

ATHLETIC COUNCIL (AC) ANNUAL REPORT, 2025–2026

Introduction

Athletic Council (AC) conducted its standard business including the evaluation of physical activity course instructors, meeting with several college offices that affect athletics (The Learning Commons, Admissions, Financial Aid, and Advancement), selecting the Tim Brown Award recipient, and receiving updates from the Athletics Director and Associate Director. Additionally, AC devoted significant attention this year to the topic of student athlete academic success and support resources. Athletic Council met on 9/15, 10/20, 11/24, 12/8, 1/27, and 3/17 during the 2025–2026 academic year.

Physical Activity Instructor Evaluations

AC's three faculty members (Kate Berheide, Karen Kellogg, and Daniel Peterson) observed the classes of David Bostick, Brad Champion, and Amanda Wadsworth 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 key college offices. This year, AC met with Matt Cohen (Senior Associate Director of Admissions), Brian DeMichele (Associate Director, Major Gifts), Brenda Pashley Rabbitt (Director of Academic Support and Enrichment), Beth Post-Lundquist (Director, Financial Aid), and Jamin Totino (Director of Student Academic Services).

The Learning Commons (Formerly Student Academic Services) – A significant focus of AC's work this year was supporting the academic success of student athletes. On November 24, Jamin Totino and Brenda Pashley-Rabbitt joined AC to discuss the various services The Learning Commons offers to support students and to brainstorm ways to specifically better support first year student athletes (a topic of focus born from a survey sent to all student athletes). Many possible pathways were explored. Ultimately, SAAC will be creating a scavenger hunt to help incoming student athletes be more aware of resources available to them on campus (including The Learning Commons and Brenda Pashley's time management workshop) and will be working more directly with coaches so they are aware as well.

Admissions – On January 27, Matt Cohen provided an overview of how Admissions and the Athletic Department work together to recruit student athletes.

Financial Aid – Also on January 27, Beth Post-Lundquist provided an overview of Financial Aid's role in the athletic recruitment process. AC agreed that Financial Aid should now be included as part of the yearly visit cycle of key college offices.

Advancement – On March 17, AC was joined by Brian DeMichele to discuss various fundraising efforts that impact athletics. All in to Win exceeded its goal for 2025-2026 raising over \$429,000. Two existing facilities need more funding to be paid in full: Matt Ferrari baseball field (~\$600,000) and the McCaffrey-Wagman tennis and Wellness Center (\$2,000,000). Advancement is currently exploring options for building a new riding center or renovating the current one (~\$25,000,000).

Tim Brown Award

AC annually selects the recipient of the Tim Brown Award, which highlights and celebrates academic and athletic excellence of Skidmore's highly impressive student athletes. David Koffler (Men's Lacrosse, '26) was awarded the honor in recognition of his outstanding academic and athletic achievements.

SAAC/SGA Initiatives

Student representatives from SAAC/SGA undertook a number of initiatives this year aimed at improving the student athlete experience and strengthening connections between athletes and the broader campus community. These included conducting a survey of student athletes on their Skidmore sports experience and developing a campus resource scavenger hunt for first-year athletes. SAAC also followed up on the fall semester Opt-In housing pilot, in which incoming first-year athletes were given the option to room with athletes from other teams. The pilot was viewed positively by students, and Residential Life indicated openness to continuing the program.

AC Membership 2025–2026:

Kate Berheide (Sociology)

Megan Buchanan (Sr. Associate Director of Athletics and Senior Woman Administrator)

Gail Cummings-Danson (Athletics Director)

David Cohen (Associate Dean of the Faculty for Diversity, Development and Faculty Affairs)

Mike Dunn (Fall 2025, Management and Business)

Karen Kellogg (Spring 2026, Environmental Studies and Sciences)

Brooke LaValle (Student-Athlete Representative from SAAC)

Daniel Peterson (AC Chair, Psychology)

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

Avery Rogers (Student-Athlete Representative from SGA)

In 2026–2027, **Karen Kellogg** will serve as AC Chair. **Kate Berheide** will continue her faculty appointment. The 2025–2026 academic year concludes **Daniel Peterson's** appointment, and **Mark Rye** will begin his term as the third faculty representative.