

**Report from the Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics to the University of Georgia
University Council; April 24, 2024**

Presented by Lisa Renzi-Hammond, Committee Chair

The Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA) is required to report to Council regarding the academic progress of University of Georgia student athletes. This report has been compiled from committee meetings taking place during the fall 2023 and spring 2024 committee meetings.

President Morehead, faculty, staff, and student representatives of Council, it is my privilege to present updates on the academic progress of student athletes at the University of Georgia. I'll begin the report by first highlighting the extraordinary academic successes of our student athletes, and then I will discuss our committee's specific work for this academic year.

When our committee reported to Council last year, student athletes had a record high overall GPA for fall semester 2022. Since then, our athletes turned a record high semester into a record high year, with an overall GPA of 3.20 for the 2022-2023 academic year. They have maintained that success so far this academic year, with an overall 3.19 average GPA for fall semester 2023. I feel certain that the next Chair of this committee will have the joy I currently have of reporting as many successes in our classrooms and laboratories as they do on the field, track, court, and green, and in the pool, barn, and gym. In fall semester 2023, 362 student athletes were named to the Athletics Honor Roll for their strong academic performance, with 48 of those students named Presidential Scholars for maintaining perfect 4.00 GPAs. As the faculty research mentor for one of those Presidential scholars, I can attest to how hard those students work to earn that achievement.

With respect to the specific work of our committee, our committee met in both fall and spring semesters, specifically on October 2, 2023, and again on April 15, 2024.

During our fall meeting, the committee met with Geoff Bentzel, Senior Associate Athletics Director for Compliance. We engaged in a discussion of UGA policies and NCAA rules for interactions with recruits, creating a culture of compliance, academic misconduct, major infractions, issues surrounding name image likeness, and sports wagering. We then met with the Associate Athletic Director of Academics, Beth Dziedzic, and reviewed academic standards for UGA student athletes. Common to both the compliance and academic standards discussion is the need to develop clear policies and a drive to maintain a culture of compliance in a rapidly changing landscape. On the academic side, both athletes and

counselors have expressed the need for clear policies around generative AI – a pain point likely felt by most of us in this room.

During our spring meeting, the committee received opening remarks from Josh Brooks (J. Reid Parker Director of Athletics), and then engaged in discussions with student athletes, followed by academic counselors, followed by members of the coaching staff. Student athletes shared overwhelmingly positive experiences navigating life as a student athlete and expressed gratitude to UGA faculty who are willing to work with them to help them succeed academically, even while on the road. Academic counselors celebrated the return of a fully in-person Rankin-Smith Center, which provides our student athletes with vital academic support services. Head coaches mirrored concerns for student athletes navigating the world of educational technology expressed in our October meeting.

All of the academic faculty eligible to serve as committee chair are ending their terms on this committee, so a vote for the next chair will be completed electronically once new candidates are voted onto the committee.

I would like to thank the athletic director, academic support staff, compliance staff, coaches, and of course the athletes themselves for their time and candor, and I would like to offer my profound gratitude for the committee members who served this year. This concludes my report. Thank you, President Morehead and faculty, staff, and student members of this Council.