options, including more fresh produce and increased high-protein selections. It was noted that previously offered services (such as the smoothie/protein bar) have not been consistently available.
- The following was reported for student satisfaction and support indicators:
 - 95 students reported feeling safe on campus.
 - 87 reported that professors support their success.
 - 97 reported a respectful classroom environment.
 - 100 reported being informed of NCAA rules.

- 91 reported not experiencing gender bias on campus.
- Financial aid and admissions services were rated positively.
- Retention and enrollment data was discussed. Total student-athlete numbers increased from 316 in the Fall of the prior year to 389 in the Fall of the current year. Current retention rate is approximately 82%. The Athletics Department remains approximately 30 student-athletes ahead of the previous year's totals and continues to recruit approximately 27 new student-athletes between Fall and Spring terms.
- The facilities and program growth discussion included limitations caused by shared and limited practice spaces, late evening practice times due to facility constraints, and the long-term need for additional or upgraded facilities. The importance of transparency with prospective student-athletes regarding current facilities and future plans were emphasized.
- Football scheduling and initiatives include a ten-game football schedule, including eight conference games. An alumni engagement initiative was proposed for away games, including pre-game or pre-travel events and coaches speaking to alumni and supporters in host communities. Possible venues and formats for these events was discussed.
- A weekly athletics newsletter will be launched and distributed to the President's Cabinet, Athletics Staff, Alumni and subscribed community members. The newsletter will highlight athletic results, academic accomplishments, and community engagement.
- The Committee discussed the need for clearer, real-time access to current games, start times, and live scores from the athletics website.
- There was a discussion on returning the coaches' broadcast to a public location to increase visibility and community engagement. Possible future locations are being explored.
- Ms. Felicia Oakes reported on academic performance and student support. There is a rise in GPAs from Spring 2025 to Fall 2025, showing improvements in nearly all sports. Students with a GPA below 2.25 are now required to complete an academic success plan and participate in structured study hall hours. Additional academic monitoring measures include increased communication with faculty and the Academic Success Center; expanded tutoring opportunities (particularly in Math and English); team-specific study hall locations and monitoring of library study hall participation. A plan is in place to restrict athletic activities if academic responsibilities are not being met.
- The fundraising approval and management process was reviewed. All fundraising requests must be submitted at least two weeks in advance. Funds raised are deposited into team-specific foundation accounts. Any withdrawals require both the coach's and department approvals. Funds are primarily used for equipment, student needs and program support. All teams currently maintain active fundraising accounts. Football and baseball were noted as generating higher fundraising totals due to roster size and event structure.
- The Committee recognized the work of athletics staff and coaches, emphasizing that long-term success is being built through academic accountability, program development, and student-athlete character and post-graduation outcomes.

Mr. Anthony Tolley made a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 4:33 PM.

