

MIAC Student Athletic Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

September 24, 2018 (8 p.m.)

Video Conference



Attendees:

Sydney Zachary, Amanda Pedersen, Alex Wilson (AUG); Dominique Dabu, Kade Brannon (BU); Edward Hershewe, Jona Plevin (CAR); Haley Cuppett, John Reiten (CON); Maggie Leininger, Chase Johnson (GAC); Zoey Lobeijko, Dean Isaacson (HU); Oriana Galasso, Logan Harper (MAC); Sidney Schifler, Alison Ruprecht (CSB); Leighlin Alstrom (SCU); Mike Reilly (SJU); Emily Carr (STO); Cullen Willox (UST); Dan McKane, BJ Pickard, Kiana Verdugo (MIAC)

1. MIAC SAAC Overview

The MIAC mission statement and goals for the year were reviewed. MIAC SAAC will work to continue supporting student-athletes around the Conference in addition to supporting its relationship with Special Olympics.

2. MIAC SAAC Officers

The group approved MIAC SAAC Officers for 2018-19: Chair – Emily Carr (St. Olaf), Co-Chair – Zoey Lobeijko (Hamline).

3. MIAC Updates (Dan McKane)

McKane reviewed the MIAC governance structure and summarized several new Conference rules for the upcoming season. He discussed the governance structure and process, and stated Presidents have the ultimate authority in the MIAC. A proposal from a coaches' group would work its way through Athletic Directors, Faculty Athletic Representatives, and Presidents. McKane requested feedback on the non-traditional season practice opportunities, noting that this is the second year of a two-year trial. Student-athletes will be surveyed on their experience this winter. Several students expressed positive experiences. McKane also discussed the MIAC's new weather policy and its continued commitment to good conduct and sportsmanship in competition. McKane urged SAAC representatives to be leaders in helping to foster good sportsmanship on their teams. There is an opportunity for SAAC representatives to serve on MIAC strategic planning subcommittees. Those interested should contact Kiana Verdugo. McKane also noted that each MIAC institution is slated to receive \$200 through an NCAA grant for SAAC operations.

4. NCAA Reports (Kiana Verdugo)

Kiana Verdugo serves as the national SAAC rep for the MIAC and UMAC through January 2019. Effective August 1, 2018 each Division III conference will have an associate member to assist in relaying national SAAC information. Among the working groups designated in July were mental health, communication, and Special Olympics. Using the mental health resource cards developed at Carleton, Division III will be putting together a mental health video series for student-athletes. National SAAC is also working to update its best practices guide and just launched a D3 SAAC Twitter account, which student-athletes are encouraged to follow. To coincide with the 50th anniversary of Special Olympics, every DIII institution is asked to host a Special Olympics event with the goal of having at least 50 student-athletes participate. The MIAC had the most Special Olympics partnerships in Division III last year. Diversity and inclusion initiatives are also being targeted by national SAAC. Verdugo noted that several postgraduate scholarships are available to student-athletes through the NCAA and briefed the group on upcoming NCAA proposals to be voted on in January.

5. MIAC SAAC Initiative

SAAC representatives would like to continue partnering with Special Olympics Minnesota, as it is a rewarding experience and allows for student-athletes to have a positive impact in the local community. Special Olympics Minnesota is looking for volunteers for upcoming unified events and would like MIAC institutions to become "champion" schools. MIAC SAAC discussed options for the Conference's annual spring Special Olympics event. The MIAC hosted a bowling tournament last spring. MIAC SAAC gave positive feedback on the event, but would like to bring more engagement and student-athlete participation if an event is done again in 2019.

6. Open Discussion

The group discussed upcoming Special Olympics events on-campus and goals for each institutional SAAC, as well as best practices for operations and events. Every school in attendance is planning at least one Special Olympics initiative in 2018-19. Several noted that their primary objective for the year was finding ways to better integrate the student-athlete population with the general population on campus. Some institutions have incentive-based programs for encouraging student-athletes to attend non-athletic events on campus like plays and concerts. Many also have "brother/sister" games to get each gender to attend one of the others' contests. Making student-athletes aware of mental health assistance and other on-campus resources remains a primary goal.

7. Adjourned – 9:04 p.m.

Next MIAC SAAC Meeting - February 11, 2019 at 8 p.m. via video conference

MIAC SAAC Open Discussion/Sharing Summary

Augsburg -

SO - Unified football in the fall and basketball in the spring

Goals - Gain Student Athlete involvement in events

Bethel

SO - Planning D3 week basketball unified game, swim event, and polar plunge.

Goals - Community outreach, read with kids preferred scheduling for athletes

Carleton

SO - Planning combined event with STO.

Goals - Efforts to integrate student-athletes with student body, build off of RISE diversity session from last year, hold mental health open discussions.

Concordia

SO - Work with MN and ND organizations. Bowling, basketball, bean bag events.

Goals - Service by teams with SO. Increase game attendance.

Gustavus

SO - Three events (flag football, basketball, and swimming). Parade with unified athletes in town.

Goals - SO involvement, inclusion and diversity, improve game day for each sport.

Hamline

SO - Football event with AUG, bean bag event, attempted kick ball last year.

Goals - Brother/sister teams, integrate student-athletes with student body.

Macalester

SO - Young athletes program, partner with UST, basketball halftime speech with Special Olympian.

Goals - Networking with alumni.

Saint Benedict

SO - Miracle league.

Goals - Trick or Treat for hunger, increase student attendance.

St. Catherine

SO - Volunteer at local tournaments, softball, bocce ball.

Goals - Networking with alumni, attendance at games.

Saint John's

SO - Basketball tournament.

Goals - Mental health.

St. Olaf

SO - Partnered with Carleton, hosting a few events.

Goals - Mental health (identifying partners on campus to address).

St. Thomas

SO - Host fall and spring games, polar plunge.

Goals - Make student-athletes aware of campus career resources, mental health, safety.