

## ATHLETIC COUNCIL (AC) ANNUAL REPORT, 2024-2025

### **Introduction**

Athletic Council (AC) conducted its standard business including the evaluation of physical activity course instructors, meeting with several College offices that affect Athletics (Admissions, Advancement, and Student Academic Services), selecting the Tim Brown Award recipient, and receiving updates from the Athletics Director and Associate Director. Additionally, we discussed housing options for Fall pre-season athletes. Athletic Council met on 9/17, 10/15, 12/10, 1/27, 2/24, and 3/24 during the 2024–2025 academic year.

### **Physical Activity Instructor Evaluations**

AC's three faculty members (Kate Berheide, Lucy Oremland, and Daniel Peterson) observed the classes of Lindsay King, Joe Martin, and Ron Plourde and prepared written evaluations that were submitted to Gail Cummings-Danson.

### **Annual College Office Meetings**

To stay updated with college policies and patterns that impact student-athletes, AC holds annual meetings with the Offices of Advancement, Admissions, and Student Academic Services. This year AC met with Brian DeMichele (Associate Director, Major Gifts), Matt Cohen (Senior Associate Director of Admissions), and Jamin Totino (Director of Student Academic Services) A brief overview of these meetings follows:

*Advancement* – On December 10, Brian DeMichele reported on the “All in to Win” fundraising campaign. Started in 2017, the annual campaign of crowd funding and larger gifts helps athletics achieve their fundraising goals for the year. Fundraising efforts (including this and others) are critical to bridge the gap between teams’ operating budgets and the money they need to function throughout the year. This past September, Advancement exceeded their \$250,000 goal with all teams meeting or exceeding their specific fundraising goals. Brian also provided updates on the funding for the newly-opened McCaffery-Wagman Tennis and Wellness Center, the upcoming baseball field project, and the Friends of Skidmore Athletics (FOSA).

*Admissions* – On January 27, Matt Cohen provided an overview of how Admissions and the Athletic Department work together to recruit student athletes and outlined the “slotting system,” which allows coaches to provide feedback on students eligible for admission who would also be strong candidates to represent their respective team. Matt also provided an update on the early decision process: data shows that 95% of Early Decision I applicants are accepted, approximately a third of which are athletes.

*Student Academic Services* – On February 24, Jamin Totino gave an update on student athletes’ performance in the classroom noting that their average GPA is higher than non-athletes. This is due a combination of factors including the recruitment of very talented student athletes (both inside the classroom and out) and because each team has a staff member from Student Academic Services assigned to them.

### **Tim Brown Award**

AC annually selects the recipient of the Tim Brown Award, which highlights and celebrates athletic and academic excellence of Skidmore's highly impressive student athletes. Danny Magnuson '25 (Hockey) was awarded the honor in recognition of his outstanding academic and athletic achievements.

### **Pre-season housing for Fall Student Athletes**

Some students participating in a Fall sport must arrive a few weeks prior to the start of Fall classes for team practice obligations. If a student opts to live on campus, they are guaranteed housing on campus during that window of time. However, some students opt to live off campus during the academic year and struggle to find acceptable/affordable short-term rentals prior to the official start of the term. This issue has been raised by students in years past and solutions aimed at providing affordable short-term options (e.g., hotels outside of town) haven't fully solved the problem because the core issue is that short-term, affordable housing in Saratoga Springs during the month of August is rare if not non-existent. However, we wanted to address the anxiety students may feel during the summer months when trying to plan out their August living arrangements. To that end, earlier this Spring, Gail Cummings-Danson (Athletics Director) worked with SAAC to create a message that was sent by SAAC to all impacted Fall student athletes to alert them about the issue and lay out the options, namely (1) live on campus during the academic year and be guaranteed housing during the preseason or (2) live off campus and take responsibility of securing housing during relevant weeks in August.

### **AC Membership 2024–2025:**

**Kate Berheide** (Sociology)

**Megan Buchanan** (Associate Director of Athletics)

**Jazlin Chen** (Student-Athlete Representative from SAAC) *Fall 2024*

**Gail Cummings-Danson** (Athletics Director)

**Sarah Hailey** (Student-Athlete Representative from SGA) *Spring 2025*

**Brooke LaVallee** (Student-Athlete Representative from SAAC) *Spring 2025*

**Lucy Oremland** (Mathematics and Statistics)

**Oscar Perez Hernandez** (Professor of Spanish and Associate Dean of the Faculty)

**Daniel Peterson (AC Chair)** (Psychology)

**Bernardo Ramirez Rios** (Anthropology, NCAA Faculty-Athletics Representative) *Spring 2025*

**Avery Rogers** (Student-Athlete Representative from SGA) *Fall 2024*.

In 2025-2026, **Kate Berheide** will continue her faculty appointment and **Daniel Peterson** will continue as chair. Academic year 2024-2025 concludes **Lucy Oremland's** appointment so she will rotate off with **Karen Kellogg** beginning her three-year term as the third faculty representative. Karen will be in London this Fall so **Mike Dunn** has graciously agreed to serve as a one-semester replacement.