

The Ohio State University Athletic Council
Annual Report 2022 – 2023
Judy Villard Overocker, Ph.D., Chairperson

The Athletic Council, a standing committee of the University Senate, establishes and considers policy involving, but not limited to: the income and expenditures budget, the schedules for seasonal and post-seasonal play in relation to the effect on student-athlete well-being, grants and other financial aid to athletes, student-athlete eligibility, student grievance procedures and sportsmanship polices related to athletics, awards to athletes, ticket prices and ticket distribution, and public and campus relations of the athletic program. In addition, the Council also participates with the President in selecting the Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR). The Council met the first Wednesday of every month during the academic year to conduct business.

Athletic Council is comprised of sixteen voting members including: eight regular tenure-track faculty (four elected by Faculty Council and four appointed by the President), two undergraduate students, one graduate student, one professional student, two alumni, and two staff. There are five ex-officio non-voting members, including the Director of Athletics, the Vice President of Student Life, the Faculty Athletics Representative, the Directors of Student Athletics Support Services Office (SASSO), and the President of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee.

In the 2022-2023 academic year, Athletic Council had three standing committees: Academic Progress and Eligibility Committee (AP&E), Finance and Facilities Committee (FiFa), and Equity and Student-Athlete Well-Being (ESAW).

Summary of Athletic Council Meetings

Each monthly meeting highlighted the athletic success of currently active teams, plus members were encouraged to attend athletic events as much as possible to support the 1,000+ student-athletes at the university level. Athletic Council members shared updates and conducted the following business at meetings during the 2022-2023 academic year.

September 7, 2022 - Gene Smith, Athletic Director, provided an update on the current status of the Athletic Department, including the number of staff and student-athletes. Council members completed goal setting and get acquainted activities.

October 5, 2022 – Sio St. John and Alex Sommer (and other student athletes, including Council member Nina LeFlore) presented an overview of the Buckeye Inclusion Program and the impact of the student-athletes' recent historical walks beginning in Selma, Alabama. Increased fees for the OSU Golf Course were approved.

November 2, 2022 – Kacy King, Director of SASSO, provided a brief history of the Meichelle Willes Academic Award and announced the winners: Jenna Zunic (women's field hockey) and

Brayden Durbin (men's soccer). Supporting coaches/staff Jarred Martin and Brian Maisonneuve were also in attendance. The Athletic Council reviewed its by-laws and made recommendations for potential changes.

December 7, 2022 – Ben Givens, Secretary of the OSU Senate, share how Athletic Council fits into the OSU Senate structure, plus an overview of the university initiatives and processes for selecting a new President for The Ohio State University. Council members were given opportunity to provide input to the selection process as it relates to the athletics department and student-athlete success. Carly Grimshaw explained the institutional government standards that all Big Ten institutions are required to have and that a report is to be shared each year. The focus is expanding to include harassment and discrimination and looking for better ways to get the word out to faculty. It was suggested to have the document on the Senate webpage. The report was approved by the Athletic Council.

January 2023 – The committee did not meet in regular session, but came together to represent The Ohio State University at the Peach Bowl football game in Atlanta, Georgia.

February 1, 2023 – Jordan Birkemeier shared a Buckeye Club update, including past challenges, recent successes and future plans. Membership has grown from 8,800 to 16,000 members and revenue has increased from \$13 to \$22 million in 2022. All revenue goes to student-athlete scholarships. Gene Smith reported 16 teams in the Top 25 and the search for the new commissioner of the Big Ten is underway. Article II, Section 3 (Engagement Program) concerning council members being available as a resource to coaches and student-athletes (recruiting and academic advice for the classroom) was voted to be removed from the Athletic Council by-laws since this responsibility is no longer applicable to the council's work.

March 1, 2023 - Lauren Peters from women's gold and Nick Erwin from baseball were given the Michelle Willis Academic Achievement Award. Each recipient shared their challenges and successes as a student-athlete.

April 5, 2023 – SASSO Director Kacy King shared a detailed report of the background, success and impact of the SASSO program. More than 760 student-athletes will be recognized at the Student- Athlete Scholar Awards Banquet on April 10. Gene Smith feels blessed to have great people on the Athletics Department staff and now they are nearly fully staffed.

May 3, 2023 - As an annual celebration of champions, Sophie Jacques from women's ice hockey (also named 2023 Patty Kazmaier Memorial Award recipient) was present to share about her personal and team's success over the past five years. Council members were thanked for their service with individual notes of appreciation from the chair.

Summary of Committee Work

Academic Progress and Eligibility Committee (AP&E)

The Academic Progress and Eligibility Committee (AP&E) is charged with reviewing all regulations concerning intercollegiate eligibility at the university in consultation with the Director of Athletics, the Director of SASSO, and the Associate Director of Athletics Compliance. The committee reviews the academic performance and progress of student athletes and selects the winners of the Big Ten Conference Medal of Honor and Student-Athlete Academic Achievement Award. The Committee is comprised of all eight faculty members and one student member of Athletic Council.

Chair: Jennifer S. Cheavens, Ph.D.

Committee Members:

(Faculty) Judy Villard Overocker, Chris Zirkle, Brian Turner, Jennifer Cheavens, Kristin Stanford, Kwame Agyemang, W. C. Benton, Nicole Kraft
(Graduate Student) Katie Conner

Ex-Officio Members: Kacey King (SASSO Executive Director), Janine Oman (Senior Deputy AD), Carey Hoyt (Senior Associate AD), Shaun Richard (Executive Associate AD), Dan Cloran (Executive Associate AD), Carly Grimshaw (Sport Administration), Jamie Wood (Sport Administration), Doug Archie (Senior Associate AD, Compliance), John Davidson (Faculty Athletic Representative), Gene Smith (Athletics Director)

Summary of AP & E Meetings

September 7, 2022

The first meeting of the year opened with introductions and the review of responsibilities, duties, and schedule of the committee. Missed Class Time (MCT) plans were reviewed for football, men's and women's ice hockey, field hockey, men's and women's golf, pistol, rifle, softball, men's and women's swimming/dive, men's and women's soccer, men's and women's tennis, men's and women's volleyball, rowing, and men's and women's lacrosse. All plans were reviewed and either required no action from the committee or were approved.

October 5, 2022

MCT plans for winter and spring sports (men's and women's basketball, men's and women's cross-country, synchronized swimming, wrestling, men's and women's gymnastics, and baseball) were reviewed. The committee discussed the ways in which the new GEs are impacting student-athletes. The main issue for student-athletes is the way the new GEs interact with the transfer landscape. SASSO reported that getting courses and credits approved is taking a substantial amount of time and coaches often want to be able to tell prospective student-athletes how their record will be assessed early in the process. Additionally, the new GEs are likely to add time to degree for many transfer students and other student-athletes, many of whom are not receiving full-ride scholarships.

November 2, 2022

Matt Bartlebaugh (compliance) presented the history and important elements of the Academic Stress Test. The committee learned about the various risk factors (preparedness, outcomes, independence from athletic influence, and academic integrity) from the pre-collegiate level (high school) and throughout the collegiate experience. The committee discussed the need for a better process at the level of the university to evaluate transfer transcripts as student-athletes often lose credits when they transfer which can impact eligibility in the first semester post-transfer.

December 7, 2022

The meeting topic was Equity and Technology for student-athletes. The committee discussed the university's decision to roll-back the iPad initiative (i.e., Digital Flagship) and whether or not this would adversely and differentially impact student-athletes. It was also noted that in two years, travel will be farther and longer with the addition of west coast teams to the conference. Prior to digital flagship, the Athletics Department provided devices so students could stay engaged in courses while traveling. However, this was removed from the budget when digital flagship launched. Student-athletes are now getting scholarship money from the Allston decision, and they can use this money to buy devices. Additionally, students on aid can be reimbursed for up to \$1,000 for devices. Finally, SASSO owns laptops that are available for student-athletes to borrow.

January 17, 2023

The committee discussed ways in which COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the scholastic performance of some student-athletes. The committee specifically discussed two sports in which multiple student-athletes had Academic Recovery Plans. These plans are approved by the FAR (Faculty Athletic Representative) and SASSO, but the AP&E Committee was also briefed. The majority of the meeting was spent discussing one student-athlete who had a mitigation plan that needed to be reviewed and approved by the committee. Mitigation plans are necessary when a student-athlete is otherwise ineligible for competition under NCAA rules. The committee met two times to provide feedback on the mitigation plan with the primary suggestions being to incorporate more detail about what would happen if particular steps in the plan were not met. The committee also planned to hear from the SASSO counselor working with this student at a later meeting.

February 1, 2023

The Director of SASSO, Kacy King, provided the committee with the Fall Semester report on the academic performance and progress of student-athletes. The committee was provided with reports on the GPAs and academic progress at the level of teams. Kacy discussed the difficulties associated with being short-staffed in SASSO this year. Plans for addressing the staffing shortage were discussed.

March 1, 2023

Selection was completed for the male and female recipients of the Big Ten Medal of Honor. The committee also reviewed the Track and Field MCT plans with Jamie Wood, sports administrator.

Jamie brought the break-down of the number of classes that would be missed by specific student-athletes. This information addressed the issue that Track and Field (and all sports) are required to complete MCT for anytime the team is competing, but in Track and Field, often only a subset of the team travels.

April 26, 2023

The committee discussed the proposed Ohio Senate Bill 83, with a focus on the ways in which student-athletes and the Athletic Department might be uniquely impacted. Primary concerns included: (1) Increased difficulty in recruiting student-athletes and coaches; (2) International student-athletes, particularly those from China, are likely to be particularly impacted; (3) NIL initiatives might be impacted, as industry may be scared away from Ohio –similar to the discussions of industry and organizations moving away from Florida or North Carolina during the time of the “bathroom bill”; (4) 10% of student-athletes are graduate students and graduate programs that require accreditation are likely to be impacted; (5) NCAA requires attestation of DEI work that Athletics does as a department; (6) Student-athlete affinity groups would be impacted; (7) Three-year degrees might impact eligibility for some student-athletes; and (8) Events to highlight specific groups (e.g., military appreciation, PRIDE, women’s history) might be impacted. This was the last meeting of the year and all committee members were thanked for their service.

Finance and Facilities Committee (FiFa)

The Finance and Facilities Committee (FiFa) reviews and makes recommendations to the Athletic Council regarding the Department of Athletics’ budget, reviews use /condition and modification of facilities, reviews and recommends changes in ticketing, and reviews proposals and fees regarding the University Golf Course. FiFa is comprised of four faculty members, one staff member, one alumni council representative, and two students. Ex-officio members include assistant athletics directors as appointed by the Director of Athletics and a representative from the Office of University Resource Planning and Institutional Analysis. Presenters at FiFa meetings this year included: Brett Scarbrough, Associate AD Ticketing and Premium Seating; Jordan Birkemeier, (Associate AD, Annual giving and Buckeye Club; Joe Odoguardi, Executive Associate AD, Finance / CFO; Mike Penner, Executive Associate AD, Internal Operations; and Marc Lucas, General Manager, OSU Golf Club.

Summary of FiFa Meetings

September 28, 2022 (Schottenstein Center – Fred Taylor Room)

- Presentation from Marc Lucas on the Golf Course
 - Memberships are strong. Instituted a \$10,000 initiation fee in 2022. Waitlist is over 400. Proposed an 8% increase in golf fees. Proposal approved unanimously.
- Budget overview presented by Joe Odoguardi

- Odoguardi gave an overview of the current year budget, since many members of FiFa are new this year. Ohio State athletics received \$2.5 million for SafeLite Auto logo on the field. It is a 2-year deal.
- Ticket update by Brett Scarbrough
 - 89% ticket renewal rate for football; Other renewal rates: 85% (men's basketball), 80% (women's basketball), 82% (men's ice hockey), 80% (women's volleyball), & 85% (wrestling)

October 19, 2022 (Jennings Wrestling Facility – Kaufman Lounge)

- Brett Scarbrough gave a ticket update
 - Same opponents/potentially different dates for 2023 football
- Restoration Fee presentation by Mike Penner
 - Every football ticket will have a \$2 restoration fee that will yield about \$1million/year
 - Need \$25 million to upkeep stadium which includes \$11 million to improve restrooms, \$2 -3 million to fix concrete; \$500,000 for trash cans
- Started discussion on two-year faculty/staff football ticket renewal

November 16, 2022 (Bill Davis Stadium – Baseball Conference Room)

- Men's basketball ticket prices for 2023-24 presented by Brett Scarbrough
 - Days of 18-20 home games is over (because of the neutral site games)
 - No increase for 2023-24 – Approved unanimously
- Point system for football and men's basketball
 - No refunds for faculty/staff since the document was created
 - Loyalty bonus – change to consecutive years
 - Got rid of two ticket per household limit (especially affected couples who both worked at Ohio State)

December – No meeting

January – No meeting

February 15, 2023 (Schottenstein Center – Ticket Office Conference Room)

- Presentation by Kate Nushart on changes to student football tickets
 - Change is needed to improve inventory distribution, simplify the buying experience and to reward repeat buyers
 - Proposed changes include: creating a “lottery” for ticket purchases and assigning ticket packages based upon demand
 - New elements to the plan will reward longevity in purchasing student tickets and create a non-traditional student section
 - Kate will work with students/student organizations on finalizing plans

March 29, 2023 (Fawcett Center – 10th Floor Conference Room)

- Mike Penner gave a facility update. The Ice Rink replacement design (\$2.7 million) will be north of the Covelli Center.
- Joe Odoguardi presented the proposed FY 2024 budget. Within the budget there is \$5 million for student-athletes due from the Alston case (2nd year). There will only be six home football games in 2023 and only 16 home men's basketball games. The Athletic Department will begin paying on the Pandemic Deficit Operating Loan (\$1.9 million/year for 30 years). The Athletic Department has reserves to cover any deficit in FY24 (projected to be ~ \$20 million).
 - Because of two fewer home football games (with two premier games in 2023), ticket sales are projected down ~ \$17.5 million. Payroll is projected up ~ \$6 million and there will be ~ \$19.7 million in facility debt payments.

Equity and Student Athlete Well-Being Committee (ESAW)

The Equity and Student Athlete Well-Being Committee (ESAW) monitors all issues related to student-athlete equity and well-being. The Committee serves in an advisory capacity to student welfare and development programs within the Athletic Department and monitors and fosters communication regarding student-athletes to the university and the general public. The Committee is comprised of four faculty members and two student members of Athletic Council, one being an undergraduate student. Ex-officio members include the Chair of Athletic Council, the Director of Athletics, a member of the Student-Athlete Advisory Board, a representative from the Office of Legal Affairs, and Associate Athletic Director and the Faculty Athletic Representative (FAR).

Summary of ESAW Meetings

September 2022

Logan Hittle, Director of Name, Image, and Likeness, presented updates on NIL at OSU. He discussed the pillars of NIL (Empowerment, Education, and Execution) and how OSU is working to educate and inform student athletes as to their options (via online modules, team specific education, and open education) – all with the goal of having student athletes being trained and qualified to develop their own personal brand, negotiations, money management, etc., plus mitigating risks to the university. To date, there are 1,356 deals at OSU averaging \$2,910 per deal, and 358 athletes (across all sports) are involved – totaling \$3.75 million. New updates include an NIL 'job board' at OSU which can connect athletes to potential sponsors and also allows direct reporting back to OSU.

October 2022

Pat Kindig and Tracy Hedrick helped committee members to learn more about social media education and marketing at OSU. This group consists of sports information, graphic design team, digital marketing, things like "scarlet out the Shoe", etc. This department is the 'digital voice' of the university and oversees social media, official website, email marketing, and the

official OSU athletics app. They are the communication between OSU athletics and the fan (OSU is a national leader in this role). They promote fan-to-OSU communication and fan-to-fan communication. OSU is the #1 in most followed social media programs (twitter, FaceBook, Instagram, youtube) and led the country in 'interactions' (likes, shares, retweets). In followership throughout sports – OSU is top 5 in several sports and top 10 in others. The biggest growth was in tiktok, but it is a challenge to balance/regulate all of them. There is significant revenue linked to FaceBook, instagram, tiktok, youtube and 'click' backs.

For student athletes, the focus is on education and consulting for education. Student-athletes go through their own social media to determine what is or is not appropriate, what is 'branding' and how to keep it professional. Some students are 'influencers' so their accounts are more intentional. The overall focus on education is to protect the student-athletes and educate them as to what should / should not be shown. The department is responsible for security for the team accounts as well as some coaches, but students manage their individual accounts.

November 2022

Jamie Houle, OSU's lead sport psychologist, spoke on mental health and wellness for student-athletes at OSU. Their goal is to have complete parity between intervention and prevention and to provide help and preventative work, but also be able to intervene when needed. The mission is to enhance the life and well-being of the student-athletes. The department just hired two new people (sport psychologist and an athletic counselor). Clinical counseling services, prevention services, consultation, and training are available for student-athletes. They are trying to grow the program with new training (more people to help student-athletes). The department has seen 45% of all student athletes and have increased utilization for groups that were typically underrepresented, including black male student-athletes (up 46%), Latino student-athletes (up 128%), and Asian student-athletes (up 316%). Two out of three sports have a utilization rate of 50% or higher; two out of every five sports have a utilization rate of 70% or higher. Student-athletes are able to be seen within six days (average is 2.7 days) versus main campus students which is six weeks to six months to see a psychiatrist.

February 2023

Mike Penner, Executive Associate AD, Internal Operations, spoke on facilities and the student-athlete experience. The main idea over the last five years involved completing multiple venues and to keep the athletic district 'framework' in place. They strive to keep everybody close with a focus of making things safe and connected including facilities, weight room, nutrition, medical staff, and training staff. Everyone is under one roof or less than 100 yards away. The goal is to create an atmosphere of convenience, 'one stop shop', and encourage interactions of student-athletes from different sports. Almost all decisions are made with the idea or goal of convenience to student-athletes. The current facilities projects include a new ice rink and new indoor track.

March 2023

Sarah Wick, clinical dietician in sports nutrition and fitness, spoke on nutrition. Their staff is helping student-athletes to fuel their bodies (understanding what their bodies need), but also

helping them learn how to prepare for the future by learning how to cook for themselves. The focus on nutrition has grown a lot in the last 10-15 years. Through enhanced nutrition, student-athletes can be 'fueled' based on how they are directed pre- and post-event (that is when the fuel zones were born). We have four Buckeye fuel zones, but have other mini-fuel zones at basketball, football, and ice hockey. Fuel zones are areas student-athletes can come in and get what they need before practice and immediately after practice. NEST (Nutrition Elite Supplemental Tables) was born two years ago as a training table for olympic and varsity sports. Student-athletes can sit down and have a fully prepared meal (pre- and post practice; not a grab and go). In the last four to five years, the department has grown to include four dieticians on staff, two registered dieticians, and a culinary chef on staff (does cooking classes, etc.). The staff has been intentional about allergies and food sensitivities (nut free, vegetarian, gluten free options) and have created communication among athletes and the chef so athletes are getting what they want/need. A supplemental program to address special needs specific to student-athletes (i.e. concussion pack, gut health, bone health, sleep – supplements for each/any of these things) has been created and is now working more closely with athletic training teams to increase interaction among student-athletes/help.

To promote zero waste, each athlete has a heavy-duty plastic container that they can take to go, bring back, and get a fresh green container. This approach saves on paper products and has gotten rid of plastic bags in fuel zones. There is no bottled water now rather re-usable Gatorade beverage dispensers are utilized. For eating disorders, each team has a dietician, trainer, strength and conditioning coach, and physician assigned. If a concern arises, this team meets and tries to address the issue. This initiative can address concerns early and has been very successful.

March 2023

Buckeye Inclusion provides resources, educational opportunities, DEI, and leadership opportunities for student-athletes. The Big 10 offered educational experiences for student-athletes to attend a conference (trip to Selma, AL). Another opportunity was the Big 10 LGBTQIA+ symposium in June. To attend, students completed a survey and filled out an essay. After committee evaluation, four athletes were selected to go to Chicago. The Big 10 covered transportation and airfare while athletics covered food. The Big 10 Life series – back to Selma – had the same process as above. Buckeye Inclusion will be taking four student-athletes to a black student-athlete summit in Los Angeles this year. The pillars of Buckeye Inclusion – racial equity, gender and accessibility, LGBTQIA+

April 2023

Jerry Davis shared Live Life programming. The Gene Smith Leadership Institute provides leadership, character and career development for OSU student-athletes. The institute's goal is for all athletes to have a signed a contract/job/grad school when they graduate. The institute experience includes internship programs for freshman/sophomores. The student-athletes gain experience and develop their career paths (especially in athletics). NextGen is for athletes in medicine. Participants can utilize micro-Internships if they can't

commit the whole summer. The complete athlete program prepares athletes going to the olympics/pros.

Specific hot topics – Live Life program: Each coach got to pick four topics from this group: resume review, mental health, NIL, nutrition, legal services, distracted driving, body image, social media, leadership, etc. The learning experience extends to etiquette, gratitude, and life after college. The hot topics focused on the interests of the teams/athletes.

Special thanks to all members of the Athletic Council for their support of student-athletes in and out of the classroom. A council goal for 2022-2023 was for each member of the council to attend as many in-person student-athlete events as possible. This council goal was deemed successful.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Villard Overocker, Ph.D., Chairperson