

**Boston College  
Athletics Advisory Board  
Annual Report, 2019-20**

This Report summarizes for the University community developments related to Boston College's intercollegiate athletics program and the Athletics Advisory Board's (AAB) activities during the past academic year.

## **1. Academic and Athletics Highlights**

### **A. ACC Academic Consortium**

The Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) sponsored its 15th year of initiatives organized by the ACC Academic Consortium (ACCAC). The ACCAC leverages the athletics association and identity of the 15 ACC institutions in order to enrich their educational mission. Boston College students, faculty, and administrators participated in ACCAC events held during both fall and early part of spring semesters. Due to the COVID-19 crisis, several events scheduled for later in the spring were cancelled.

The ACC Leadership Symposium was held at the University of Louisville on February 28-March 1. This annual event brought together teams of student leaders from all 15 universities to discuss this year's theme of "Reaching Social Change through Storytelling."

The Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) Advocacy Days were held on October 20-22 in Washington, D.C. The biannual event, coordinated by the University of Pittsburg, provides an experiential learning opportunity for students interested in advocacy and political engagement. Participants met with members of Congress, learned about educational policy work, and shared personal experiences.

DemocrACCy, a one-time program organized by Duke University and Clemson University, brought student leaders from the 15 universities together to develop and share strategies for increasing student engagement in democracy.

The ACC Academic Leadership Network (ALN), which provides leadership development for mid-level academic administrators across ACC institutions, welcomed its second cohort of participants. The program included up to five participants from each university who met on two occasions during the year at the University of Pittsburg and Florida State, with a third seminar scheduled for North Carolina State University cancelled due to the COVID-19 crisis. Speakers and workshops at the meetings covered topics on leadership and mentoring. The goal of the ALN is to facilitate cross-institutional connections among academic administrators while building leadership capacity for the participating institutions.

### **B. Academic Achievements of Boston College Student-Athletes**

Several BC student-athletes were recognized this year for their combination of academic and athletic achievements. Catherine "Cat" Balido (Volleyball), Sean Burke (Men's Cross Country and Track), and Brigid Wood (Field Hockey) were awarded ACC Postgraduate

Scholarships for distinguished achievement in academics, athletics, and community service, as well as potential for graduate study. They were honored remotely at the 28th Annual ACC Scholarship ceremony in April.

Cat plans to pursue a degree in Law at Tulane starting this fall. She majored in communication, served as a captain on the volleyball team as a senior, and played 119 matches throughout her career. A native of Dallas, Texas, Cat totaled 989 kills throughout her career, which ranks 10th all-time at Boston College.

Sean will begin a Ph.D. program in biomedical sciences at the University Texas Southwestern Medical Center in August. He was a five-time All-ACC honoree and a second team All-American (2019) in outdoor track and field. A native of Pleasanton, California, he holds the second-fastest indoor and outdoor 5k times at Boston College.

Brigid plans to attend business school and is currently working for E. & J. Gallo. She was a marketing and operations management major, who saw action in 81 games throughout her career and served as a captain her senior year. A native of Plains, Pennsylvania, Brigid helped lead the Eagles during her senior year to their first-ever ACC Championship game and NCAA final four appearance.

During the past academic year, 31 BC student-athletes (in fall and winter sports) were named to the All-ACC Academic Team in their sport, including senior Sarah Dwyer (Field Hockey), who was selected by Boston College as its Female Scholar-Athlete of the Year. In men's and women's ice hockey, 19 student athletes were selected for the Hockey East All-Academic Team, including senior David Cotton (Men's Ice Hockey), who was chosen by Boston College as its Male Scholar-Athlete of the Year.

Richard Yeargin (Football) was one of several ACC student-athletes chosen for the ACC Futures Program. The internship program, which began in 1995, has been successful in placing its participants into permanent positions within the sports industry. Yeargin declined the position as he has decided to pursue opportunities in professional football.

### **C. NCAA Measures of Student-Athlete Academic Progress**

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) uses two measures of academic achievement as part of its Academic Performance Program (APP). These are the Academic Progress Rate (APR) and the Graduation Success Rate (GSR), both of which are calculated for all full or partial scholarship student-athletes at each NCAA Division I member school.

The APR considers the eligibility, retention, and graduation of student-athletes receiving athletics aid (and, for teams that do not award athletics aid, all recruited student-athletes). The APR awards one point for each student-athlete who is academically eligible to compete in the next semester and one point if that student-athlete returns to school for the next semester (or graduates). Accordingly, for the academic year each student-athlete can receive a maximum of four points, two each for fall and spring semesters. The APR is computed by taking the total number of points actually received in a given year, dividing it by the maximum possible total points, and multiplying by 1000.

The primary use of the APR is on a team-by-team rather than an overall institutional basis. Teams must earn a four-year average APR of at least 930 (i.e., 93 percent of the maximum total points) in order to compete in postseason championships. Schools with teams whose four-year average falls below 930 also may be subject to penalties in the form of limitations on practice times, reductions in the maximum allowable scholarship aid, and coaching suspensions.<sup>1</sup> Based on the most recent data, none of Boston College's teams are subject to these penalties. Six BC teams received public recognition from the NCAA for having a four-year average APR among the top 10 percent of Division I institutions sponsoring that sport, and 5 BC teams recorded perfect scores of 1000. This represented a decline from last year when 12 teams were honored by the NCAA and 11 teams had perfect scores.

The second measure of academic performance used by the NCAA is the Graduation Success Rate (GSR), which measures the percentage of student-athletes entering an institution who graduate within six years from that institution, excluding students who transfer out while still academically eligible to compete at their initial institution. The latest available data cover student cohorts entering college in 2010-2013. For Boston College, the overall four-year average GSR was 94 percent, compared to a median of 91 percent for ACC institutions, and 88 percent for all Division I institutions. Thirteen of the varsity sports that Boston College sponsors achieved the highest possible GSR of 100 percent. Further details on APR and GSR for individual sports and other NCAA schools can be found at [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org), under Division I/Academics.

This past spring, the NCAA distributed a portion of new revenues from the broadcast rights of the NCAA Men's Basketball Championship to institutions based on the academic achievement of their student-athletes. An institution has three ways to qualify: earn an overall, single-year, all-sport APR of 985 or higher; earn an overall all-sport GSR of 90 percent or higher; or earn a Federal Graduation Rate (FGR) for athletics that is at least 13 percentage points higher than for the school's entire student body.<sup>2</sup> Boston College qualified on the basis of GSR. The ACC has decided that revenue shares earned by member institutions will be pooled and distributed equally across all 15 institutions.

#### **D. Student-Athlete Community Service**

Most BC student-athletes take part in community service activities, organized through the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) and the Athletics Department's Student-Athlete Development Office. During the past year, student-athletes completed over 1,600 hours of community service with over 25 local and national organizations. The total number of completed hours this year was affected by COVID-19. Student-athletes participated in three athletics-wide events as well as many team and individual service opportunities with

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<sup>1</sup> The benchmark of 930 has been shown to predict a Graduation Success Rate (described below) of 50 percent, the minimum standard that the NCAA expects all Division I members to meet.

<sup>2</sup> The FGR measures the percentage of students who graduate from an institution within six years after entering that same institution as full-time, first-year students in the fall semester. When applied to student athletes, the FGR counts only those who receive athletically related financial aid in their first semester. It differs from the GSR by not counting student-athletes who graduate after transferring into the institution and by counting student-athletes as having never graduated if they transfer out even if they subsequently graduate from another institution. Its main advantage is that institutions report the FGR for all students as well as student-athletes, allowing for comparison between the groups.

organizations including Newton Wellesley Hospital, Team Impact, Best Buddies, and Franciscan's Children's Hospital.

In December 2019, the Student-Athlete Development Office hosted its annual Adopt-A-Child event which connects student-athletes and athletics staff with underprivileged children from neighboring communities. Each team is responsible for fundraising and purchasing gifts for the children they adopt. All 31 varsity teams, as well as many coaches and staff, adopted at least one child. Overall, student-athletes, coaches, and staff adopted a record 190 children this past holiday season.

For the 11th consecutive year, a group of BC student-athletes participated in the Devlin SAFE Service Immersion Trip in partnership with the organization Soles for Souls. In January 2020, eleven student-athletes from seven different teams traveled to New Orleans to distribute winter jackets and shoes to over 400 children over the course of five days.

During the virtual Golden Eagle Awards ceremony in May, Molly Barrow (Women's Ice Hockey) was presented with this year's Richard "Moe" Maloney Award for outstanding service. Boston College's ACC Top Six for Service award was presented to Emily Buttinger (Field Hockey), Nicole Clermont (Women's Cross Country/Track), Jessica Creedon (Women's Track), Ali Kea (Women's Swimming), Jewel Strawberry (Volleyball), and Zack Walker (Men's Ice Hockey).

Last July, Boston College was named the winner of the 2019 Community Service Award by the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) and the Fiesta Bowl. The award was presented by NACDA and the Fiesta Bowl last fall at an on-campus event.

### **E. Athletics Program Highlights**

Several Boston College teams and individuals achieved athletic success this past year. Five teams made national post-season championships or bowl appearances: Field Hockey, Football, Men's Soccer, Women's Cross Country, and Volleyball. One member from Women's Track qualified for the NCAA Indoor Track and Field Championships, one member of the Ski team competed in the NCAA Skiing Championships, and a Sailing team member won a national championship.

Five new head coaches were introduced during the year: Jeff Hafley (Football), Grace Hollowell (Rowing), Chuck Carmone (Skiing), Bob Thompson (Men's Soccer), and Amy Kvilhaug (Softball).

In June 2020, Patrick Kraft was named the William V. Campbell Director of Athletics. He replaced Martin Jarmond, who became athletics director at UCLA. Kraft comes to BC from Temple where he served as athletics director since 2015.

The Football team played in a bowl game for the 6th time in 7 seasons, and the 18th time in 21. Junior running back A.J. Dillon and redshirt freshman lineman Tyler Vrabel earned All-American honors. Dillon was selected in the second round (62nd overall) of the 2020 NFL Draft by the Green Bay Packers. Graduate student Richard Yeargin was named the 2019 Brian Piccolo Award winner. Presented annually by the ACC in memory of former Wake Forest and Chicago Bears' standout Brian Piccolo, the award honors the "most courageous" football player in the ACC.

During the fall, the Field Hockey team had a sensational season, recording the most ACC wins in program history and advancing to the NCAA Final Four before falling to eventual national champion North Carolina in the semifinal round. Boston College earlier had advanced to the ACC Championship game before also losing to UNC. Head coach Kelly Doton was named ACC Field Hockey Coach of the Year, while forward Margo Carlin was chosen as ACC Freshman of the Year. Carlin along with junior midfielder Fusine Govaert and senior goalkeeper Sarah Dwyer were named All-Americans.

In Women's Cross Country, the team finished 20th overall at the 2019 NCAA Championships. The Eagles bested 11 teams ranked ahead of them in the national coaches' poll. It was BC's 20th appearance as a team in the national championship meet and first since 2014. Sailing's Sophia Reinke brought home her second National Singlehanded Championship in November, having previously won in 2017. The junior was named to this year's Sailing All-American team, earning honors as both Women's Skipper and Coed Skipper. Men's Soccer advanced to the Round of 32 in the NCAA Championship. It was the Eagles' 15th all-time NCAA Championship appearance and first since 2016. The Volleyball team matched its single-season best (2004) with 20 wins and earned a bid to the National Invitational Volleyball Championship under second-year head coach Jason Kennedy. It was the first-ever postseason appearance in program history. Kennedy earned recognition from Volleyball Magazine as one of the top coaches under 40 in the country.

This past winter, Men's Ice Hockey head coach Jerry York – who was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto in November – guided the team to its 17th Hockey East Regular Season Championship in program history. Forward Alex Newhook was named National Rookie of the Year by the Hockey Commissioners Association, the first such honor for a BC hockey player since the award's inception in 2007. The team was poised for a deep run in the post season but had its play suspended due to the COVID-19 crisis. The Women's Ice Hockey team, which hosted a first-round Hockey East playoff for the eighth-straight year, also had a National Rookie of the Year winner in forward Hannah Bilka. Boston College became the first school to win both the men's and women's rookie of the year awards in the same year.

Women's Basketball finished the 2019-20 campaign with a 20-12 record, including an 11-7 mark in ACC play, and advanced to the semifinals of the ACC Championship. The 20 wins were the most for the past 10 years and the 11 conference wins were the most since BC joined the ACC in 2005. Head coach Joanna Bernabei-McNamee was named ACC Women's Basketball Coach of the Year, while senior forward Emma Guy was a First Team All-ACC selection and sophomore forward Taylor Soule was recognized as the Most Improved Player in the ACC. A NCAA tournament appearance looked likely before play was suspended due to the COVID-19 crisis.

The Fencing team captured its second straight Northeast Fencing Conference title, had three individual qualifiers for the NCAA championships, and had three team members earn All-American accolades. In Track, senior Sean Sullivan set a Boston College record in the indoor mile with a time of 4:02.26 at the BU Valentine Invitational. Senior Emeline Delanis ran the 15th-fastest 5,000m nationally (16:03.09) at the BU event, helping her earn a spot in the field of the NCAA Championship and 2020 All-America honors. At the ACC Indoor Championships, sophomore Marcus Manson established a new BC mark of 48:03 in the 400 meters. The Swimming and Diving team established 18 program records at the ACC Championships in February and had six swimmers compete in the U.S. Open in December, a meet that includes Olympians and U.S. National Team members. In Skiing, junior Parker Biele became the first

Boston College female skier to compete at the NCAA Championship. Biele placed 18th overall in the giant slalom.

All spring sports had their seasons truncated due to the COVID-19 crisis. Lacrosse, which had played in the national championship final the past three years, opened the season ranked fifth in the nation. Junior attacker Charlotte North set a BC record for points in a single game with 12 and was accorded All-America honors. In Women's Tennis, junior Yufei Long became only the second Eagle in program history to qualify for the main draw of the ITA Women's All-American Championship. Baseball sophomore infielder Cody Morissette was named an All-American for the second year in a row by *Collegiate Baseball Newspaper*. A second-team selection, Morissette became the first two-time All-American in BC Baseball history.

## 2. Athletics Advisory Board Meetings 2019-20

The AAB met seven times during 2019-20. Our guests included Athletics Director Martin Jarmond; Head Coaches Jim Christian (Men's Basketball), Mike Gambino (Baseball), Jeff Hafley (Football), and Randy Thomas (Women's Cross Country / Track); Steve Bushee, Assistant Athletics Director for Sports Medicine; Staff from Student-Athlete Academic Services (SAAS) including Michael Harris (Director), Da'Mon Merkerson (Associate Director), Amy Morgan (Senior Assistant Director), and Ashley Grigsby (Assistant Director); Jade Morris, Senior Associate Director, Student-Athlete Development; and six representatives from the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC).

The AAB spent some time this year reviewing general policy and procedures regarding violations of academic integrity involving student-athletes. Meetings also covered several other topics including sports medicine, opportunities for student-athlete development, the distribution of student-athletes across majors and class sections, the participation of student-athletes in first-year formation programs, student-athlete well-being, and the annual review of missed classes due to competition.

At its initial meeting on **September 20, 2019** the AAB discussed potential topics for the coming year and heard updates on items from last year. The group agreed to invite several head coaches to attend upcoming meetings. Members also expressed an interest in meeting with AD Martin Jarmond and with staff in sports medicine. As in past years, the group planned to spend time reviewing data on course and major clustering during the fall. The group also agreed to meet with representatives of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC).

Members were apprised of recent transitions in Athletics, including the departure of Senior Associate AD for Business and Finance Marcus Blossom to Holy Cross where he is now director of athletics and the hiring in early July of Head Coach Amy Kilvaug in softball. Amy comes to Boston College from St. John's University where she was head softball coach for the past 12 years. In women's soccer, Jason Lowe was beginning his first season as head coach, having been hired early in 2019. Jason comes to Boston College from Wake Forest where he was associate head coach for women's soccer.

Regarding items from last year, the group was updated on progress concerning recommendations to the Provost last spring about student-athlete travel letters and policies of

the Office of Student-Athlete Academic Services (SAAS) regarding proctored exams. The AAB had recommended that an electronic notification of travel dates for student-athletes be provided to faculty for student-athletes in their classes, in addition to the current practice of having faculty sign a paper form on the first day of class. The AAB also had recommended that the form used by student-athletes to request proctoring arrangements for exam conflicts be modified to affirm that the faculty member and student-athlete tried but were unable to make separate arrangements. The Provost's office has offered to explore in coordination with the director of SAAS how these recommendations might be best implemented.

The group also heard an update on the status of the early registration proposal that the AAB endorsed in 2018 and Provost Quigley approved early in 2019. The leadership of Student Services was assessing how to implement early registration. Although the date for launching the registration function of Eagle Apps was still uncertain, Student Services may be able to use other means to implement early registration and was cautiously optimistic it would move forward in time for the spring 2020 registration period.

The group was informed of major issues facing college sports, including recent legalization of sports betting in many states and discussions in the NCAA concerning compensation to student-athletes for the use of their name, image, and likeness. Members also heard about the inaugural ACC mental health summit held in May 2019, an event that will be held annually, and the launch of the ACC Network, an ESPN affiliate dedicated to ACC sports, which will provide expanded live coverage of Olympic and women's sports.

The meeting of **October 21, 2019** was devoted to a discussion with head coaches Jim Christian (Men's Basketball), Mike Gambino (Baseball), and Randy Thomas (Women's Cross Country / Track). Each coach was invited to offer an update on their team and, more generally, their perspective on the state of college athletics at Boston College and beyond.

Jim Christian noted that because of the challenging academic environment at Boston College, the pool of basketball recruits is not as deep as for many other schools, and so trying to find student-athletes who will succeed takes significant effort. He noted that a lot is happening in college basketball, with the recommendations from the Rice Commission on College Basketball continuing to be implemented. Jim mentioned because of the move to a 20-game conference schedule (from 18 games previously), the ACC is starting its season by matching ACC teams against each other. Boston College would open the year versus Wake Forest instead of an out-of-conference opponent, with the hope of generating greater fan interest early in the season.

Mike Gambino is a BC graduate who played on the varsity baseball team. He believes this gives him a good perspective on how athletics fits with BC's Jesuit mission. Mike mentioned that the new baseball stadium on the Brighton campus has transformed what the program can now offer its student-athletes compared to the earlier facility on Shea Field. Commenting on recruiting, he noted that some schools use the junior-college pipeline to field their teams, taking on students who initially were too weak academically to be admitted, something he and Boston College will not do. He stresses the value of a BC degree as a key selling point to prospective recruits.

Randy Thomas is in his 33<sup>rd</sup> year at Boston College, having served under five athletics directors. Randy noted that cross country and track have broad participation, with every Division I school sponsoring cross country. BC's team ranked 25<sup>th</sup> in the nation during early October and the

program has finished the season in the top 25 four times over the past decade. This achievement has come even as Boston College is one of only two schools in the Power 5 conferences without a track facility, requiring the men's and women's teams to practice elsewhere (currently at Harvard).

The discussion touched on several topics including class scheduling, mental health, international students, degree completion options, whether student-athletes should be compensated for the use of their name, image and likeness, and the adequacy of per diem allowances for student-athlete meals when traveling.

The coaches mentioned the problem student-athletes face in navigating tight schedules when choosing classes. Because practice often occurs during standard class time blocks—in many cases due to facilities constraints—student-athletes frequently have difficulty scheduling their classes. One coach felt that early registration for student-athletes would be very helpful. A related issue the coaches mentioned involves the time demands faced by student-athletes who juggle athletics, academics, and required student-athlete development activities. The NCAA now requires each head coach to specify a time management plan that ensures a day off from all athletics-related activities each week along with additional days off in and out of season. Even so, implicit pressure to participate in “optional” student-development activities can sometimes impinge on these days off from sports.

The discussion next turned to mental health. One coach mentioned how it often takes quite a while for student-athletes to disclose concerns. The coaches agreed more could be done in the mental health area in terms of providing counseling resources. Presently, two practitioners from Newton-Wellesley Hospital provide services on a part-time basis. An Athletics Department working group had met in the late spring to discuss ways of augmenting sports medicine staff in the mental health area, although no decisions had yet been finalized.

In response to a question about international student-athletes, the coaches all agreed that it takes time for international students to acclimate. International student-athletes generally come from “club” teams and so it is a major adjustment playing sports while also enrolled in school. It can be difficult to get to know them and the coaches find they need to spend a good deal of time with them.

Discussion next touched on the issue of degree completion for student-athletes who left Boston College before graduating. For those who have turned professional, coming back during a regular semester to finish usually is not an option due to the demands of professional practice and competition. For some sports, additional summer school offerings and on-line classes at Boston College would help, as would flexibility to take courses at other universities in the United States. Current policy generally does not allow undergraduates to take a semester (or more) of classes elsewhere in the United States and count them toward the BC degree, although undergraduates can take courses abroad. The coaches emphasized that many of these former student-athletes want to get their degree. They are proud to have gone to Boston College and want to finish. One member pointed out that the office of Student-Athlete Academic Services works with former student-athletes to look at strategies for completing the degree.

On the question of whether student-athletes should be compensated for the use of their name, image, and likeness (NIL), the coaches raised concerns about who would be marketable, how a



compensation mechanism would be regulated, and what could be done to ensure it is equitable so all student-athletes benefit. One coach asked how compensation for NIL would interact with stipends paid for full cost of attendance. For example, since compensation for NIL certainly would be taxable income, might scholarships that include cost of attendance also become taxable? One coach expressed concern that this could lead to the sports of basketball and football, which probably have the most NIL opportunities, needing different conference governance structures. The group agreed the issue is complex and raises many issues that would need to be addressed.

In response to a question about whether the per diem for food expenditures during student-athlete travel are sufficient, the coaches felt these allowances are inadequate and that student-athletes sometimes supplement the per diem with their own money. Although the food “fueling station” in Conte Forum has helped bridge some of the gap by allowing student-athletes to take items when leaving for travel, an increase in the per diem would be welcome. For those sports with training table, one meal a day is provided to the teams. One coach noted that having student-athletes eat most meals with other students in dining halls actually is a very positive feature of the experience at Boston College, and so he would not want student-athletes to eat all meals only among themselves. For those student-athletes who live off campus during junior year one coach expressed concern that some may not be receiving adequate nutrition.

The AAB met on **November 4, 2019** to review data on the distribution of student-athletes across majors, first-year formation programs, and individual class sections, as well as to begin a discussion about academic integrity policy.

Data on the distribution of student-athletes and non-athletes across majors and concentrations for the past five years show that student-athletes are enrolled in a broad array of majors, and are disproportionately represented in only a few.<sup>3</sup> They are also less likely to double or triple major than non-athletes. As of Fall 2019, 19 percent of student-athletes who had declared a major were studying Communication compared with 7 percent of non-athletes for the largest percentage-point difference across majors. In Marketing, 10 percent of student-athletes were majors compared with 4 percent of non-athletes. A sizeable disparity also was seen in Management and Leadership, where 6 percent of student-athletes were majors compared with 1 percent of non-athletes, and in Finance, where 17 percent of student-athletes were majors compared with 13 percent of non-athletes.

For those majors chosen by more than 5 percent of student-athletes, Communication was the most popular (19%), followed by Finance (17%), Marketing (10%), Biology (7%), Economics (7%), Management and Leadership (6%), and Applied Psychology and Human Development (6%). Most majors show no discernable trend in enrollment by student-athletes over recent years, exceptions being a surge of almost 4 percentage points the past year in Finance and a decline of 2 percentage points in Economics and Applied Psychology and Human Development.

The disproportionate representation of student-athletes in some majors may reflect the belief that those majors are useful for careers related to sports, such as broadcasting and marketing, or more generally, careers in business. Some majors have relatively few required courses (for

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<sup>3</sup> The AAB thanks the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment and the Office of Student Services for providing the various data reviewed at the meeting.

example, Communication), so switching into those majors later in one's college career may be easier than for majors that have many required sequential courses. Given the constraints of practice schedules, selecting a major with more course options might make scheduling classes easier. The share of student-athletes majoring in a science is generally less than half of the comparable share of non-athletes and this may be due in part to difficulty scheduling lab requirements, some of which are slotted for three- or four-hour time blocks. Biology is an exception, with nearly 7 percent of student-athletes as majors, compared with 10 percent of non-athletes.

Student-athletes are about twice as likely to have not yet declared a major compared to non-athletes, with 15 percent of student-athletes in fall 2019 listed as undeclared compared to 7 percent of non-athletes. Under NCAA rules, student-athletes have until the end of sophomore year to declare a major or concentration. A possible reason why student-athletes are far more likely to be undeclared than non-athletes may be that they are heavily focused on their sport and so don't make the time to consider their curriculum options and choose a major. Delaying the choice of a major, however, could be beneficial by allowing students more time discern their academic interests and career goals.

Members next reviewed data on student-athlete participation in first-year formation classes and programs. These data include the numbers of students enrolled in core renewal classes, Courage to Know classes, Freshman Topic Seminars, and 48Hours retreats. All of these courses and programs provide opportunities for reflection on topics related to personal growth and development.

Data on enrollment in core renewal classes since their inception in 2015 show student-athletes account for 3 percent of students in these classes, below their overall share of about 7.5 percent among first-year undergraduates. The structure of core renewal classes, which include labs and evening reflection sessions in addition to regular class meetings, may make it difficult for student-athletes to fit these courses into busy practice schedules. Most sports have at most one or two student-athletes taking a core renewal class in any given semester. The main exception is Rowing, which accounts for 26 out of the 88 student-athletes who have taken a core renewal class, with 18 team members enrolled the past four semesters. One reason for this may be that incoming student-athletes in Rowing are relatively strong academically and so may be seeking out challenging courses. Another reason may be that traditional early morning practice times for Rowing have made it easier to schedule the labs and reflection sessions associated with core renewal classes (although starting in fall 2019 practice has been shifted to early afternoon).

The group also reviewed data for the past six years on enrollment in Courage to Know classes and Freshman Topic Seminars. Faculty members teaching these classes serve as advisers to their students.

Student-athletes accounted for 21 percent of students enrolled in Courage to Know classes, nearly three times their overall share of 7.5 percent among first-year undergraduates. This represented about half of all first-year student-athletes, much higher than the roughly one-fifth of first-year non-athletes taking the course. The reason for the sizeable enrollment of student-athletes may be because the course is offered in numerous sections across class time blocks, making it easier for student-athletes to schedule. In addition, orientation counselors strongly recommend the class to student-athletes as being useful for acclimating to college life.

Student-athletes in Freshman Topic Seminars accounted for 3 percent of the students registered for these classes, less than half their overall share of 7.5 percent among first-year undergraduates. This represented about 6 percent of first-year student athletes, much lower than the 15 percent of first-year non-athletes taking these classes. These one-credit seminars are graded on a pass / fail basis and are a vehicle for first-year students to get to know a faculty member. Members suggested that orientation counselors be encouraged to promote Freshman Topic Seminars to incoming student-athletes.

Relatively few student-athletes participate in 48Hours retreats, accounting for about 3.5% of students in this program, about half of their overall 7.5 percent share among first-year undergraduates. The low participation rate likely reflects conflicts with practice and competition schedules. But retreat attendance among all students has been falling over the past few years, and so participation rates of student-athletes may reflect broader forces. One member pointed to the desire by students to be on campus during the weekend and so offering retreat options that are shorter and based nearby (or on) campus might be worth exploring.

Getting word out within Athletics about these first-year formation classes and programs had been suggested last spring by head coaches who attended the AAB meeting on April 29, 2019 and said they were unaware of these opportunities. In response, the AAB sponsored a presentation on first-year formation programs at an All-Coaches meeting in September. Elizabeth Bracher, Director of the Cornerstone Program; Ryan Heffernan, Campus Ministry and Athletics Advisory Board member; and Tim Mulvey, Associate Director of the Center for Student Formation provided an overview of programs for student formation, mentoring, and advising.

The group also reviewed data on student-athlete enrollment in individual class sections for all courses taught over the past six semesters to assess the degree of clustering among student-athletes. Over this period, student-athletes accounted for about 7.5 percent of the undergraduate student body, so setting a benchmark a little higher, say at 10 percent, seems appropriate as a starting point for assessing clustering in class sections.

The number of class sections in which student-athletes made up 10 percent or more of the enrollment ranged from 330 to 351 over this period, with no discernable trend.<sup>4</sup> At higher percentages of student-athlete enrollment, the number of class sections falls off rapidly. For example, in fall 2019 the number of class sections with 20 percent or more student-athletes was 115, the number with 30 percent or more student-athletes was 45, and the number with 50 percent or more student-athletes was 15. Classes with high percentages of student-athletes also tend to have low overall enrollment. Of those class sections in fall 2019 with 50 percent or more student-athletes, all but 2 had a total student enrollment of less than 10 (one section was at 12 and one at 21).

The number of class sections also declines rapidly as the absolute number of student-athletes in a class rises.<sup>5</sup> For class sections with 10 percent or more student-athletes, the number with at least 5 student-athletes ranged from 96 to 115 over the past six semesters, while the number

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<sup>4</sup> See Addendum Table 1 for data on class sections with student-athlete enrollment. Data are for all class sections in which student-athletes are enrolled and include some graduate-level courses.

<sup>5</sup> See second and third panels of Addendum Table 1.

with at least 10 student-athletes ranged from 17 to 20 and the number with at least 20 student-athletes ranged from 2 to 5.

Another way to assess clustering is to consider the distribution of student-athletes across class sections in which at least one student athlete is enrolled.<sup>6</sup> During fall 2019, sections with 10 percent or more student-athletes accounted for about one-third of sections having student-athletes enrolled. This falls sharply at higher percentages of student-athlete enrollment. Sections with 20 percent or more student-athletes accounted for a little over one-tenth of sections with student-athletes, those with 30 percent or more student-athletes accounted for about 4 percent of such sections, and those with 50 percent or more student-athletes accounted for 1.4 percent of such sections.

Student-athlete enrollment in courses whose format is coded as “Undergraduate Independent Study” has averaged just under 4 percent of total enrollment in these courses over the past five years, or just about 12 such enrollments per semester. Student-athletes are about half as likely to be enrolled in independent study classes as non-athletes. These enrollments are spread over student-athletes representing many teams, with the vast majority of teams having at most one or two student-athletes enrolled in any given semester.

Members agreed that, other than for a few class sections, clustering of student-athletes does not appear to be a concern. And for those sections with a large number and/or large percentage of student-athletes, this probably arises due to scheduling constraints from practice schedules that limit a more even distribution across class sections. In addition, some courses are of greater interest to student-athletes because of their content and thereby tend to attract more student-athletes. Members suggested following up in future reviews on classes with a disproportionately large presence (50 percent or more) of student athletes to assess the distribution across teams. The group also agreed that the data would serve as a benchmark against which to compare future trends in clustering following implementation of an early registration system for student-athletes next spring.

The group next turned to a discussion of academic integrity policy. At Boston College, each undergraduate school is responsible for overseeing its own process for adjudicating cases of academic misconduct. The policies and procedures of each school differ in some respects. Recent changes to University policy in this area have provided better consistency by applying procedures of the school in whose course the infraction occurs regardless of which school the involved student(s) are enrolled. Even so, differences remain, not only in procedures but also in the processes for sharing information.

Athletics compliance staff have raised concern regarding timely conveyance of information about academic integrity cases involving student-athletes. The concern is that student-athletes might be deemed by the NCAA as academically ineligible and/or to have received “extra benefits” as a result of an academic integrity finding. Knowing about these cases in a timely manner is necessary for compliance staff to limit risk to Boston College that could result in significant penalties and damage to its reputation.

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<sup>6</sup> See bottom panel of Addendum Table 1.

A positive finding of academic misconduct that results in the student failing a course might not affect athletics eligibility for the next semester if the student-athlete's performance in other courses meets progress toward degree standards. But it could have implications for "extra benefits," for example improper assistance on an exam or assignment. A negative finding might also have implications for such "extra benefits" and lead to an NCAA violation. These "extra benefits" could, for example, be any assistance a student-athlete receives that is not generally accorded to all students even though there was no academic integrity violation.<sup>7</sup>

During the discussion that followed, questions arose about why the compliance office needs to know about cases that are still in process at the end of the semester (not yet adjudicated). One member expressed concern about students' due process rights. Some members asked why it is not sufficient to simply observe a grade of "F" or "I" (incomplete) after the semester ends, as knowing the grade would permit determination of eligibility to compete, and thereby make the status of the integrity case redundant.

Cases in process at the end of the semester need to be reported because of post-season competition that occurs after the semester ends (e.g., bowl games, baseball championships, lacrosse championships, track championships). Although student-athletes can remain eligible in post-season with a grade of "I" (incomplete) if it is expected to be changed to a passing grade, the compliance director has indicated she would recommend pulling a student-athlete out of competition if the "I" was likely to result in an "F" that makes him or her ineligible.

The AAB agreed to work with compliance staff to ensure timely reporting on integrity cases and to explore with the Provost's office ways to improve consistency in the integrity processes across the undergraduate schools.

Steve Bushee, Assistant Athletics Director for Sports Medicine visited with the AAB at its meeting on **December 4, 2019** to provide an overview of the Sports Medicine Department. Steve is now in his 36<sup>th</sup> year at Boston College. He oversees 14 certified sports trainers (9 who are full time staff members and 5 who are resident trainers). Sports Medicine has facilities in Conte Forum and the Yawkey Center, both of roughly the same size. Two-thirds of the staff are based Conte, which handles basketball and most Olympic sports, and one-third in Yawkey, which handles football, swimming and diving, skiing, sailing, and tennis.

Newton-Wellesley Hospital provides several health-service providers under a contract with Boston College. These include the medical director (orthopedic surgeon), medical doctors serving as team physicians and consultants, a physical therapist, a nutritionist, a massage therapist, and mental health providers. The Sports Medicine Department has an on-site x-ray capability. Steve mentioned that Sports Medicine has the smallest staff among ACC institutions, yet must provide coverage for over 700 student-athletes and 31 sports, totals near the top in the ACC. He felt these demands at times have stretched the staff beyond sustainable limits, with consequences for the level of care, and warrant additional staff members and resources.

Steve emphasized the good relationship Sports Medicine has with University Health Services. Physicians from Health Services assist Sports Medicine and student-athletes benefit from Health

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<sup>7</sup> See attached Addendum Chart 1 from the NCAA providing background on academic integrity situations that may give rise to NCAA violations.

Services' 24-hour care facility, something rarely available on most college campuses today. Student-athletes suspected of having a concussion can be sent to this on-campus 24-hour care facility for observation rather than having to be admitted to a local hospital. Steve mentioned that he highlights this 24-hour care facility to parents of recruits.

A wide-ranging discussion followed Steve's overview, touching on several topics including concussions, drug testing, mental health, and student-athlete wellness.

Steve serves as Boston College's NCAA healthcare administrator and in this role oversees various NCAA mandates, including concussion protocols and drug testing. He noted that BC has a good record on handling concussions and has been an early adopter of best practices as they have evolved. For example, it used to be thought that concussions should be treated by keeping the injured person quiet and in a darkened room. But research showing benefits of increased activity following concussion has led to new protocols of having the person do mild exercise on a stationary bike or elliptical trainer soon after injury. Even with all the progress made in preventing and treating concussions, Steve pointed to recent research showing how even minor blows to the head (sub-concussive trauma) may also cause significant brain injury, suggesting we have much more to learn.

Drug testing of student-athletes at Boston College is done with the goal of making them think twice about using illegal substances rather than "catching them." Approximately 20-30 student-athletes are randomly tested each week, with the list provided outside of Athletics from University Health Services. Student-athletes to be tested are not notified ahead of time and the specimen collection is observed by Sports Medicine staff. Lab analysis is contracted out to a testing service. Student-athletes testing positive meet with their coach, the Athletics Director, and Dr. Mazur from Health Services. Parents are notified. Counseling is offered and can be made mandatory for repeat offenses, and the student-athlete must undergo regular (rather than random) testing. Penalties may include losing playing time. NCAA testing, which is separate from in-house testing, can occur at times throughout the year, and always occurs in conjunction with competition in NCAA championship events. Penalties for NCAA violations may involve suspension from participation in the sport. All test results are interpreted in light of other medication a student-athlete may be taking, such as pain medication for dental work or for an injury, or stimulants for conditions such as attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. Steve mentioned that administering testing is time intensive for his staff, taking them away from providing other sports medicine services. He noted that some schools outsource the entire process for drug testing, including collecting samples.

Newton-Wellesley provides 10 hours per week of mental health clinician services for Sports Medicine. Student-athletes also have access to University Counseling services. The mental health services provided in athletics were initially intended to be more focused on psychological aspects of performance, but have over time become more focused on clinical mental health needs. Some student-athletes feel more comfortable seeking help through Sports Medicine, while others prefer to seek help outside of Athletics. But Steve and the group agreed services provided both by Sports Medicine and through University Counseling are still short of demand.

One member asked whether student-athletes might be provided advice on coping mechanisms and how to help teammates when in distress. One possibility could be to have a clinician provide advice in a presentation to teams. Another way of helping student-athletes with stress

might be to integrate mediation and/or yoga into training regimens. A member asked whether student-athletes are provided flu shots. Newton-Wellesley hosts sessions in Conte for student-athletes (and athletics staff) to receive flu vaccinations each fall. In response to a member's question about nutrition, Steve noted that Newton-Wellesley provides a part-time resident nutritionist.

Steve emphasized that Sports Medicine provides the same set of services for all student-athletes regardless of sport, although the staffing level makes this challenging. Members suggested that data on student-athlete perceptions of Sports Medicine might be helpful in documenting the need for more resources. Members agreed to discuss these issues at a future meeting in the spring with representatives of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee.

The AAB met on **February 3, 2020** at the offices of Student-Athlete Academic Services (SAAS) on the second floor of the Yawkey Center. Attendees from SAAS included Michael Harris (Director), Da'Mon Merkerson (Associate Director), Amy Morgan (Senior Assistant Director), and Ashley Grigsby (Assistant Director).

Michael provided an overview of the office, describing how he sees the mission of SAAS as supporting the Athletics Department's strategic priority of fostering student-athlete formation. He highlighted several elements including maintaining academic success by consistently ranking near the top of the Atlantic Coast Conference in NCAA performance metrics, enhancing academic support services, and increasing post-graduate opportunities by leveraging BC's alumni network. SAAS' vision is to become a national leader in formative student-athlete academic services.

Michael next described five near-term goals for his office: 1. Develop a culture of alignment, collaboration, and integration with the academic community and with athletics; 2. Establish a successful model of support for BC's diverse student-athlete population; 3. Improve communication with coaches and athletics administrators; 4. Enhance efforts to maintain a culture of compliance and academic integrity; 5. Improve outreach efforts and increase visibility through a revamped website.

In support of these goals, SAAS has made some changes and has reoriented its structure. Proctoring services are now offered only for exam conflicts arising because of athletics competition. Exam conflicts arising for other reasons (illness, family, etc.) are handled by the student-athlete and professor directly or by the Connors Family Learning Center (CFLC), which now also provides approval of accommodations for student-athletes with learning disabilities. Michael attends meetings of undergraduate academic officers, which has enhanced communication between SAAS, associate deans, and Student Services.

Academic services are provided on three levels. In the major revenue sports (Football, Men's Basketball and sometimes Women's Basketball), student-athletes receive "comprehensive" services. For other sports that give significant numbers of scholarships (Baseball, Women's Basketball, Soccer, Field Hockey, Ice Hockey, Lacrosse, Softball, and Volleyball) student-athletes receive "baseline" services that are augmented as the need arises. For the remaining sports that give relatively few or no scholarships, student-athletes receive "consulting" services. If a student-athlete receiving consulting or baseline services is identified as needing a higher level of support, SAAS certainly will meet those needs.

Michael enumerated several other initiatives SAAS is pursuing. These include:

- Moving to a system of electronic tutor reports (using Google forms for now and Navigate in the future);
- Providing writing labs staffed by tutors specifically hired to assist with writing skills;
- Creating a new category of tutors known as “academic mentors” who will provide broad support for helping student-athletes develop learning strategies, while continuing as in the past to provide traditional “content” tutors;
- Hiring graduate assistants to augment existing staff;
- Facilitating and delivering textbook purchases for students on athletics scholarship aid.

Michael mentioned that with Boston College adopting EAB’s Navigate as its system for managing data analytics, SAAS would be using it to schedule appointments, track progress reports, and issue travel letters to faculty. Athletics is also adopting the Game Plan software platform to use in providing student-athletes with personal assessments, online student success modules, career services, and other mentorship features.

During the spring of 2018, the AAB approved and sent forward a report to BC’s academic leadership proposing several recommendations for strengthening SAAS. The AAB identified the need for both more staff and greater physical space. As pointed out in that report, Boston College ranked at the bottom among ACC institutions in the number of academic support staff and square footage of facilities, all while sponsoring an ACC-high 31 sports involving over 700 student-athletes.

Michael noted that SAAS has been given additional physical space on the second floor of Yawkey, more than doubling its total square footage, which continues to include space on the fourth floor. Renovations of the fourth-floor space are nearing completion and renovations of the second floor are slated for this summer.

The staff remains at eight full-time employees, with three new hires over the past two years replacing three employees who have left. As currently structured, the staff includes the director, one associate director, one senior assistant director, two assistant directors, two learning specialists/academic counselors, and one office administrator. Part-time staff includes three graduate assistants, and in any given semester approximately 8-12 academic mentors and 35-50 content tutors. Compared to other ACC institutions, in addition to having the smallest full-time staff, Boston College also has the lowest number of support staff dedicated to football and the lowest tutor operating budget.

Michael and his staff have developed a proposal for hiring additional full-time employees. These include a learning specialist/academic counselor, a tutorial coordinator/academic counselor, and two full-time (10-month) interns. In addition to adding full-time staff, the proposal asks for a modest increase in the SAAS operating budget largely to expand the number of part-time student tutors. The proposal has been sent to the Provost’s office and is under review. Consistent with its review from spring 2018, the AAB agreed to endorse the SAAS proposal by sending a memo of support to the Provost.



In the discussion that followed Michael's presentation, members asked whether the Navigate software was capable of integration with the Canvas course management software. Michael indicated that this should be possible. One member asked about the current practice of SAAS counselors monitoring student-athletes on Canvas course pages and what exactly the counselors were given access to. Michael noted that the counselors have only observer status and this access is consistent with FERPA rules because it is for a legitimate educational purpose.

The group toured the nearly-complete fourth floor space before adjourning. On the fourth-floor, a couple of rooms have been converted to an open-floor flex-space layout, with a small "fueling station" to provide food snacks for student-athletes and a newly designed "observable" glass-windowed exam proctoring room. Existing offices on that floor are also being refreshed. With the increased space for SAAS, the office of Student-Athlete Development has relocated from Conte to Yawkey, which should enhance its ability to effectively support student-athletes.

At the meeting on **February 17, 2020** Head Football Coach Jeff Hafley and AD Martin Jarmond attended for the first 45 minutes and then the group spent the remainder of the time reviewing practice and competition schedules for varsity sports.

Jeff and Martin offered their perspectives on the football program and athletics more generally. Jeff began by describing how he would like to reach out across campus, connecting with BC faculty and staff to make everyone feel involved with football and athletics. He mentioned looking forward to engaging with the broader BC community. One member noted a sense of increased energy around athletics over the past two years and asked how we might build on this. Martin emphasized the need to more fully involve the student body, tell better narratives about student-athletes, and publicize not just sports achievements but also academic success and community service contributions.

During the wide-ranging discussion that followed, members raised several issues. Coaches have a lot of influence over student-athletes and so can be instrumental in providing incentives for class attendance and academic effort. Jeff noted that during his first team meeting he had emphasized the importance of staying on top of academic responsibilities. He meets each week with staff from the office of Student-Athlete Academic Services (SAAS) and speaks directly with those team members identified as neglecting their academics.

Faculty office hours are a resource available to all students and one AAB member asked whether coaches know how they work. While coaches are aware of the importance of student-athlete meetings with SAAS counselors, Jeff and Martin had the impression that coaches generally don't appreciate the availability of office hours with faculty. Members emphasized office hours as a good way for student-athletes to make connections with faculty members. These sessions are not just for students struggling academically but also an opportunity for all students to develop mentoring relationships with faculty. And when office hours occur during times that students cannot attend, all faculty are willing to schedule an appointment at a mutually convenient time. Both Jeff and Martin said they would emphasize making use of faculty office hours to student-athletes, academic support staff, and coaches.

Discussion next turned to student formation classes and programs. Members mentioned several of these including First-Year Topic Seminars, advising sections of First-Year Writing

Seminars, Courage to Know classes, Halftime Retreats, and Senior Capstone Seminars as great options for personal growth and development by students. Student-athletes are underrepresented in many of these classes and programs. One suggestion is to make sure advisers for student-athletes at first-year summer orientation sessions highlight these formation opportunities and emphasize the benefits of getting to know faculty mentors through the first-year advising classes. Given the time constraints that practice and competition place on student-athletes, another suggestion is to tailor retreat programming to student-athlete schedules. Shorter retreats that take place close to campus are a possible option. Capstone classes during senior year provide an opportunity for reflection on one's college years and discernment of one's path following graduation.

Martin noted the importance of connecting faculty to the athletics department. He asked whether there might be ways of engaging with faculty members. Two possibilities in this regard could be having Martin and Jeff attend the upcoming spring Faculty Forum on March 30 and having them meet with the Provost's Advisory Council during April. The group acknowledged the need to foster a better understanding across campus of the pressure student-athletes face, particularly now with the prevalence of social media, and to emphasize the ability of faculty members to help them navigate through this. Members believe this understanding is achievable but must involve outreach to faculty who are skeptical of athletics. Several members asked whether the Center for Teaching Excellence might run programs for faculty on how best to support student-athletes, and students more generally, who are trying to balance the time demands and other pressures of extracurricular activities. Perhaps a program of this type might be included in new faculty on-boarding.

Jeff mentioned the power of narratives and stories for highlighting how some student-athletes have struggled, persisted, and ultimately achieved their goals. Members agreed that vignettes of student-athletes showing "a day in their life" could be a way to foster better understanding among faculty. Developing personal connections with faculty members, whether as academic advisors or through visits during office hours, would help remove stereotypes some faculty have of student-athletes. Jeff suggested having AAB members invite other colleagues from their departments to join them at a spring football practice. Seeing faculty visit in their "safe space" could help student-athletes become more comfortable with reaching out to faculty for advice and mentoring. Due to the COVID-19 crisis, sports activity was suspended in mid-March and the AAB was not able to attend a spring football practice.

During the second part of the meeting, the AAB reviewed practice and competition schedules for all varsity sports. Prior to the meeting, each member was assigned teams to review and were asked to assess the number of potential missed classes for each of the standard class time blocks, after accounting for those time blocks unavailable due to practice schedules. As in past years, some teams faced severe constraints on available class times due to practices. In reviewing practice schedules, the group raised the concern that coaches don't appreciate the start and end times of standard class time blocks. For example, beginning practice at 1:00 p.m. on a Tuesday and Thursday prevents student-athletes from taking classes starting at noon on those days. In this case, moving the start of practice 30 minutes later, to 1:30 p.m., would free up the noon time block. The AAB will issue its annual report and detailed summary tables drawing on the members' analysis by late spring.

The AAB met on **February 24, 2020**. Jade Morris, Senior Associate Director, Student-Athlete Development attended for the first 45 minutes and then the group spent the remainder of the time with members of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC).

Jade gave an overview of initiatives in student-athlete development. She began by noting programming by her office is focused on three broad areas: community service, career readiness, and personal development.

In the time since she took on her current role, Jade has moved away from the previous approach of requiring participation by each student-athlete in a certain number of program activities to an approach where programming is targeted to class year. The earlier approach had often led to student-athletes signing up for activities simply because of scheduling convenience, regardless of whether the activities were relevant to them personally. Under the new approach, programming now includes an orientation for first-year student-athletes to acclimate them to Boston College; career workshops for sophomores to help them develop resumes, cover letters, and linked-in profiles; dine and dress etiquette sessions for juniors with BC alumni and staff accompanied by presentations from employers; and transition-to-life-after-sports panels for seniors with former BC student-athletes discussing their paths after college. Student-athletes are expected to participate in the programming targeted at their class year.

Besides these applied programs, student-athletes also are active in community service, which is structured around sports teams and emphasizes on-going (rather than one-off) activities with team members rotating among service opportunities.

Jade mentioned two other initiatives now underway. One involves creating affinity groups, each organized by an athletics staff member. These include groups based on gender, race, first-generation status, LGBTQ, injury, international student-athletes, transfers, etc. The purpose of these groups is to provide informal support networks for student-athletes. But one issue that sometimes arises is individual student-athletes or members of some teams not wanting to be identified as a member of a particular group, and so finding the right balance for encouraging participation can be challenging. One AAB member noted that for some students, it may be relatively easy to integrate into the BC community, for example, transfer students. But for other groups, perceived social stigma may mean it takes some time for students to feel comfortable. While these groups are intended to be supportive and are fully voluntary, they sometimes can be viewed as reinforcing differences.

Another initiative is the adoption this year of "Athlete Viewpoint" as the Athletics Department survey instrument for assessing student-athlete attitudes and experiences. During the fall of 2018, the AAB attended a presentation on the "Athlete Viewpoint" survey software organized by former Senior Associate AD Marcus Blossom and Jade. At that meeting, the AAB had been impressed by the functionality and benchmarking features of the instrument and had encouraged Athletics to purchase the subscription. One member mentioned it would be interesting to see how BC student-athletes' responses compare to benchmarks at other schools. The survey will be administered to all student-athletes with data available by end of semester.

Jade also described longer term plans, including efforts to increase opportunities for service immersion trips and retreats that fit with student-athlete schedules, to provide job treks and micro internships where student-athletes shadow alumni over spring break or during the

summer, and to increase student-athlete development programming for student-athletes on campus during the summer.

In the discussion that followed members asked about coordinating with other groups on campus that support student development and formation. Jade indicated her office has reached out to other groups and tries to ensure student-athletes are aware of opportunities across campus. One member pointed out it might be useful to survey student-athletes about their experience participating in these activities.

At this point in the meeting, the AAB thanked Jade for attending and welcomed six members from the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC). Joining the meeting were senior Catherine “Cat” Balido (Volleyball), junior Jess Creedon (Women’s Track), senior Adam French (Men’s Soccer), senior Olivia Vaughn (Women’s Soccer), sophomore Mac Webster (Men’s Golf), and senior Brigid Wood (Field Hockey).

The SAAC members were invited to share their experience and concerns as student-athletes at Boston College. Several students mentioned academic advising, with some having received excellent support from faculty advisers and from counselors in the office of Student-Athlete Academic Services (SAAS) and others having a less satisfactory experience, sometimes being assigned different advisers each year. One AAB member wondered if academic advisers and SAAS counselors connect with each other. SAAS counselors now have observer access to student-athletes’ Canvas pages and so have the ability to monitor performance directly.

A question arose about whether the students had trouble getting into classes needed to complete their majors. Practice schedules often limit the time blocks available and create difficulties for scheduling classes. And travel schedules can result in missed classes that violate class attendance policies of some faculty. The students said that despite these difficulties, they’ve managed to fulfill required courses for their majors. They have found that most faculty are understanding and will give overrides into a class needed for a major requirement. The students also emphasized the importance of making sure at the start of the semester that faculty are informed that student-athletes will miss class for competition, and if this is not acceptable they should tell the student-athlete not to take the class. One AAB member asked how best to convey this to faculty. One student thought providing an electronic listing of student-athletes in their class along with associated competition schedules could help reinforce the in-person presentation of the missed-class paper form at the start of the semester.

For several BC sports, practice occurs at locations removed from campus (or at the Newton campus) requiring transportation from the main campus to the practice site. The AAB has been assured on previous occasions by SAAS that practice schedules incorporate sufficient time for such travel. In response to a question about whether this is indeed the case, the students said it depends on the sport, as some coaches end practice in time to allow for travel back to campus within the practice window but other coaches do not. One student suggested that SAAS should emphasize to coaches the need to account for travel time when they end practice. Students often are driving vans for their teams and some have felt pressured to rush back to campus drop off teammates for class, with the drivers then needing additional time to park vehicles in the Beacon Street garage.

One AAB member asked whether the students had been able to participate in other non-athletics activities during their time as Boston College. Some of the students mentioned participating in Kairos retreats and Appa immersion trips. But the constraints of practice and competition schedules, along with carrying full academic course loads, mean that fitting in such activities can be challenging. An AAB member asked whether student-athletes in sports having an “off-season” might have more flexibility to participate in non-athletics activities during those “non-championship” segments of the year when practice hours and competitions are limited. One student agreed that some coaches do allow an occasional missed practice during the off-season so that student-athletes can participate in other activities. But several students noted that even though “official” athletics hours are reduced during the off-season, they felt pressure to attend captains’ practices, training / rehab sessions, and other informal athletics activities. Some students suggested providing non-athletics activities during summer sessions.

The discussion next turned to whether students had experienced constraints on what type of majors they could choose. One student is majoring in Nursing and mentioned the difficulty of balancing her sport of track with numerous clinical requirements. Others agreed that majors had to be chosen with scheduling conflicts in mind. More generally, the students thought that having more classes recorded using audio / video technology could open up options in terms of academic programs and majors that currently are difficult to manage when missing class due to athletic competitions. As the meeting drew to a close, the board thanked the SAAC members for sharing their experiences and concerns.

**Two scheduled meetings were subsequently canceled** following the closing of campus due to COVID-19 and will be rescheduled for next academic year:

**March 30 at 2:30 p.m.** with JM Caparro, Senior Associate Athletics Direct, External Affairs.

**April 27 at 2:30 p.m.** with staff from Athletics Facilities and Operations.

### **3. Committee Composition**

In June 2019, Mike Naughton (Physics) and Sharon Beckman (Law) began second three-year terms having been reelected earlier that year. At the end of the academic year, Tara Pisani Gareau completed an elected term on the Board. In the most recent spring semester, Elizabeth Wallace (English) was elected to a three-year term beginning in June 2020.

Please feel free to seek out any AAB member with questions or concerns you may have. One of the Board’s primary functions is to serve as a channel for communication between academics and athletics, and we are open to your input.

#### **The Athletics Advisory Board, 2019-20**

Sharon Beckman (Law)

John J. Burns (Office of the Provost)

Tara Pisani Gareau (Earth & Environmental Sciences)

Jessica Greene (Institutional Research)

Robert Murphy (Economics, AAB Chair and Faculty Athletics Representative)

Ryan Heffernan (Mission and Ministry)

Sara Moorman (Sociology)

Michael Naughton (Physics)

Delvon Parker (CSOM)

Sheila Tucker (CSOM)

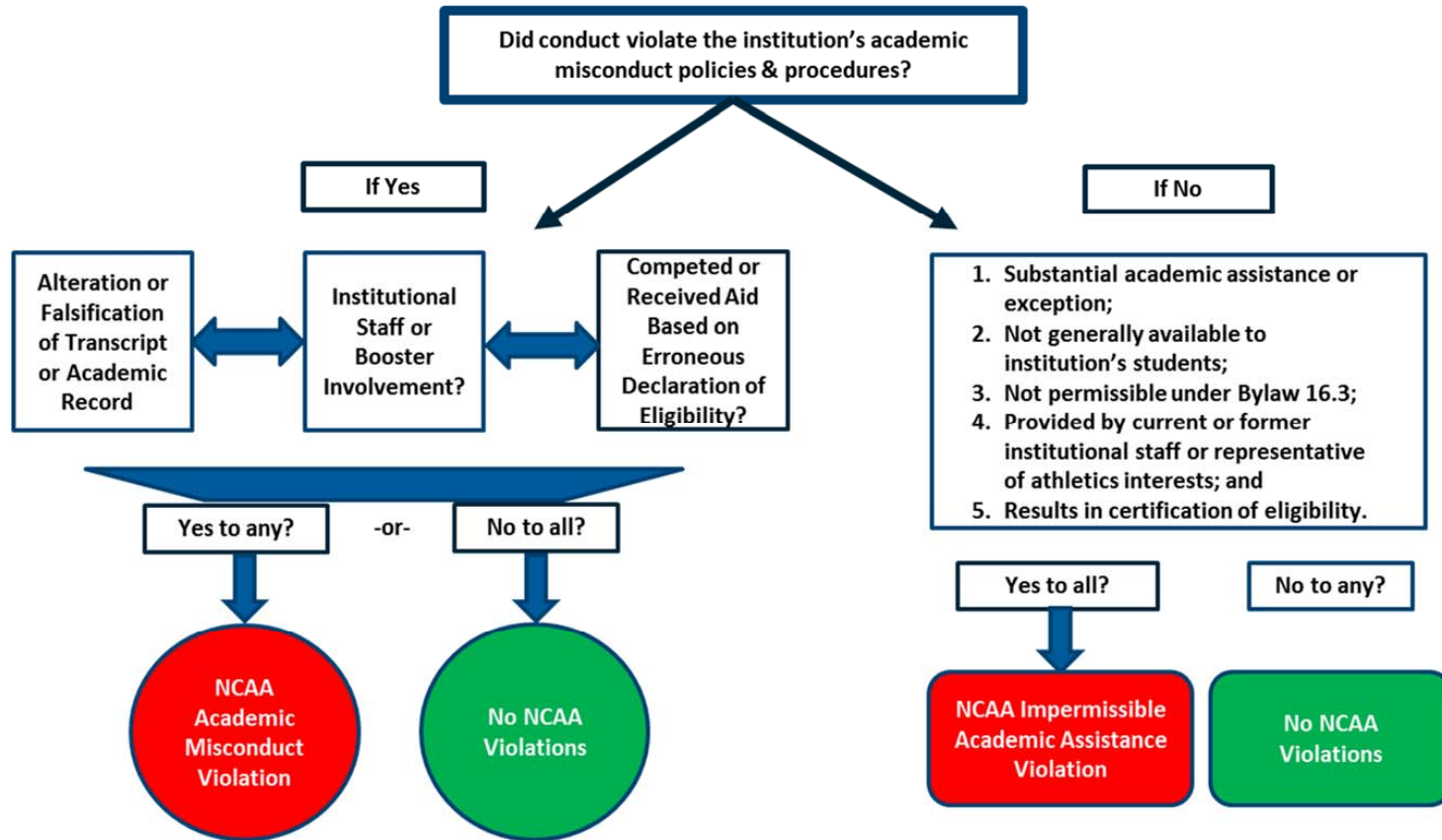
**Addendum Table 1****Class Sections with Student-Athlete (SA) Enrollment**

	Spring 2017	Fall 2017	Spring 2018	Fall 2018	Spring 2019	Fall 2019
# Classes with $\geq 10\%$ SAs	339	349	330	351	346	346
# Classes with $\geq 20\%$ SAs	113	85	99	109	96	115
# Classes with $\geq 30\%$ SAs	39	26	29	40	30	45
# Classes with $\geq 50\%$ SAs	13	10	12	10	9	15
# Classes with at least 1 SA	N/A	1031	984	1063	954	1050
# Classes with at least 5 SAs	N/A	121	115	135	116	136
# Classes with at least 10 SAs	N/A	26	25	31	23	25
<b><i>For Classes with <math>\geq 10\%</math> SAs:</i></b>						
# Classes with $\geq 5$ SAs	96	98	96	107	98	115
# Classes with $\geq 10$ SAs	18	18	17	20	17	15
# Classes with $\geq 20$ SAs	5	3	3	2	2	3
<b><i>Percent of All Classes with SAs:</i></b>						
Classes with $\geq 10\%$ SAs	N/A	33.9%	33.5%	33.0%	36.3%	33.0%
Classes with $\geq 20\%$ SAs	N/A	8.2%	10.1%	10.3%	10.1%	11.0%
Classes with $\geq 30\%$ SAs	N/A	2.5%	2.9%	3.8%	3.1%	4.3%
Classes with $\geq 50\%$ SAs	N/A	1.0%	1.2%	0.9%	0.9%	1.4%

**Source:** Office of Student Services

**Note:** Data are for all class sections in which student-athletes are enrolled and include some graduate-level courses. Student-athletes represent about 7.5 percent of undergraduates over the past 6 semesters.

**Addendum Chart 1**



Source: NCAA