**THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**

**THE VISITORS OF JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY**

#### Minutes of the Athletics Committee

The Athletics’ Committee met on April 16, 2021, in Ballroom B/C of the Festival and Student Center. The meeting was called to order 8:02 a.m. by Vanessa Evans-Grevious, Chair.

# Present:

Evans-Grevious, Vanessa, Chair

Herod, Maribeth

Jankowski, Maria

Rothenberger, John

Welburn, Craig

## Others:

Alger, Jonathan, President

King, Charles, Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance

Gorton, Eric, University Communications, Public Affairs Coordinator

Knight, Jack, Associate University Counsel

Bourne, Jeffrey, Director of Athletics

Crawford, Meredith, Assistant A.D., Student-Athlete Leadership Program

Hartman, Lauren, Sports Dietitian

Phillips, Jennifer, Associate A.D. for Compliance/Student-Athlete Services/SWA

Polglase, Geoffrey, Deputy Director of Athletics

White, Kevin, Associate A.D. for Sports Programs/JMU Athletics Diversity & Inclusion Chair

Wood, Cliff, Senior Associate A.D. for Development

Ms. Evans-Grevious then called for a motion to approve the minutes. It was moved by Maribeth Herod and seconded by Craig Welburn to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2021, meeting of the Athletics’ Committee.

**Sports Update**

Jeff Bourne, Director of Athletics, recognized Head Coaches, Mark Byington, Men’s Basketball, Dane Pedersen, Swimming, Lauren Steinbrecher, Volleyball, and John Wolsh, Diving, on their respective CAA Coach of the Year honors and related team accomplishments from this past season. Each coach addressed the Athletics’ Committee and highlighted their team’s past success, both competitively and academically, as well as acknowledged the challenges brought forth by COVID, but noted resiliency of their athletes. Further, each coach expressed gratitude for the efforts of the Administration team and the Sports Medicine Staff. Mr. Bourne then presented a Sports Update. JMU teams currently sit with a 96-45-4 cumulative record for a .679 winning percentage. Football stands at 4-0, has been ranked No. 1 in the country for much of the season and also No. 1 on the FCS mid-season selection committee rankings; it will play its final regular season game tomorrow at home versus Richmond (3-0). Men’s soccer sits at 5-0-2 for the spring season, finished first in the CAA South Division, and will play for the CAA title on Saturday. Paul Zazenski earned his 100th career victory during the season and was named CAA Coach of the Year, while T.J. Bush was named CAA Defender of the Year, allowing one goal in 6 games. Women’s soccer finished 1-3-2 overall in the spring season. Volleyball went 7-3 overall, including 7-1 to win the South Division of the CAA. Miëtte Veldman was named CAA Rookie of the Year. Coach Steinbrecher earned her 200th career victory during the season. Field hockey sits at 4-1 (4-0 CAA) in the spring season and has clinched at least a share of the regular season. Cross country finished third in the CAA Spring Championship. Miranda Stanhope was named CAA Rookie of the Year after a second-place finish in the title meet. Swimming & Diving went 3-0 in the regular season before then capturing the program’s fourth consecutive CAA Championship in late March. Madison Cottrell was named CAA Championship Most Outstanding Performer. Men’s basketball was picked ninth in the CAA preseason poll, but flipped the script to win a CAA regular season championship, finishing 13-7 overall and 8-2. Matt Lewis was named CAA Player of the Year and was named to the Mid-Major Player of the Year award watch list. He suffered a season-ending injury before the final regular season game. Women’s basketball finished at 14-10 overall and 9-6 in the CAA. JMU finished second in the CAA and lost to eventual champion Drexel in the semifinals. Peyton McDaniel was named CAA Rookie of the Year and Kiki Jefferson First Team All-CAA. Women’s golf erased a 16-shot deficit on the final day and captured the fifth CAA title in program history by five strokes. Redshirt freshman Kendall Turner took home the individual title at the par-72, 6,050-yard East Course at Grandover Resort. With the victory, the Dukes have earned an automatic bid to one of the NCAA Regionals. Defending CAA Champion women’s tennis is off to a 11-3 start; Men’s Tennis sits at 5-6. Softball started 10-0 before its first loss and currently sits 19-1, and recently broke into the ESPN.com/USA Softball Top 25 ranking at #24. JMU is second nationally in winning percentage behind undefeated Oklahoma. Lacrosse sits 6-4 and started 10th in the preseason national polls. The program recorded its 500th victory all-time in a triumph over George Mason. Baseball sits at 5-7 overall while Marlin Ikenberry recorded his 400th career win during the season; despite a less than ideal start, Mr. Bourne acknowledged that the talent of the baseball program is not reflective of its record. Indoor track & field’s condensed season began with freshman Erica Moolman breaking the school record in the pole vault. JMU is expected to host three more CAA Championships this spring: track & field, lacrosse and softball. The JMU Athletics Diversity and Inclusion Council continues to help the department to prioritize initiatives in these areas. Mr. Bourne concluded his update by noting that committee chair, Kevin White, recently earned JMU’s 2021 Compass Award for Diversity & Inclusion in the Leadership category.

**JMU Athletics Diversity & Inclusion Council**

Kevin White, Associate Athletics Director for Sports Programs and JMU Athletics Diversity & Inclusion Council Chair, presented an overview of the diversity and inclusion efforts taken by the Athletics Department. Mr. White shared the current members of the Council and highlighted efforts by the various subcommittees, including a departmental book club and the Community Relations subcommittees’ recent partnership with Harrisonburg City Public Schools. Through this partnership, there a goal of collecting 1,000 books that celebrate diversity and inclusion, and have been approved by HCPS. Mr. White encouraged Committee members to donate a book, which be distributed by JMU student-athletes to all children in grades Pre-K and Kindergarten; a similar book drive has been planned with Rockingham County Public Schools in the Fall. Further, Mr. White noted JMU Athletics’ continued commitment to partnering with the local community, and shared that a community representative has been invited to attend future coaches’ meetings, in hopes of strengthening relationships between JMU Athletics and the surrounding communities. Mr. White concluded his update by acknowledging that JMU Athletics recently conducted a climate survey among both staff and student-athletes, to gauge the overall culture within JMU Athletics. He acknowledged that overall the data revealed that JMU Athletics receives an “A” for promoting an inclusive and diverse culture; however, noted that there is always room for improvement, especially within marginalized groups. He commended the fact that our student-athletes continue to stay engaged and challenge us as a department to be transparent and proactive in our DEI efforts. Mr. White thanked Jeff Bourne and President, Jonathan Alger, for their leadership on the issues of DEI and acknowledged that JMU is making strides in these areas, well beyond the efforts of other institutions.

**Title IX Participation Report/Student-Athlete Leadership Program/SAAC Update**

Jennifer Phillips, Associate Athletics Director/SWA**,** provided a summary of the recent Title IX Report conducted within the JMU Athletics Department. Ms. Phillips reported that overall, that the JMU Athletics program should be commended with its efforts to fully comply with Title IX requirements. She recognized that the coaches continue to do a great job managing their respective rosters and despite financial challenges, make accommodations where they are able. Given the NCAA’s legislation allowing an additional year, Ms. Phillips reported that currently seven Olympic sports athletes have requested to utilize an extra year; she anticipates some Football athletes also making such a request. In Academic Years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, Ms. Phillips reported that JMU met the requirements of Title IX Compliance Test 1, regarding providing proportional participation opportunities for males and females with respect to their overall enrollment in the University, and that the Department should continue to follow its current Roster Management Plan and monitor enrollment rates. Further, she shared that JMU fully complies with the Athletic Financial Assistance component of Title IX. The distribution of athletic scholarships is within the 1% allowable by OCR regulations in both academic years (AY 2019-20 – 0.1% and AY 2020-21 – 0.3%). The Title IX report yielded that there were no significant issues; however, Ms. Phillips acknowledged that the department was working to address some personnel positions (i.e. Dietitian and Director of Player Development (WBB) as well as making some additional accommodations for the Field Hockey Program, relating to its facility. Following questions from the Committee, Ms. Phillips concluded her update.

Meredith Crawford, Assistant Athletics Director, Student-Athlete Leadership Program, shared various SAAC initiatives from this past semester and offered a Dukes LEAD Update. Despite, COVID limitations, SAAC members have continued to be proactive in areas relating to Diversity and Inclusion (Dukes Let’s Talk, Dukes LEAD Programing, Unity Statement, Black Student-Athlete Summit, Diversity Climate Survey, MLK Twitter Campaign and Black History Month Social Media Challenge), Mental Health (Dukes Let’s Talk, Dukes LEAD Programming, and sponsoring various COVID Support initiatives) and Community Service (5K for Tom Kuster, Salvation Army Angel Tree, Open Doors Hygiene/Gold Gear Kits, Blue ridge Area Food Bank Drive, National Girls & Women in Sports Days, St Jude’s Children Hospital, Valentine’s Day Cards, Anicira Animal Shelter, Harrisonburg City Public Schools Diversity Book Drive, and American Cancer Society’s Relay for Life). The Dukes LEAD Program continues to offer workshops and various career development opportunities for our student-athletes. Roughly 300 student-athletes have participated in each virtual workshop session that has been offered. A large emphasis has been placed on Diversity and Mental Health, and it has been a goal to introduce diverse groups of individuals to our student-athletes; for reference, of the 15 workshops offered this year, 11 have involved persons of color. There has been an intentional effort to overlap initiatives through workshops, career development opportunities and community service efforts. Ms. Crawford thanked Jeff Bourne, Charles King, Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance, and President, Jonathan Alger, for their continued faith and support of the Leadership Program. She also highlighted various “wins” from this past year including partnerships with Athletes to Careers and the Center for Global Engagement here at JMU, which helped provide jobs and international internship opportunities for former and current student-athletes. Ms. Crawford the offered a snapshot of the Program moving forward, including increased staffing, the development of an International Leadership Institute, an Athlete Network, and additional Affinity Groups. While she referenced that the Program is essentially self-sufficient, she acknowledged the need for a larger endowment fund to support the Programs initiatives moving forward. Ms. Crawford concluded her update by taking questions from the Committee and acknowledging that while COVID has impacted how the Program has sponsored programming, it has also created an awareness that moving forward, some initiatives may be better served and attended, if they stay virtual in nature (i.e. SAAC meetings and some workshops).

**Sports Nutrition Update**

Lauren Hartman, Sports Dietitian,then provided a Sports Nutrition Update and shared a synopsis of the program’s growth since its establishment in 2018. She highlighted the success of the program and how it has directly benefited student-athlete growth and development, resulting in increased performance. Ms. Hartman offered recommendations and needs for the program moving forward, namely the need for additional staff to man the various fuel stations used to provide supplements to our student-athletes. She noted that fuel station hours of operation have increased by over 500% in three years, and that given a lack of paid staff, that accountability to provide oversight to the stations is next to impossible. Mr. Hartman shared some of the creative measures that have been put into place to help provide support, including the implementation of an eight-month Gatorade SNIP Fellowship (JMU was the first mid-major program to apply and secure this fellowship), Graduate Assistant positions, interns and student volunteers. Hampered by a lack of staff, Ms. Hartman referenced that her ability to fully serve student-athletes is diminished. She acknowledged that with the support of a larger, reliable, paid staff, she could focus her efforts in other needed areas, including increasing awareness of and access to sports nutrition services, implementing efforts that allow her to work more directly with student-athletes suffering from body image issues and poor health habits, and overall, allowing her to more fully interact with our student-athletes. Ms. Hartman then offered recommendations regarding future staff structures, and how such implementation would better optimize the total impact and efficiency of the program. Following questions from the committee and a brief discussion regarding needs of the program, Ms. Hartman concluded her update.

**Development Update**

Cliff Wood, Senior Associate Athletics Director for Development, provided a fundraising update. Total fundraising is up roughly $500K year over year, and is ahead of last year, but behind FYs 2018 and 2019. The Annual Fund’s growth is being slowed by the inability to sell tickets to football and basketball which affects the Duke Club Seat Contribution; however, Annual Fund numbers should continue to grow as we approach our May 15th priority deadline for football tickets. Year over Year numbers will continue to look strong until June. Mr. Wood noted that last year’s priority deadline was pushed back to June 15th so those comp numbers will decrease at the end of the fiscal year. Despite the freeze on new Capital, the Atlantic Union Bank Center continues to garner interest and donations. Mr. Wood shared that roughly 2-3 tours are given each week and that donors are excited for the new facility and want to contribute. Total donors are down year over year, largely due to decreases in incoming freshman parents and the Student Duke Club; however, Mr. Wood acknowledged that decreased donors continue to be a problem; he referenced that across all University fundraising, only 6% of alumni give back. Mr. Wood noted that donor increase is a goal for the new fiscal year and that the Duke Club will continue to be transparent regarding financial needs and work to promote philanthropy earlier with potential donors, notably among current students. Following a discussion by committee members regarding donor engagement, Mr. Wood concluded his update.

There being no further business, Ms. Evans-Grevious then called for a motion to adjourn. It was moved by Maria Jankowski and seconded by Maribeth Herod. The meeting was adjourned at 9:33 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Vanessa Evans-Grevious, Chair

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Donna L. Harper, Secretary to the Board