Gender, Diversity, and Student-Athlete Well-being Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes

February 4, 2011

GC1235

Attendance: Charmaine DeFrancesco (CD); Sharon Eaddy; Julissa Castellanos; Larry Lundsford; Shirylon McWhorter; Rob Frye; Krish Jayachandran; Liz Borrell-Augustin; Robert Dollinger; Emilio Collyer; Meagan Eshillan; Jennifer Doherty-Restrepo; Wesley Carroll; Tom Syracuse; Ciprian Mejia; Susan Himburg; Victoria Miliucci; Denise Halpin; Julie Berg

I. Meeting called to order by CD at 1:00 pm.
   - CD thanked committee for all the hard work and special thanks to Susan Himburg and Tom Syracuse
   - CD explains purpose of this meeting is to review the two plans for improvement sent to the sub-committee from the respective working groups and approve them for moving ahead with open forums.

II. Gender
   - CD: This plan has been reviewed by steering committee. Including the president.
   - Reminder that NCAA has 15 areas to address in the plan and at this meeting will provide an opportunity for comment on each.
   - Number of participation slots compared to general student population – at FIU more female than males but athletic rate is higher for males.
   - Adding female sports – needs improvement. Recommendation, given competitiveness in division and interest in local community, addition of sand volleyball. Discussion:
     - Rob Frye – question on wording for goals – teams missing word
     - Wesley Carroll – will sand volleyball have enough to improve 12.5% only 14 per team – Julie Berg replies address tier 2 history of adding teams - demonstrate meeting interest and providing opportunities teams or number of slots.
     - CD addition of sports involves strategic planning. D1 institutions have to add many more sports for participation slots, but the additions should be practical and competitive as well as inclusive of data to demonstrate needs and interests are met. The popularity and practice of sports in a given area or by feeder schools is a consideration.
     - Julie Berg – Sport would also have to demonstrate interest and start as a club, then meet competitive level be a sponsored sport.
     - Larry Lunsford – Can volleyball players play on both teams? (court and sand)
     - Julie Berg – A committee is studying this issue for sand volleyball at the division level.
Susan Himburg – Should the steps have more details in office responsible?
Shirylon McWhorter – Yes, Sub-committee of University Access and Equity Committee, the Title IX Gender Equity Committee.

- Meeting interest of group – seems not to be meeting, investigation ongoing.
  - Athletic scholarship – There is a money difference in favor of women, but no inequity. The difference is recruitment out-of-state and internationally – more costly is done more by women.
  - Equipment and supplies – Athletics has addressed this concern and supplied additional equipment to women's teams.
  - Scheduling of games and practice times, travel allowances, academic support services, - no issues identified
  - Coaches – disparity of full time coaches - steps to improve include softball, soccer, volleyball full time assistant coaches to be hired – in keeping with University diversity hiring practices
  - Locker rooms and facilities – no issues, exception softball grand stand area that will have improvements
  - Medical and training facilities, housing and dining, publicity and awards – no issues
  - Support services – no issues, coaching staff office concerns will be addressed by office reconfigurations
  - Recruitment – no gender issues with funding but opportunities to recruitment diminished because of limited number of full-time coaches. This will be addressed as earlier mentioned by hiring more full time women's team coaches.
  - Retention, governance – no issues

The Narrative explains plan more fully and contains data to make the evaluations

- Further discussion
  - SGA – what can be done outside of this committee to address the issues raised?
  - Response: SGA and SAAC to have joint meeting. And, SGA campaign for student athletes

III. Diversity

- CD: This plan has been reviewed by steering committee. NCAA has 4 areas to address in the plan and at this meeting will provide an opportunity for comment on each.
  - Assessment - no issues identified. Comment to add a survey for inclusiveness. Susan and Shirylon discussion of implementing University wide with responsibility to Access and Equity Committee
    - Cipirian – Notes that cultural differences and attraction to the sports offered may have influence on inclusiveness
• General discussion of marketing strategies followed
  o Retention – finding is below benchmark, which is based on older data. However, more recent progress reports demonstrate very positive gains in retention.
  o Partnerships – no issues – SGA rep and Ciprian aside discussion on increasing community volunteerism by athletes
  o Governance – no issues

Hiring practices – not in plan but in the text for 3.2 Diversity report – FIU has increased minorities in coaching staff. Looking at data from several sources, athletics makes a concerted effort to meet diversity initiatives. Several coaches mentioned as examples of recent hires meeting diversity standards and rules set by the University. Conclusion is FIU is excellent in diversity of athletes and continues on track for hiring practices.

IV. Student well being
  o CD: no plan needed but see highlights in report.
  o Survey instruments – exit survey
  o Reminder of committees’ use of focus groups to compliment exit survey results
  o Support programs – sub-committee found good amount of interface with campus support services such as women’s center, Multicultural Programs (MPAS), victim advocacy, etc. Also found well taken care of in area of health services.
  o Food service issue – A dialogue has started with dining services to address hours, food prep and choice.
  o New travel policy also has been addressed as a result of focus groups
  o General discussion: Possible need for more personnel for student programming – example assistance for athletes career development.

V. Meeting adjourned