The meeting was called to order at 8:00 AM by Christine Draper, Chair.

Members and Visitors Present

Cheryl Aasheim, Sam Baker, Barry Balleck, Cathy Beene, Jeff Blythe, Ron Core, Christine Draper, Chris Geyerman, Garrett Green, Bill Levernier, John Mulherin, Steve Rossi, Keith Roughton, Fred Smith, Reed Smith and Christine Whitlock.

Approval of Minutes

- The minutes of the March 28, 2012 meeting were unanimously approved.

Introduction of Guest by Sam Baker:

- Dr. Brooks Keel
- One area of misconception is that Georgia Southern is in some other NCAA subdivision other than DI because football is FCS. It’s a great accomplishment to go from a 5-6 football record to playing in the championship semi-finals two years in a row. Unfortunately the institution does not get the national attention in the FCS that FBS programs receive. Georgia Southern’s academics is already there and research is making strides. It is time for athletics to consider this type of move. The headline in the Sunday Statesboro Herald was a little misleading.
- If Georgia Southern is to make a move like this there are four things that must happen.
  1. Must be able to keep good coaches and give them the tools to succeed.
  2. Must have the best facilities for all programs.
  3. Must have the funds. The feasibility study in 2009 showed we needed $4.5 million on an annual basis for the operations budget. These expenses entail additional scholarships, recruiting budgets, travel, meeting the FBS salary structures and adding a sport.
  4. Must be invited to join a conference. There is a window of opportunity for Georgia Southern. It will be a long time before another opportunity like this comes along. This is a generational decision.
- A decision has not been made, but will possibly have to be made soon.
- How do we raise $4.5 million? The Athletic Foundation is working on the largest campaign in Georgia Southern history to address facility and budget issues. Georgia Southern’s current athletic budget is 95 out of 125 in the FCS and next to the bottom in the Southern Conference football playing institutions. To meet the needed funding it will mean increasing ticket revenue, donations and playing guarantee games. Another aspect is the potential to solicit an increase in student fees. This will have to be voted on by the students. A $25 increase in the athletic fee to increase student designated seating at Paulson Stadium, a $22 fee for construction of a new health care facility, a $10 green fee (requested by the students) and a $50 athletic fee to assist in funding an ascendance to FBS. That’s a total increase in student fees of $107. Timing is an issue. The fee increase request goes to the students if approved by Board of Regents in December of this year, voted on in April, 2013 and the fees if approved will go into effect in the 2013 academic year.
- Dr. Keel asked the UAC to discuss this issue and give insight and if possible provide a recommendation.
- Question: Are the increases in student fees permanent. Dr. Keel: the green fee and the $50 athletic fee are permanent. The health fee and $25 athletic stadium fee will sunset.
Financial Update

Jeff Blythe:

- The April budget report was emailed to the UAC for review.
- Wrapping up the fiscal year. An email was sent to the coaches asking them to be very conscious of their expenses between now and June 30. Working on the FY13 budget. For equity the plan is to add three new assistant coach positions in women’s sports.
- The biggest expense is scholarships which go up every year. Summer school expenses are also on the rise.

Schedule Approvals

Cathy Beene:

- None.

Athletics Update

Sam Baker:

- Appreciated Dr. Keel coming. In 2008 Georgia Southern supporters urged the institution to conduct a FBS feasibility study. The UAC made a recommendation to the President that a feasibility study be conducted. Rosser International, Inc. completed the feasibility study in June 2009. The study provided a road map of what it would take to get to the FBS level. On a financial basis it meant an increase in operational annual budget of at least $4.4 million.
- Georgia State’s recent announcement of a move to FBS has now necessitated a serious contemplation of the subject by Georgia Southern. Georgia State was invited to join the Sunbelt because of their location. There are good reasons for going to the next level and good reasons to remain FCS. It has always been a decision to be made by the institution. There is a small window of time to consider the move because when the window closes it may be ten years before it opens again.
- Softball is having a great season. They are currently in first place in the Conference. Baseball has regrouped and doing well.
- Over 249 student-athletes participated in the Bulloch County Relay for Life on April 13.
- Keith Roughton and his staff are working now to get ready for the influx of new student-athletes coming for summer school time as well as enrolling in the fall.
- Question: Georgia Southern is opening Southern Links? Sam: CRI is opening the golf course. We are fortunate that the site will contain a cross country course which will enable athletics to host cross country meets.
- Question: If we go to the FBS is the PR and money worth it if we have a losing record. Sam: That is a question that remains to be seen. FBS will bring an entirely different dynamic to the program.
- Question: Are any other Southern Conference schools thinking of moving up to FBS? Sam: Possibly Appalachian State.

NCAA Representative Update

Chris Geyerman:

- Distributed a list of the Georgia Southern student-athletes on the 2011-12 SoCon Winter Academic All-Conference Team.
• The Southern Conference Spring meeting is the end of May in Asheville, NC. On the agenda is a situation from the Men's SoCon Golf Championship Tournament at Daniel’s Island that involved open-air and other gender specific (i.e., men only) access areas.
• At the June Faculty Senate meeting – I present the list of NCAA violation reported this year. All are secondary.

Athletic Foundation Report

John Mulherin:

• Dr. Keel and Sam pretty well outlined the needs.
• Continue to work on the plan.

New Business

• Discussion of moving to the FBS level. The UAC voted to present a recommendation to Dr. Keel supporting the University’s taking the necessary steps to make a move to the FBS if and when a conference extends an invitation to join its ranks.

Old Business

• None.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lanell VanLandingham
Senior Administrative Secretary
Department of Athletics