

Athletic Council Annual Report for Academic Year 2018–2019

Athletic Council (AC) met seven times in the 2018–2019 academic year.

AC completed its standard business beginning with the annual evaluation of three physical activity instructors. The council's three elected faculty members spent time observing the classes of Jeremiah Kneeland, Elizabeth Ghilardi, and Joe Burke, and followed with written evaluations submitted to Gail Cummings-Danson (Director of Athletics).

The council has annual meetings with several members of the Skidmore community to keep the committee updated on current policies affecting Athletics.

Gail Cummings-Danson reports on all legislation presented at the National College Athletics Association (NCAA) before national voting on measures occurs and offers exposition on any changes that could potentially affect Division III schools. This academic year there were no major policy changes to report.

Jamin Totino (Director of Student Academic Services) and Kim Marsella (Director of Academic Advising) report annually on student-athlete academic data such as GPA, academic standing, and tutoring usage rates. Some key findings worth sharing this year:

- Most student-athletes hold above a 3.0 GPA
- Percentages of student-athletes who receive unsatisfactory or failing grades are below that of the general student population
- The Peer Academic Coaches (PACs) program has proven to be a benefit to students who take advantage of it. Ways to increase student usage of the program are being considered, including time and location of sessions according to individual sports.
- There's a healthy partnership between OAA and SAS, and between OAA/SAS and Athletics to support teams and individual students

Tempe Landi (Associate Director of the Skidmore Fund) provided a report from the Advancement Office, which detailed the significant amount of fundraising Athletics is responsible for annually. This presents a tremendous burden on student-athletes who must also raise funds for field trips, some of which are part of their regular schedule. It is worth noting that profits from summer camps and building rentals do not contribute to the fundraising, but goes back to the College. The report also detailed several fundraisers and solicitations that Advancement coordinates each year including:

- The Thoroughbred Cup in June
- Phone-a-thon (This is moving from February to April to avoid competition with Giving Tuesday)
- All in to Win in October - This fundraising effort has shifted to a dollar goal as opposed to a donor goal, and this gives Advancement the opportunity to talk with students about philanthropy. Students then reach out to other students about giving, and the students on AC said they appreciated this new approach. The new approach also resulted in a significant increase in total dollars donated.
- There are also team camps, individual team fundraisers, and coach solicitations all year.

The report concluded with information regarding the completion of the Valentine Boathouse and a brief update on the current campaign for athletic facilities.

Catherine DeLorenzo (Director of Admissions) provided a report highlighting the record number of applications this year (over 11,000 compared to 10,000 last year). In terms of Athletics, the report clarified admission procedures and the committee discussed the difficult task coaches face recruiting student-athletes based on both their athletic potential and their ability to successfully navigate standard admissions criteria. The other big change in Admissions is the use of SLATE—a communication product that helps Admissions more effectively communicate with students about missing pieces of their applications, etc. This has made the admissions process more efficient and has helped response time when Admissions sends decisions out.

During their winter meeting, the Board of Trustees approved launching an RFP process for the first-phase of the new sports facility. Architecture firms have now been on campus to look at spaces and proposals are due June 14. The decision will be made regarding the selected firm around the third week of June. AC discussed the importance of keeping our facilities up-to-date and safe in terms of the College's health moving forward—providing a robust campus experience for current and future students. AC also recognized the importance of having IPPC involved at various stages and has confirmed that IPPC has been involved in the RFP process for the new Athletic facilities.

One of the biggest accomplishments this year was the approval of credit for athletic participation. Curriculum Committee agreed to the proposal to offer one-credit per sport, per semester for Varsity sports. This brings Skidmore in line with many peer institutions. As announced via all-faculty email at the beginning of the semester, this policy will be implemented in fall of 2019. PA-VAP will be the code: Physical Activity–Varsity Athletic Participation.

The council annually selects the recipient of the Tim Brown Award, which highlights and celebrates athletic and academic excellence of Skidmore's highly impressive student-athletes. Out of a truly stellar pool of candidates, Maeve Foley was awarded the honor in recognition of her outstanding achievement.

Finally, this report concludes with some highlights from Megan Buchanan (Associate Director of Athletics) on the amazing work that the Student Athletic Advisory Committee (SAAC) has accomplished this year:

- Stampede subdivision helped organize Pack the Rink, Big Green Scream, and DIII Week (collected over \$1,000 in change wars for Special Olympics)
- Community service branch continued its work with Saratoga Bridges, Skidmore Cares, and Adopt a Family. A couple of SAAC members also took on major community projects, including Raking Leaves for Seniors of Saratoga
- This past year SAAC started a new partnership with Double H Ranch and spent a day volunteering and hosting our first *Be the Match* campaign on campus. As a result, over 40 people registered for the national bone marrow registry

- *Show Your Sport* continued the *Change Direction Campaign* to raise awareness for mental health issues. In an effort to break the silence surrounding mental health, SAAC attended a ConnectMore training in the fall and several teams participated in the *Out of the Darkness Suicide Prevention Walk* helping Skidmore bring in over \$6,000 towards our goal

Athletic Council Members 2018–2019

Caroline D’Abate (Management & Business, Chair Fall 2018)

Jason Ohlberg (Dance, Chair Spring 2019)

Karen Kellogg (Environmental Studies & Sciences)

Gail Cummings-Danson (Director of Athletics)

Megan Buchanan (Associate Director of Athletics)

Elizabeth Levy (Student-Athlete Representative)

Jane Huber (SGA Representative)

*This year concludes Caroline D’Abate’s three-year term on AC. In fall 2019, T.H. Reynolds will join AC and Karen Kellogg will serve as Chair.