
**THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
THE VISITORS OF JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY**

Minutes of the Athletics Committee

The Athletics Committee met on November 7, 2024, in Ballroom B of the Festival and Student Center. The meeting was called to order at 2:46 p.m. by Dickie Bell, Chair.

Present:

Bell, Dickie, Chair
Eiland, Joanie
Rexrode, Dave
White, Jack

Others:

King, Charles, President
Funkhouser, Savanna, Associate Director, Government Relations
Hall, Hollie, Associate V.P. and Dean of Students
Knight, Jack, University Counsel
LaPorta, Stephen, Associate A.D., Governance & NIL Strategy
Litten, Katherine, Psychologist Student-Athlete Services
Lough, Denise, Assistant A.D. for Administration and Operations
Polglase, Geoffrey, Deputy Director of Athletics
Phillips, Jennifer, Senior Associate A.D. for Student-Athlete Development/SWA
Renkin, Scooter, Assistant A.D for Development
Roan, Matt, Director of Athletics
Saylor, Chad, Associate Director, University Communications
Soenksen, Roger, Faculty Athletics Representative
Warner, Kevin, Associate A.D. for Communications and Strategic Initiatives
Wood, Cliff, President, Montpelier Collective

Prior to adopting the minutes from September 12, 2024, Mr. Bell called for a motion to approve the minutes. It was moved by Jack White and seconded by Joanie Eiland to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2024, meeting of the Athletics Committee.

Sports Update

Matt Roan, Director of Athletics provided an Athletics update noting that as of October 21, 2024, JMU teams have compiled a 48-27-11 cumulative record for a .626 winning percentage. Two teams have appeared in national polls early in the 2024-2025 school year with men's soccer starting the season ranked 18th nationally and rising to as high as eighth. Meanwhile football received votes in both the AP and the LBM Coaches Polls and with a 6-2 record is

bowl eligible. Mr. Roan congratulated Coach Chesney with doing a great job getting to this point and prioritizing a transformative experience for our student-athletes with a record-breaking win against UNC, 4-0 at home with chance to keep that streak alive. Men's soccer is 7-4-6 and going into SBC tournament as the number six seed while women's soccer is 10-3-5. Women's soccer has also gone unbeaten in league play and has won the regular season championship. In JMU's annual TowneBank Royal Rivalry with Old Dominion, ODU holds the lead at 1-2 through November 5th with multiple matchups coming up in women's soccer, volleyball and football. Volleyball is currently 10-12 for the season and plays ODU on Letterwinner weekend. Field Hockey finished the regular season with a 13-5 record and earned a share of the MAC regular season title in our first year in the league. By earning the #1 seed via tiebreaker, field hockey earned the right to host the tournament next year. Cross Country placed seventh in the SBC Championship with one student-athlete winning a silver medal honor. Men's and Women's Basketball both started 1-0 with wins over Ohio and Kent State, respectively. Mr. Roan noted the multitude of season accolades like, two Conference Regular-Season Champions in Women's Soccer and Field Hockey, two NCAA Appearances from Cross Country and Football, two Conference Players of the Year and Head Coaches of the Year from women's soccer and field hockey. Mr. Roan noted that JMU faculty member, Dr. Geary Albright, was selected as the lone winner of the Sun Belt Faculty of the Year Award and was celebrated at the league's recent fall meetings. JMU also received recognition for its student-athlete department-wide graduation success rate (GSR). Mr. Roan followed up on the valuation report provided by our Associate Commissioner at September's full board meeting noting that with the announcement that the ODU game next weekend will be on ESPNU, 5 of 10 games this season have been on national television. Mr. Roan also mentioned the cohesive work between Athletics and other campus departments in creating a successful Thursday night game. Mr. Roan discussed the addition of highlighting outstanding faculty and staff at football games, inviting different campus partners to basketball games and celebrating a Community Night, and strengthening the notion of the Valley's Team. Mr. Roan spoke of a revenue generating-focused working group that has allowed athletics to be more focused on data and analytics in decision-making. These findings show that the total sales from football are generated more so from non-local supporters, while basketball tickets sales are from a greater local fanbase. Ticket sales have been phenomenal with football season tickets sell outs coming one month sooner than the prior year. Other sellouts include the first five games of the football season and premium seating for men's and women's basketball. Student engagement at the home opener for men's basketball was great with 2,500 in attendance. Athletics is optimistic to have a sellout football season and Bridgeforth Stadium is expecting a season record with an average of 25,344 fans per game. Looking ahead to 2025 and hosting Washington State.

Mr. Roan updated the committee on the Master Plan work that is underway. Athletics has had multiple meetings with Mosley and Sasaki, as well as one meeting with Populous on the possible stadium expansion, including planning for concepts and cost estimate to allow for commitments for philanthropic and partnership investments on the projects. Mr. Roan talked about ticket sales this year putting "Demand on Display."

Mr. Roan updated the committee on the Athletics Strategic Plan, noting that the Admin Team has been working on updating the department's vision (best positioning for future changes), mission (excellent experience for all stakeholders), values/guiding principles (unchanged), and two years of focused goal setting; these goals include an updated pro forma and compliance with the Cox Bill, as well as shaping the overall fundraising strategy to include expendable revenues now and endowed funds for the future.

Mr. Roan explained Title IX as it relates to college athletics, including participation, financial aid in proportion to participation, and the provision of 11 other benefits, such as equipment and supplies, access to coaching, facilities, support services, etc. Athletics consulted with Helen Grant, our contracted Title IX consultant, who recently recommended Prong 1. Prong 1 provides participation opportunities for women and men that are substantially proportionate to their respective rates of enrollment of full-time undergraduate students. As such, we will see about 58 participation opportunities for current and/or prospective student-athletes impacted by the House Settlement (24 men's and 34 women's opportunities). There is no grace period for impacted opportunities. Mr. Roan will continue this conversation at the next meeting, which will include the other elements previously shared such as increased scholarships and other financial benefits, as well as continuing with our NIL approach. Prong 1 will ultimately also save the university money in comparison to other options, over the next 10 years and creates more certainty in how we move forward. Noting that the general manager role is a trend both with personnel and software tools, Mr. Roan mentioned that athletics is currently engaged in conversations investigating this topic.

Mr. Roan then concluded the Sports Update by answering questions from the Committee Members.

2023-2024 Academic Report

Jennifer Phillips, Senior Associate A.D. for Student-Athlete Development/SWA, presented the 2023-2024 Academic Report. Initially, Ms. Phillips provided a glance into the services that Student-Athlete Services provides like, assisting sports programs with recruiting, loaning laptops and calculators to student-athletes, offering tutoring services, fostering a relationship between academic advisors, student-athletes and coaches, monitoring study halls, providing screening and testing with our Educational Psychologist, holding academic eligibility reviews and continually communicating with professors and other campus offices on behalf of student-athletes in general.

There were many academic accomplishments in the 2023-2024 academic year that Ms. Phillips noted. Eighty-six student-athletes made the President's List for honors, 219 made Dean's List. One hundred and seventeen student-athletes graduated and five student-athletes, as well as, one academic tutor were inducted into the James Madison's Beta Gamma Sigma chapter, International Business Honor Society. A Lacrosse player was selected as

valedictorian and 692 student-athletes achieved a 3.0 semester GPA in at least one semester, while 28 held a 4.0 GPA in the Fall of 2023 with 46 in the Spring of 2024.

Ms. Phillips explained the qualifiers for NCAA academic units to receive revenue distribution, noting that JMU Athletics has met all three benchmarks. JMU trends at a 91% Graduation Success Rate and an Academic Program Rate of 987, both exceeding requirements.

Ms. Phillips concluded the update by introducing Ms. Katherine Litten, Licensed School Psychologist for Student-Athlete Services.

Student-Athlete Focus: Student-Athletes Utilizing Academic Resources

Jennifer Phillips, Senior Associate A.D. for Student-Athlete Development/SWA introduced Kathryn Litten, Licensed School Psychologist for Student-Athlete Services. Ms. Litten discussed the testing that is provided to all incoming student-athletes and her role as a liaison to the Office of Disability Services and Sports Medicine. Ms. Litten also described her case load of one-on-one meetings with at risk students before introducing a student-athlete representative. The student-athlete shared the difficulties with adjusting to the college academic environment and the support that was offered to him from Student-Athlete Services, but specifically from Ms. Litten. The student-athlete further discussed how the resources available have helped him to be more successful in the classroom. The student-athlete mentioned that study skills building, and the addition of the Pink Grouping has helped with skills in that reach farther than just the classroom.

Ms. Phillips concluded the update by thanking Ms. Litten and the student-athlete and answering any questions from Committee Members.

JMU's NIL Committee/Program Update: (Education & Protection of Student-Athletes) Stephen LaPorta, Associate A.D. for Governance and NIL Strategy acknowledged the nine-person JMU NIL Strategy Committee including, himself, Geoff Polglase Deputy A.D., Jennifer Phillips, Sr. Associate A.D. for Student-Athlete Development/SWA, Scooter Renkin, Associate A.D. for Development, Brad Burgess, Associate A.D. for Ticketing & Strategic Revenue, Melissa Wyant, Assistant A.D. for Creative Services & Fan Engagement, Kevin Warner, Associate A.D. for Communications and Strategic Initiatives, Cassidy Clements, Assistant A.D. for Student-Athlete Leadership, and Mike Chatburn, General Manager Sports Properties. Stephen then presented the JMU NIL Strategy named Honors1. Honors1 will provide education, NIL opportunities through the Dukes Marketplace, professional representation and a connection to the Montpelier Collective.

Education through Honors1 focuses on external and internal resource connections with Dukes LEAD and the Gilliam Center for Entrepreneurship. The education portion of Honors1 will also provide a combination of passive (NCAA NIL Assist and Influencer) and

active learning opportunities (NCAA x Meta NIL empower and NIL Summit). The education portion of Honors1 will also focus on personal brand, contracts, financial literacy, intellectual property, entrepreneurship and networking.

The Dukes Marketplace will serve as an area for student-athletes to connect with local businesses through an athlete profile that consists of a short bio, links to social media accounts, and a messaging feature. Businesses will also have the ability to propose transactions, post opportunities, and make secure payments to student-athletes. Mr. LaPorta explained how Honors1 will provide professional representation to student-athletes through connections to services for legal advice, accounting and tax preparation and building skills success in entrepreneurship.

The Montpelier Collective (“MC”) forms the official NIL collective of JMU. The MC is a 501(c)(3) organization that works to assist other local non-profits. Oversight of the MC will be conducted by eight board members. The goal of the collective will be focused on retention and recruitment of student-athletes. Mr. LaPorta then introduced Cliff Wood, President of the Board of the Montpelier Collective.

Mr. Wood spoke to the committee regarding the overall structure of MC and its mission and goals to support local not for profits including The Boys and Girls Club, Salvation Army and Virginia Red Cross. The MC will be a vehicle to help in recruiting and retaining efforts for athletic programs. Revenue streams coming in will be diversified to enable measurable growth and MC will be looking to double the fundraising efforts and goals to remain sustainable.

Mr. Dickie Bell then requested the Athletics Committee’s approval of the previously presented JMU Compensation Policy. The Compensation Policy will compensate student-athletes for activities above and beyond currently required, athletically related activities. The value of the compensation will be determined by the Director of Athletics or Designee and a promotional activity release form will be signed by the student-athlete. The policy also states that compensation does not trigger an employee/employer relationship. The Board of Visitors Athletics Committee approved the forward motion of this policy, and Mr. Bell shared that it will be presented to the full Board of Visitors for final approval on Friday, November 8, 2024. Mr. LaPorta concluded the update by answering questions from the committee.

Development Update

Scooter Renkin, Associate Athletics Director for Development presented the Advancement Report based on numbers as of November 7, 2024. For Fiscal Year 25, 5,134 donors have contributed \$1,300,000 in overall donations; this number is inclusive of over \$780,000 for the Annual Fund which consists of Proud and True Gifts and Duke Club Seat Contributions. These numbers show great success in growth over the prior year. Annual Fund contributions

are up 20%, donor numbers have increased by 88% and overall Athletics Fundraising is up 63% from prior year.

The Student Duke Club Membership has grown to over 4,200 students with enrollment continuing to rise.

The ‘Diggin’ Dukes’ Campaign will take place on December 3, 2024. The focus of this fundraising drive will be Sport Specific Giving through restricted giving, and will also benefit Dukes LEAD, and Proud and True.

The Fiscal Year 28 goals remain at \$4.9M in Annual Fund donations by 10,000 donors. Mr. Renkin concluded the update by answering questions from the committee.

Led by Dickie Bell’s closing remarks, Matt Roan concluded the meeting by asking the Committee members for feedback concerning future agenda items they would like to be considered which included a brief discussion.

There being no further business, Dickie Bell, Chair, then called for a motion to adjourn. It was moved by Dave Rexrode and seconded by Joanie Eiland. The meeting was adjourned at 4:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dickie Bell, Chair

David C. Kirkpatrick, Secretary to the Board