

**Athletic Board**  
**Wednesday, February 22, 2016**  
**Convocation Center, Multi-Purpose Room, 1pm**

**Present:** Matthew Streb (Chair), Josephine Umoren, Bill Cassidy, Lara Sala, Peter Garrity, Thomas Bough, Glenn Roby, Joe Bittorf, Mary Burns, Sarah Johnston-Rodriguez, Mark Groza, Sean Frazier, Randi Napientek, Lorena Martin, Quinton Rosser

**Guests:** Ryan Sedevie, Sr. Assoc AD/Advancement and External Affairs, Debra Boughton, Sr. Assoc AD/Finance and Chief of Staff, Melissa Dawson, Sr. Assoc AD/Director of SAASS, John Cheney, Sr. Assoc AD/Facilities and Event, Jerome Rodgers, Sr. Assoc AD/Compliance and Administration, Jay Vickers, Sr. Assoc AD/Sports Administration, Brad Ohrt, Head Strength and Conditioning Coach, Phil Voorhis, Head Athletic Trainer

- I. Call to Order – M. Streb (1:03 pm)
- II. Approval of November 30, 2016 Meeting Minutes. P. Garrity moved to approve; J. Bittorf seconded; motion carried unanimously.
- III. Introduce new men’s soccer coach Ryan Swan
- IV. Faculty Athletics Representative – M. Streb  
M. Streb apprised the group of the selection of this year’s LEaD Huskies, a program that fosters leadership skills among a targeted group of Huskie student-athletes. This year’s group has a combined GPA over 3.80, and are scheduled to meet with M. Streb next week.
- V. Athletic Department Update – S. Frazier  
S. Frazier provided a Winter Sports Update handout to the group. He briefly touched base on the some of the highlights from each sport, and discussed several possible post-season opportunities.  
  
R. Sedevie updated the group on the NCAA Golf Championships. This event will not only carry great revenue potential, but also sets the tempo for future hosting opportunities. R. Sedevie indicated that they have weekly “host” calls with the NCAA and Rich Harvest Farms to continually work on things like Operations Manuals, volunteer registration, uniforms, etc.  
  
S. Frazier also introduced a fundraising campaign that NIU Athletics will roll-out this year, entitled “Campaign to Sustain”. This fundraising opportunity is unique in that NIU Athletics is promising to commit a minimum of 7% of every \$1 raised back to the University. This commitment will be clearly expressed to donors, so they understand that their donations are not only helping NIU Athletics, but the University as a whole.
- VI. Major Issue: Overtraining (Guests: Brad Ohrt, Phil Voorhis)  
P. Voorhis presented a PowerPoint outlining the steps NIU is taking to prevent an incident like the one that occurred at the University of Oregon. Upon acceptance in NIU sports programs (and then annually), all student-athletes are required to complete a pre-participation physical, which includes collection of demographic information, insurance information, medical history, assumption of risk/drug testing consent, release of information, mental health screening, and a 2-part physical conducted by the Athletic Training Staff and Physician. Part 1 of the physical, done by an Athletic Trainer, will

check the student-athletes height, weight, vision, wingspan, BP, pulse, and ortho. Part 2, conducted by the Physician, reviews all paperwork, does a HEENT/Cardiac/system review, and runs blood work to test for Sickle Cell trait (Sickle Cell blood tests are mandated by the NCAA). Once the student clears the Physician check, the Physician notifies the Athletic Trainers, who then notify Compliance, who will give the final clearance for participation to commence for the student-athlete to the Coaching staff. The total process takes approximately 3-4 days.

B. Ohrt presented a PowerPoint that touched base on the incident that occurred at the University of Oregon, which left three players hospitalized. He stressed the importance of student-athletes maintaining a certain level of performance during their off-season/downtime so their bodies can handle the rigors of training required of high-level athletes, which was apparent had not occurred with the Oregon players. B. Ohrt provided the group with several handouts which laid out NIU's Strength & Conditioning plans and discussed an average day for their student-athletes. All injuries/sickle cell status are noted on the individual student-athletes daily plan, and every day each student-athlete is given a lift card, which is tailored to them specifically (green lift cards indicate the student is under a modified work-out/rehab program). At the end of each work-out, the student-athletes are graded on their performance, which allows the S&C staff to track the student's performance daily. This allows the staff to alter/tailor the work-out programs based on the student's needs, and also allows them to opportunity to see where a student might be needing help beyond the weight room (i.e. lower production might mean lack of sleep which might mean issues at home). It was proposed during discussion that GA's in the Nutrition field might assist in working with S&C to come up with some kind of Nutrition Education program.

## VII. Liaison Reports

a. Diversity Integration Group (D.I.G.) – Y. King/J. Rodgers  
No updates.

b. Finance and Facilities –J. Bittorf/ J. Cheney  
J. Bittorf discussed personnel changes, including the addition of Men's Soccer Head Coach, Ryan Swan, and the retirement of the Director of Procurement, Michelle Danza.

Athletics is currently looking into LED lighting for VEC, which would produce energy savings. G. Roby suggested looking into retrofits and D. Boughton suggested possible grants, such as the ones use for the Chick Evans Fieldhouse.

Sodexo and Learfield amended contracts are under review in the OGC. Sodexo's contract will allow NIU to increase commission from alcohol sales, which should produce positive revenue generation for Athletics. The Adidas' contract is also up for review, and Athletics is currently discussing possible amendments with Adidas.

Additionally, Athletics has begun the transport bid process to have one vendor bus/flight charters for NIU away games.

c. Student Staff Services –R. Napientek/M. Dawson  
No updates.

d. External Affairs – M. Groza/R. Sedevie  
M. Groza discussed upcoming events: Inside Huskie Basketball (Final show 2/23/17), Huskie Bowl (4/22/17), Victor E. Ball (4/29/17) and the NCAA Golf Championships (5/19/17–5/31/17). Upcoming events at the Convo include: Thomas Rhett, IHSA Wrestling, and the Yorkville Dog Show.

## Athletic Department Reports

### a. Strategic plan update – critical issue #3 – J. Vickers

J. Vickers discussed the Strategic Plan Critical issue #3, Financial Sustainability (handout provided). Goal #1 of Financial Sustainability is improving the fan experience to generate further awareness and increase attendance at sporting and Convocation Center events. Many objectives have been met under this goal, including securing high-profile events such as Theresa Caputo and Thomas Rhett, introducing “Meal Deals”, adding LED tables, etc. Some of the items that are in progress include the re-invention of the End Zone Club, which will be made into a ticketed space at a lower cost point, and working with corporate partners to improve the aesthetics in the Convo.

Goal #2 is maximizing current relationships and non-traditional methods to realize additional revenue streams. Completed objectives include the implementation of Office 365 within the athletic department and a new contract for IMG/Learfield Ticketing. Objectives in progress include installing Wi-Fi in the Yard at Huskie Stadium and a re-negotiation of the contract with Learfield Licensing Properties, in which Athletics is looking to get a royalty percentage off of licensing sales.

Goal #3 is developing a business plan that supports the vision of the NIU Athletics department. To fulfill this goal, Athletics has implemented an annual review of department priorities on Sport Specific webpages, housed on the HAF website. These webpages are designed to highlight and promote individual sport programs specific goals. In-progress goals include publicly announcing NIU Athletics “Campaign to Sustain”, securing 10 naming right opportunities, and announcing the Forever Huskies Endowment Program to support the Cost of Attendance in perpetuity.

### b. Revenue generation update (Victor E. Ball) – J. Vickers

J. Vickers provided a handout outlining the timeline for the Victor E. Ball, held on April 29<sup>th</sup> in the Chessick. The doors will open at 5:30pm, and the program will begin at 7:30pm. The goal is to raise \$300,000, which goes toward the cost-of-attendance for student-athletes. J. Vickers believes Athletics is on-point to reach this goal, and is currently working with partners and local businesses to generate attendance/donations.

### c. Title IX compliance presentation – D. Boughton

D. Boughton presented a PowerPoint discussing University compliance with Title IX. Title IX is a federal law that prohibits sex discrimination in education programs – including athletics programs – that receive federal funds. There are three things Athletics must meet to be compliant with Title IX: accommodation of interests and abilities, Athletics Financial Aid, and other Athletic benefits and opportunities.

Within the first category, there are three tests used to measure accommodation of interests and abilities: 1. Proportionality, 2. Continued program expansion for underrepresented sex, and 3. Fully and effectively accommodate the underrepresented sex (survey). NIU currently meets test one based on our unique circumstances where our male undergraduate population is greater than that of our female undergraduate population. In order to remain compliant, we must continually maintain our roster goals.

The second category looks at Athletics Financial Aid awards. Athletics Financial Aid Awards must be awarded proportionally (within 1%) to unduplicated (i.e. participants that count more than once in roster goals) participation rates. In 2015-2016, NIU awarded a total of \$8,029,119 in financial aid. \$4,880,373 (60.8%) of the total aid was awarded to male participants, and \$3,148,746 (39.2%) was awarded to

female participants. The unduplicated participation ratio should be 61.4%/38.6%, so NIU is within the 1% range.

The final category is a “laundry list” of Athletic benefits and opportunities that includes 11 items: equipment/supplies, scheduling of game/practice, travel and per diem allowances, tutoring, coaching, locker rooms and facilities/services, housing and dining facilities/services, publicity, support services, and recruitment of student-athletes.

In order to maintain compliance in all three areas, Athletics must provide periodic and everyday upkeep. D. Boughton stressed some of the steps NIU Athletics is taking to continue to remain compliant with Title IX:

1. Women’s sports program bi-annual discussion
2. Refine Gender Equity Plan created in last certification
3. Annual review and response to student-athlete program/exit surveys
4. Implementation of additional periodic survey of student-athletes and coaches on “Other Athletic Benefits and Opportunities”
5. Periodic review of NIU roster goals and possible additional financial incentives for compliance
6. Everyday analysis of equitable benefits and equal participation opportunities

d. NCAA financials report – D. Boughton

D. Boughton presented a PowerPoint on the NCAA Financial Report, which is an annual report of fiscal year activity that is used by university and department leadership to benchmark revenue and expense categories for other institutions. D. Boughton provided a handout of the different revenue and expense categories for athletics and discussed NIU’s 2015-2016 NCAA Financial Report, which showed NIU Athletics overall expenses exceeded the overall revenue by \$224,854.00. The main driver for the overall deficit is the Athletics Student Aid variance, where “cost-of-attendance” was implemented during the reporting cycle.

e. Football ticket prices – R. Sedevie

R. Sedevie provided a handout that laid out the Football season/single game ticket prices. As was discussed in the previous Athletic Board meeting, football ticket sales will be based on a dynamic ticketing structure, meaning prices will change depending on the day of the week (weekday vs. weekend) and the opponent (conference vs. non-conference). While it is still more beneficial to purchase season tickets, the dynamic structure should make ticket purchases more affordable to single ticket buyers. Additionally, the Eastside season ticket prices will be reduced to \$60.00, and Athletics will offer reduced prices to students during mid-week games.

f. Men’s and Women’s basketball ticket prices and comp ticket policy – R. Sedevie

The Men and Women’s basketball ticket prices and the Complimentary ticket policy (handouts provided) have not changed from 2016-2017.

VIII. Announcements/Adjournment

- a. The next Athletic Board meeting will be Wednesday, April 19, 2017, 1pm-3pm, in the Multi-Purpose Room.
- b. D. Boughton called the meeting to a close at 2:55 pm (M. Streb had to leave the meeting at 2:50); motion carried unanimously.