

UAAAC: 2019 – 2020 Report

by Leigh N. Hersey, PhD, Committee Chair

MEMBERS

The Committee benefited from many returning members who were able to contribute.

Mary Adams rejoined the Committee as the Faculty Athletic Representative (FAR), replacing Brett Bennett who served for a number of years.

New members need to be appointed from the College of Business and Social Sciences (replacing Tom DeNardin and Bruce Walker) and the College of Pharmacy (Savannah Posey). Leigh Hersey has completed her first three-year term as a member, serving as chair for the past two years. All other members have completed their second year of service.

Unfortunately, student-athletes were not appointed to the Committee this year. Members miss hearing their voices on issues impacting them.

MEMBERS: Leigh Hersey (Chair), Caroline Carpenter (Secretary), Mary Adams (FAR), Gloria Alvarez (community member), Todd Dooley, Jim Doull (community member), Ken Leppert, Anthony Malta, Scott McDonald, Meredith McKinnie, Barbara Michaelides, Lance Nickelson, Ashley Simmons

SUB-COMMITTEES

Sub-committees met throughout the year to focus on key issues.

EQUITY AND STUDENT ATHLETE WELL-BEING: Leigh Hersey (chair); Meredith McKinnie, Mary Adams. This sub-committee did not meet in the fall. They met several times in the spring.

They met with Scott McDonald to discuss re-engaging the Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) and to share responsibilities in overseeing this group. An active SAAC is vital for addressing issues at both a university and conference level. The group also addressed the need for continuing to improve academic opportunities for student-athletes and instilling a culture of classroom success. The importance of mental health awareness for student-athletes was discussed, with the hope of building on some of the initiatives the student-athletes already created. COVID-19 delayed these initiatives as sporting events at which to highlight them were cancelled. They continued discussing ways to bridge the bayou and encouraging interaction between the athletic and academic sides.

This group also sent out the Faculty Award survey, under the direction of Mary Adams, as created by the Sun Belt Conference. The sub-committee reviewed the applications. Dr. Shannon Banks,

Toxicology, was named the Faculty Award winner and his name has been sent to the Sun Belt Conference. Due to COVID-19 halting events, it is unclear when the public announcement will be made.

ACADEMICS, INTEGRITY, AND COMPLIANCE: Mary Adams (chair); Jim Doull, Barbara Michaelides, Todd Dooley, Anthony Malta. This group continued to meet to improve student-athlete compliance standards.

GOVERNANCE AND FISCAL INTEGRITY: Ken Leppert (chair); Scott McDonald, Lance Nickelson. This group coordinated a revision and update of the UAAAC Guidelines. The revisions streamlined the processes and updated contact names.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Updated UAAAC Guidelines
- Awarded Dr. Shannon Banks the Faculty Award, based on nominations submitted by student-athletes.
- Awarded Tyler Edward, Academic Counselor, Staff Award,

LOOKING AHEAD

New members need to be nominated and incorporated.

Status of chair needs to be confirmed.

Re-engagement of student-athlete members needs to be incorporated.

Continue to bridge the bayou and unite athletics and academics.