

MIAC Student Athletic Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

February 11, 2019

Video Conference



Attendees: Dominique Dabu, Kade Brannon (BU); Edward Hershowe, Jona Plevin (CAR); Haley Cuppett, John Reiten (CON); Maggie Leininger, Chase Johnson (GAC); Logan Harper (MAC); Sidney Schifler, Suintina Spehar (CSB); Ruth Rike (SCU); Mike Reilly (SJU); Laura Sondag (SMU); Paige McLeod (UST); Dan McKane, BJ Pickard, Kiana Verdugo (MIAC)

1. Introductions – 8:00 p.m.

Kiana Verdugo welcomed the group and lead introductions.

2. 2019 NCAA Convention Proposal Voting Results Review

Verdugo provided a verbal review of the voting results from the 2019 NCAA Convention, noting that 12 of the 13 MIAC institutional SAACs provided feedback on the most recent slate of Convention proposals. All but one proposal brought to the floor passed this year, with the only exception being the soccer/field hockey start date proposal, which was referred for further research.

3. National SAAC Update

Verdugo will be succeeded as the MIAC/UMAC national SAAC rep by Charlotte (Lottie) Ellis from Crown College, who will represent the two conferences for the next three years. Emily Carr (STO) will be the associate representative for the MIAC. Verdugo provided an update on various National SAAC endeavors, including the release of a mental health resource card, and campus SAAC best practice guide. The Special Olympics 50/50 Challenge has been extended through April 30, 2019 and campus SAACs were reminded to submit any partnerships and events to the NCAA. There is also a best practices guide for Faculty Athletic Representative (FAR) engagement, which campus SAACs are encouraged to review and meet with their FAR.

4. MIAC Updates

MIAC Commissioner Dan McKane thanked the group for their work on campus and for representing the conference so well in competition and beyond. McKane requested student-athlete feedback on the MIAC's non-traditional season trial. Student-athletes have viewed the trial as overwhelmingly positive, noting that the change provides greater opportunities for team bonding. Additionally, there is flexibility to either get on the field/court/ice or be in a classroom setting. MIAC Assistant Commissioner BJ Pickard provided an update on the Conference's upcoming Centennial Celebration. The Centennial Celebration will be held throughout the 2019-2020 academic year and will focus largely on digital initiatives, including #MIAC100 social media campaigns and a microsite honoring the history of the conference. Pickard requested feedback from current student-athletes on how best to include active competitors in the celebration. One element proposed was a "MIAC Legacy" campaign, recognizing MIAC families, as many current student-athletes have parents and siblings who also competed in the conference.

5. MIAC SAAC Initiative

Verdugo requested feedback from SAAC regarding the potential for a smaller social gathering at one of the Twin Cities campuses to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Special Olympics North America and the conference's continued partnership with Special Olympics. Bethel and Macalester SAAC's expressed interest in hosting the event.

6. NCAA Division III Week

The NCAA's annual Division III Week will be held April 1-7, 2019. Division III Week is an excellent way to engage and celebrate campus-wide. Participation is encouraged.

7. Open Discussion

Ruth Rike (SCU) requested feedback on campus dining hall setup and graduation athletic stoles and cords. Many MIAC SAACs are struggling to work with dining services for healthier food options and later cafeteria hours for student-athletes. SAACs are encouraged to contact their FAR to assist in advocating for positive dining changes. It was reported that no MIAC institution utilizes unique graduation stoles or cords for athletics at this time; however, the concept was met with positive feedback from the group. Hamline was unable to arrange for stoles or cords specific to student-athletes, but did allow for "Hamline Athletics" pins to be worn on gowns at graduation. The group also discussed gym credit requirements and whether it is appropriate or necessary for varsity athletes to be required to take Phy. Ed. credits while competing in a collegiate sport. Some institutions do allow for four years of lettering in a sport to satisfy the requirement, while others have shifted the requirement from physical activity to a "wellness" course. SAACs are again encouraged to speak with FARs to advocate for change.

8. MIAC SAAC Open Discussion/Sharing Summary

- ☐ Bethel: Volunteered with local elementary school. Preparing for Polar Plunge. Continued discussion for preferred scheduling/early registration for student-athletes and others involved in extracurricular activities.
- ☐ Carleton: Planning Valentine's Day themed fundraisers and working on Special Olympics rivalry events with St. Olaf.
- ☐ Concordia: Planning annual Golden Cobbs awards and is partnering with It's On Us for sexual violence awareness and prevention.
- ☐ Gustavus: Recently worked on Diversity and Inclusion Week and a Special Olympics "Speak Kindness" campaign.
- ☐ Macalester: Evaluating its past SAAC events and working to consolidate its efforts towards more practical and engagement-focused events in the future.
- ☐ Saint Benedict: Conducting shoe and food drives.
- ☐ St. Catherine: Working with its campus on dining options and athletic-specific graduation elements.
- ☐ Saint John's: Developing a mental health resource card and has continued its work with Special Olympics and Kids Fighting Hunger.
- ☐ Saint Mary's: D3 week celebrations. Working on an "extra gear" drive, as most student-athletes played multiple sports in high school and have extra gear available for donation, which can benefit low-income kids/schools.
- ☐ St. Thomas: Conducting shoe drive. Working with advisor to help student-athletes utilize collegiate athletic experience on resumes and in job interviews.

9. Adjourned – 8:49 p.m.