

**APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY
ATHLETICS DIVERSITY PLAN
Fall 2001-Spring 2006**

Appalachian's statement of educational opportunity asserts that:

“Appalachian State University is committed to equality of educational opportunity and does not discriminate against applicants, students or employees on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, or sexual orientation. Appalachian also actively promotes diversity among students and employees.”

Equitable treatment of all individuals is a component of the Appalachian State University's intercollegiate athletics mission statement: “Appalachian State University is committed to ensuring equitable participation and treatment of men, women, and minorities in intercollegiate athletics through its administration, staff, coaches, programs and policies. Appalachian's non-discrimination practice represents a moral and ethical, not just legal, imperative.” This plan will further substantiate the university's commitment to equality of opportunity in athletics.

Goals

1. Support the recruitment efforts of multicultural and minority student athletes for all sport programs.

Steps to Achieve:

- Encourage coaches to include student athletes of different color, cultures, socioeconomic backgrounds and experiences in their recruiting process, with major emphasis on teams that are predominately Caucasian.
- Identify the above potential student athletes to admissions and financial aid for potential help with academic scholarships and financial aid.

Responsible: Athletics director, sport administrators and head coaches

Timeline: Ongoing with annual evaluation

Means of Funding: Sport budgets, general athletics revenues

2. Support the recruitment and hiring of diverse individuals for any athletics staff vacancies.

Steps to Achieve:

- Advertise openings in *The NCAA News*, coaches association websites and, when possible, in websites with culturally and economically diverse audiences.
- Seek quality individuals with a variety of backgrounds and experiences through networking and encourage them to apply for any vacancies.

Responsible: Athletics director

Timeline: Ongoing

Means of Funding: General athletics revenues

3. Continue to monitor academic progress and retention of student athletes.

Steps to Achieve:

- Monitor progress through the university's Learning Assistance Program (LAP) to include the intrusive advising process, participation in the study hall program and academic progress reports.

- Arrange for student athletes to meet with their academic advisors during orientation in a small group; sign up for individual class schedule-planning meetings.
- Require new student athletes to attend an advising meeting during the first four weeks of each semester for the purposes of:
 - a. establishing a relationship with the advisor
 - b. defining the advisor/advisee relationship
 - c. beginning the career exploration process
 - d. identifying academic, social or personal needs
 - e. making referrals to other campus resources as needed
- Provide advisement to help student athletes determine a major and courses for the upcoming summer and/or semester.
- Discuss academic progress with an academic advisor weekly if a student athlete's grade point average is below a 2.0.
- Ask all faculty to submit academic progress report information for student athletes in their classes during the fifth and tenth weeks of the semester. This information is shared with the coach. If problems are discovered, the advisor meets with the student, and an academic progress report response form is completed and signed by the student athlete and sent to the professor.
- Require all student athletes with less than a 2.0 GPA in the study hall program, and any additional athletes designated by their head coaches, to report their grades weekly to their study hall leader, who has been trained to provide study skills instruction and referrals to campus resources.

Responsible: Coordinator and assistant coordinator of academic services for student athletes, athletics director, head coaches

Timeline: Ongoing

Means of Funding: General athletics revenues, NCAA Academic Enhancement Fund

4. Evaluate regularly and enhance the advising delivery process to identify more accurately "at risk" student athletes and improve existing intrusive academic intervention strategies.

Steps to Achieve:

- Identify "at risk" student athletes during the admissions process on the bases of high school academic performance, test scores, anecdotal data and information from high school teachers, coaches and guidance counselors.
- Provide services for student athletes in the "at risk" category through the federally funded student support services program. Advisors in this program have smaller caseloads and students are served in smaller orientation and study hall groups. These students are required to attend study hall for the first year rather than the first semester.
- Conduct program evaluations on a regular basis and orientation evaluations at the conclusion of each orientation session.
- Complete study hall evaluations at the end of each semester with input from leaders and student athletes.
- Complete an advising evaluation when each student athlete declares a major.
- Prepare a summary report of all evaluations at the end of each year and study hall reports at the end of each semester.

Responsible: Director of the learning assistance program, student support services advisors in learning assistance program, coordinator and assistant coordinator of academic services for student athletes, athletics director, head coaches

Timeline: Ongoing with semester or annual evaluation

Means of Funding: General athletics revenues, NCAA Academic Enhancement Fund, student support services funding from the U.S. Department of Education

5. Increase awareness among student athletes of financial aid opportunities available to them.

Steps to Achieve:

- Encourage the process of filing the free application for federal student aid and meeting with financial aid advisors yearly.
- Promote knowledge of the NCAA Special Assistance Fund during fall eligibility sessions and through the Student Athlete Handbook.
- Disseminate information regarding NCAA and Southern Conference graduate scholarships that are available.
- Encourage application for the NCAA degree completion awards by those who qualify.
- Inform student athletes of different organizations on campus that have academic and need-based aid available.

Responsible: Athletics director, sport administrators, coaching staff, F.A.R. (faculty athletics representative), coordinator and assistant coordinator of academic services for student athletes

Timeline: Ongoing

Means of Funding: General athletics revenues

6. Review exit interviews of student athletes annually for insight into their experiences, issues and concerns.

Steps to Achieve:

- Identify and encourage exit interviews of student athletes.
- Review issues and concerns expressed in exit interviews.

Responsible: Athletics administrative staff, Athletics Council

Timeline: Ongoing

Means of Funding: None needed

7. Review the welfare of student athletes and athletics personnel annually.

Steps to Achieve:

- Provide an annual report to the athletics director given by the Minority Enhancement Committee chair.
- Prepare an annual report for the athletics council by the Minority Enhancement Committee chair.
- Hold periodic staff meetings where athletics personnel may share concerns.
- Maintain administrators' open door policy for staff to share concerns.

Responsible: Athletics director, faculty athletics representative, athletics council, Minority Enhancement Committee

Timeline: Ongoing

Means of Funding: None needed

8. Encourage staff and student athletes' attendance at seminars, workshops and programs on diversity and multicultural issues.

Steps to Achieve:

- Publicize on-campus events focusing on diversity and multicultural programs to the athletics staff and student athletes to see.
- Forward university electronic announcements concerning diversity and multicultural programs to staff and student athletes through the S.A.A.B. (Student Athlete Advisory Board).
- Invite university personnel to speak on multicultural and diversity topics at periodic head coaches meetings.

Responsible: Athletics director, sport administrators, life skills coordinator, Student Athlete Advisory Board

Timeline: Ongoing

Means of Funding: General athletics revenues

9. Promote diverse representation on different athletics and university clubs and committees.

Steps to Achieve:

- Inform teams, at fall eligibility sessions of the Student Athlete Advisory Board, of the desire to have cultural diversity on the board.
- Encourage more diversity on the athletics council through the chancellor and faculty athletics representative.
- Encourage diversity representation in the community service projects of each team.
- Encourage athletes to become involved in departmental clubs, Appalachian Ambassadors, Student Government Association and any clubs or student organizations on campus.

Responsible: Athletics administrative staff, life skills coordinator, head coaches

Timeline: Ongoing

Means of Funding: None needed

This document was reviewed by the following groups: the Minority Enhancement Committee, the Chair of the Equity Subcommittee, the Athletics Council, the head coaches, the Student Athlete Advisory Board and the University Attorney.

Final revision: December 19, 2001