

MIAC SAAC Meeting Minutes

September 15, 2013

Present: Ryan Cook, Kelsey Hlavac (Augsburg); Megan Kirchoff (Bethel); Danny Shields (Carleton); Domenic Fraboni, Hannah Knickerbocker (Concordia); Pat Tracy, Rachelle Blashko (Gustavus); Leeanna Manthe (Hamline); Sam Imholte, Haley Chatelaine (Saint Benedict); Paul Plombon (Saint John's); John Soucheray (Saint Mary's); Nicki Mosbeck (St. Catherine); Katie Maher, Paige Brimeyer (St. Thomas); Dan McKane, Megan Gaard, Matt Higgins (MIAC)

1. MIAC SAAC Overview

- MIAC SAAC Goals:
 1. Continue Special Olympics partnership
 2. Be voices for NCAA legislation input
 3. Listen to student-athletes about their input on conference-wide issues
 4. Share ideas and have dialogue between institutions

2. MIAC SAAC Officers for 2013-14

- Chair: Pat Tracy (Gustavus)
- Co-Chair: Paul Plombon (Saint John's)
- Secretary: Haley Chatelaine (Saint Benedict)
- Treasurer: Ryan Cook (Augsburg)

3. New MIAC Website

- Special focuses: State of Minnesota (only conference with all MN schools), Core values listed in header: quality athletics, academics, student-athlete well-being, integrity.
- Features: Easier navigation, Easy-to-access standings, results, and schedules, MIAC Live (links to live-streaming broadcasts of events), My MIAC (find resources for specific schools), Feature Stories, Easy access to social media, Scoreboard (all sports' scores in one place), App (MIAC Front Row).
- The MIAC created a sportsmanship video ([link to video](#)).

4. Special Olympics

- Working with Special Olympics is a Division III initiative.
- There are several options to work with Special Olympics. A few are: a) Unified sports groups: athletes with and without disabilities team up and play in a league together, b) School club - group for promoting Special Olympics events, c) Polar Plunge - raises awareness and money, d) Young athletes group - introduce kids with and without disabilities to new sports.
- Institutions reports involvement with Special Olympics in the following ways:
 - AUG: Goes to other schools for events
 - BU: Volleyball team volunteers at a golf event with Special Olympics
 - CAR: Working on developing more opportunities
 - CON: Volleyball tournament
 - GAC: Basketball, swimming, flag-football, and maybe track events
 - CSB/SJU: SAAC sponsored events to raise money, clubs/volunteer opportunities on campus
 - SCU: Buddy program with SAAC reps as reporters to the team
 - SMU: "Buddies" program and Polar Plunge
 - UST: Polar Plunge (put on outside S.A.A.C.); spring break event
 - Additional ideas: conference-wide Special Olympics events (throwing first pitch at baseball games, etc.)

5. NCAA and National SAAC Update

- Concordia's Domenic Fraboni is our new National Division III SAAC representative. He will represent both the MIAC and UMAC.
- NCAA National SAAC report included the following highlights:
 - 1) NCAA Convention legislation. Goal is for legislation to improve the student-athlete experience.
 - 2) 40th Anniversary of Division III will be celebrated this year.

- 3) Special Olympics Partnership - make sure institutions are reporting volunteer hours ([link](#)).
- 4) Division III membership survey indicated that administrators lacked knowledge and involvement with SAAC.
- New NCAA rules:
 - Sickle Cell Trait Status (this year- incoming freshmen/transfers; next year – everyone).
 - Coaches can use social media to recruit, but has to be private and one on one.
- 2014 NCAA Convention Legislation
 - Sport safety package: Each institution would need to have a physician to oversee medical practices.
 - Reduce street drug penalties to be out for half, rather than whole, season (ask teams about opinions on this potential change).
 - Potential legislation on bringing in helmets to spring season football.
- Division III is looking at potential rule changes for recruiting and coach work/life balance. The working group has come up with nine potential options to consider.

6. MIAC Update

- Sport Code Updates (pg. 7 of handout)
 - When traveling for conference games, only a specific number of players per team can dress, but additional can come along with the team.
 - Baseball: Moving to 7 and 9-inning doubleheader games.
 - Women's basketball: Fewer conference games (22 to 18) starting in 2014-15 season.
 - Men's hockey: Shootout if still tied after 5 minute overtime; new point system.
 - Women's hockey: 4-person officiating crews.
 - Tennis: High-seed host playoff format
- Sportsmanship Policy: Updated to address what is and isn't acceptable conduct.
- MIAC Elite 22 Award: New award for student-athletes with highest GPA (highest GPA of top 2 teams/All-Conference athletes) and participating at conference championship.

7. Strategic Plan

- The MIAC is in year 3 of 4-year of the strategic plan.
- Four main themes of the plan: Academic success, Event atmosphere, Branding & Identity, Finances.

8. Playoff Review

- Conference governance structure is currently reviewing playoffs. MIAC has varying number of teams across sports that access playoffs (from 4 to 6).
- Should playoffs all have the same number of teams? Should different sports have different numbers in the playoffs due to a number of factors?
- Ask teams if all sports should have the same number of playoff teams.

9. MIAC Student-Athlete Leadership Conference

- The MIAC will host their second student-athlete leadership conference on August 2-3, 2014 (Saturday and Sunday) at Saint Mary's University.
- At least 10 student-athletes from each school may go (possibly more depending on budget).
- Focus: Develop leadership skills to bring back to campus and bond member institutions.
- Potential topics to cover:
 - Life after athletics
 - Personality assessments
 - Sports psychology (speakers)
 - Social media (personal branding and representation)
 - Inter-school mixing
 - Communication
- Contact Megan Gaard at MIAC with additional ideas for the leadership conference.

10. SAAC Best Practices

- Augsburg: Meets once a month with food, 2 advisors, coaches pick representatives, homecoming pep fest, school spirit dance-offs/other events, Auggie Awards presented by SAAC, Auggie Cup, decoration competition for homecoming.
- Bethel: No organized SAAC group similar to most other institutions, but more community-service based work, works with groups of students for certain initiatives.
- Carleton: Meets every other week, 1-2 representatives per sport, visibility from pep-rallies, t-shirts, and is working on on-campus visibility and athlete attendance.
- Concordia: Monthly, may change to bi-weekly, meetings; working to put more responsibility on reps to encourage involvement; focus on academic and community-involvement awards.
- Gustavus: Meets for 45min every other week, hand-chosen members, athletes know of SAAC but working on campus presence (goals for volunteer hours as an athletic department).
- Hamline: 2 presidents, 2 vice presidents, 4 committee members; working to branch out to non-members with events like campus BBQs; meets every other Thursday; Piper Cup for involvement.
- Saint Benedict: Meets every other Sunday, representative applications (1 per sport plus at-large reps for media relations, sponsored events, and community outreach), visibility from sponsored whole-school event, Blazer Fridays, Sister Sports, and Blazer Big Days.
- St. Catherine: Meets first Thursday of each month to sum up past month and plan next month; works to push Wildcat athlete presence with Wildcat Wednesdays, Wildcat Cup and Sister Sports; working to get younger athletes involved.
- Saint John's: Meets 1st Tuesday of each month with pizza, trying to bring in younger athletes, visibility from sponsored whole-school event, fall clean-up after homecoming and "Pack the ..." events.
- Saint Mary's: 2 coach-nominated reps per sport; meets once a month but looking to possibly try every other week; Cardinal Cup; always working on promoting visibility.
- St. Thomas: Meets once a month, pass on membership to another teammate, each sport has a representative, "Code Purple" games and fall clean-up for involvement.
- Megan's advice: make sure campuses know that SAAC is hosting events.

11. Resources Available for SAAC

- NCAA Grant - \$195 for operations (food, travel, etc.) – preferably not for prizes and stuff. MIAC office will send check to each institution this fall.
- Hazing Prevention Week (September 23-27)
- Other S.A.A.C. links on handout

12. Next MIAC SAAC Meetings

- December 8, 2013 via conference call
- February 16, 2014 via conference call

Adjourned: 2:55 p.m.