



Minutes from the BIG EAST Conference
Student-Athlete Advisory Committee Meeting

Providence, Rhode Island
March 30-31, 2012

Those participating were: Matthew Hargrove, University of Cincinnati; Ann Fiorvanti (Campus SAAC Advisor), Chelsea Peitz, University of Connecticut; Ray De Leon, John McEnroe (FAR), DePaul University; Rafael Notario, Georgetown University; Megan Schubert, University of Louisville; Rachel Stier, Marquette University; Grant Van De Castele, University of Notre Dame; Caitlin Walker, Providence College; Jennifer Leaverton, St. John's University; Kelli Pry, University of South Florida; Kathryn Nagy, Villanova University; Roberto Sasso, Kenny Schank, BIG EAST Conference.

1. **Welcome and Introductions** – Schank welcomed the group and made opening comments and announcements.
2. **Leadership and Team Building Presentation** – Keith Waldman, of Optimal Performance Associates, presented information and led the group in an interactive presentation on leadership and team building.
3. **Evaluation of guest speaker / Future speaker discussion** – Schank asked the representatives to give their feedback on Keith Waldman's interactive presentation to the group. The consensus of the representatives was that they enjoyed Mr. Waldman's leadership and team building presentation and interactive activity. Schank then lead a discussion on potential future speakers for the in-person meeting. The consensus of the group was to explore a potential guest speaker on the topic of team building and leadership, potentially through Jeff Janssen. There was also some interest expressed for a guest speaker in the area of sports psychology.
4. **2011-12 NCAA Legislative Update** – Schank reviewed the current status of proposals within the 2011-12 NCAA Legislative cycle. Schank noted the ongoing work of the Post-Presidential Retreat Working Groups. Schank informed the group that there will be a moratorium on new legislation for the 2012-13 legislative cycle, unless a proposal was part of the presidentially-led reform agenda. Schank discussed how the goal of the Rules Working Group is to develop a new regulatory culture, which will include specific principle-based outcomes and operations bylaws; with the over-arching principles including fairness, accountability and integrity. Schank then lead a discussion into the current issues facing intercollegiate athletics.

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5. **BIG EAST Sportsmanship Update** – Schank provided a sportsmanship update on behalf of Jennifer Condaras (BIG EAST Assistant Commissioner for Compliance). Schank explained the background of the sportsmanship policy and how all member institutions are required to review this policy with their student-athletes prior to the start of each academic year. Schank noted to the group that there has been several sportsmanship policy violations over the course of the current academic year, involving both men's and women's sports. Schank asked the group to stress the importance of good sportsmanship on their campuses. Schank noted that the Senior Woman Administrators are currently working on a few revisions of the sportsmanship policy in regards to appeal opportunities. Schank displayed to the group the new BIG EAST Conference sportsmanship logo.
6. **BIG EAST Senior Woman Administrator Update** – Schank provided a Senior Woman Administrator (SWA) Update to the group on behalf of Jennifer Condaras (BIG EAST Assistant Commissioner for Compliance). Schank noted that the SWAs have been focused on regular season scheduling matters. Schank explained that the SWAs have been working with the coaches groups and the Conference office to plan and deal with membership changes. Schank noted that the SWAs are carefully reviewing each sport to determine what scheduling strategy is in the best interest of all parties. Schank explained that the SWAs have been working on improving the BIG EAST Championships, challenging member institutions to enhance both the student-athlete and competitive experiences at each championship.
7. **BIG EAST Athletic Director Update** – Schank provided an Athletic Director update on behalf of Bob Driscoll (Associate Vice President/Director of Athletics of Providence College). Schank explained the expansion efforts to date of the Conference. Schank noted that all of the incoming member institutions are extremely excited to be joining the BIG EAST Conference. Schank explained that the Conference is in a great position moving forward. Schank informed the group that the Conference hopes to have a new television contract secured within the near future. Schank noted that the Bowl Championship Series (BCS) may be changing its current format. Schank reviewed recent examples of inappropriate social media behaviors displayed by student-athletes at campuses across the country. Schank asked the group to exercise caution as it relates to their use of various social media outlets (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, etc) and to understand how this might impact themselves, their team, athletic department, and institution.
8. **BIG EAST Faculty Athletic Representative Update** – McEnroe discussed the typical roles of an NCAA Faculty Athletic Representatives (FAR). McEnroe distributed and reviewed a handout which articulated his responsibilities at DePaul University. McEnroe discussed the importance of introducing and familiarizing yourself with your institution's FAR. McEnroe provided some background information regarding the BIG EAST Conference Academic Awards program. McEnroe noted that the BIG EAST FARs will meet in June to review and select the 2011-12 BIG EAST Scholar-Athlete Sport Excellence recipients.

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9. **Campus SAAC Advisor Update** – Fiorvanti informed the group of her role and duties as the University of Connecticut SAAC Advisor. Fiorvanti reviewed and distributed a “Husky Cup” handout to all representatives. Fiorvanti then lead the group into a discussion concerning campus SAAC programming and events.
10. **BIG EAST Expansion Update** – Sasso reviewed key attributes and facts of each incoming BIG EAST member institution. Sasso discussed what the current configuration of the Conference is now compared to what it will look like by the start of the 2015-16 academic year. Sasso then lead a discussion and answered questions relative to expansion.
11. **BIG EAST SAAC Website, Blog, New Format** – Schank reviewed the current layout and purpose of the BIG EAST SAAC website and blog. Schank asked the group for their feedback relative to the blog. Schank noted that each year, SAAC representatives reaffirm their position to continue the blog even though participation levels by representatives are relatively low. The consensus of the representatives was to discontinue the blog, as the blog is too time consuming on top of their other athletic and nonathletic responsibilities. Schank proposed that in place of the blog, the conference will redesign its SAAC website to feature a “SAAC Representative Profile” from each campus over the course of an academic year. Schank provided an example and reviewed what the new feature will look like. It was decided by the SAAC representatives to move forward with the “SAAC Representative Profile”. Schank noted that this feature will be up and running shortly after the beginning of the 2012-13 academic year.
12. **Additional items for discussion**
 - a. **Future BIG EAST SAAC Meeting/Conference Call Schedule** – Schank reminded the group that there will be only one in-person BIG EAST Conference SAAC meeting each academic year. Schank informed the group that currently, the in-person BIG EAST Conference SAAC meeting will alternate from taking place every other academic year between the fall and spring semester. Schank noted that the conference office will be reviewing the future meeting schedule format and will provide updates to campus SAAC Advisors this summer. Schank asked the group to make sure that campus SAAC Representatives properly mute/un-mute their phones during scheduled conference calls. The group then discussed some interest in potentially setting up either conference calls and/or an email listserv to exchange ideas regarding on-campus SAAC events.
 - b. **National SAAC Background/Updates/Links** – Schank reviewed the background and purpose of the Division I National SAAC. Schank discussed SAAC’s role within the Division I Governance structure. Schank provided various links where representatives can go to find up-to-date information on Division I National SAAC related items. Schank noted that BIG EAST National SAAC Representative, Alex Mendez (USF), will be attending the Division I National SAAC in-person meeting this July.

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- c. **BIG EAST National SAAC Representative Position** – Schank reviewed the duties and responsibilities of the BIG EAST National SAAC Representative position. Schank noted that current BIG EAST National SAAC Representative, Alex Mendez (USF), has one year remaining in his current term in office. Schank noted that the BIG EAST will be accepting nominations for this position beginning spring 2013, with the new representative having an official starting date of July 1, 2013. Schank encouraged the group to be on the lookout for potential candidates who might be interested in this position back at their respective campuses. Schank informed the group that more information concerning the nomination process and timeline will be sent out to campus SAAC representatives and advisors during the spring 2013 academic term.
- d. **National Student-Athlete Day** – Schank reminded the group that National Student-Athlete Day is April 6, 2012. Schank asked the group to submit any campus activities or events that highlight National Student-Athlete Day activities on their campus to him to post on the BIG EAST website.
- e. **Community Service Activity – Special Olympics Rhode Island** – Schank reviewed the background of Special Olympics Rhode Island. Schank informed the group of the current Special Olympics campaign to educate the public on stopping the use of the “R” word. Schank then discussed the unified bowling tournament activity that the group will be assisting with.
- f. **Meeting Evaluations** – Schank informed the group that he will be emailing all representatives a meeting evaluation form to be completed and returned to him by a specified date contained with the email.

13. **Adjournment** – The meeting adjourned at 10:30 AM EST on March 31, 2012.