

Senate Athletic Committee  
December 2, 2019

Present: Floyd, Crawford, Twombly, Abernathy, Phillips, Ginavan-Hayes, Williams, Buskirk

Absent: Reed, Wolff, Alexander, Herda, Bass, Brown

Minutes from previous meeting were corrected to note that Alexander was not present.

Susan Williams explained the proposed class absence policy, how it would apply to all KU students who must miss class for official KU activities, and how it would benefit student athletes. She asked committee members who are also on University Senate to keep an eye out for this policy as it works its way through the University Senate review process and to advocate for approval as appropriate. She noted that it is unclear (at the meeting time) where the policy is in the process. Susan Twombly agreed to follow up with Shawn Alexander, President of Faculty Senate and Suzanne Valdez, President of University Senate.

The committee welcomed Jane Fulton, Senior Associate Athletic Director for Student Athlete Development; Kristie Baumchen, Student Athlete Wellness Coordinator; and Kylee Kopatich, KU Leads to address the question of what is being done to ensure student athlete mental health.

They described the active student athlete committees with a particular focus in 2018-19 on mental health and developing the Beak the Stigma campaign, which launched in May, 2019. (See <https://kuathletics.com/ku-student-athletes-raise-awareness-of-mental-health-with-three-day-beak-the-stigma-event/>). This year's focus is on various presentations and "locker talks" to explain Beak the Stigma and also to promote mental health. Examples of these activities, Monday motivational messages, and mindfulness training. Jane, Kristie, and Kylee stressed the importance of involving student athletes in mental health efforts.

Several questions were posed:

1. How comfortable are student athletes to speak up? In her role, Kristie, along with the athletic trainers) is part of the medical staff. As such, confidentiality is guaranteed.
2. Who pays for psychological services: KAI does.
3. Are cheerleaders covered? To some extent per NCAA rules. KAI does do screenings and include them in many activities.
4. Tiara Floyd asked if KAI would be interested in participating in an online mental health platform Student Senate is considering. Answer not clear, but perhaps not viable option for athletes.
5. Case load: Kristie reported seeing 140 student athletes for mental health related issues. About 50% were referred out for short or long-term therapy.

Susan Twombly will ask Governance to send out a Doodle poll to attempt to find a better meeting time for spring.

Meeting adjourned at 4PM.