

Student-Athlete Mentoring program was distributed to the Athletics Committee. Feedback and suggestions was solicited from the mentors and was noted in the progress report.

Dr. Ulrich Groetsch suggested a mentoring program for international student-athletes. Navigators are available for student-athletes in the international office.

VI. Gender Equity Committee Report

Debbie Williams, Chair of the Gender Equity Committee, stated that the committee would meet in February 2017.

VII. Athletic Director Report

Mark Linder, Athletic Director, updated the committee on the following:

Mark Linder, Todd Vardaman, and Debbie Williams attended the NCAA Division II Convention in Nashville, TN.

Mike Hagen, Associate Commissioner of the ASUN, visited UNA on January 17-18, 2017. Mr. Hagan met with the UNA Athletics Department staff on January 18, 2017.

UNA will be classified as Division II until spring 2018. The transition to Division I will begin fall 2018.

In 2016, the Athletics Committee had supported the motion to propose to the Strategic Planning and Budget Committee an increase in stipend for Graduate Assistants in the Athletics Department from \$600 to \$1,000. Twenty-one graduate assistants are in the athletics department. The budget committee allowed recommission in 2016 and the proposal to increase the stipend is back on the budget committee agenda for consideration.

Todd Vardaman, Associate Athletic Director of Compliance, discussed the following information regarding the transition to Division I :

The Athletics Committee will be a great resource for the transition.

A Reclassification Steering Committee will be created.

Members of the steering committee will be made up of the UNA campus community. The committee

The committee will be formed by fall 2018 and will be a four to five year committee.

Mike Hagen will visit the campus in July 2017 and begin an initial compliance review of UNA Athletics.

VIII. New Business

Mark Linder, Athletic Director, and Todd Vardaman, Associate Athletic Director of Compliance discussed the Division I transition with the Athletics Committee:

In 2017-18 – UNA Division II

In 2018-19 – A Division I exception: Senior student-athletes on scholarship in their final year of eligibility and have been at UNA more than one year, will receive an exception to Division I requirements.

In 2019-20 – UNA must meet all Division I requirements.

In 2022-23 – UNA will be eligible for NCAA championships and conference championships.

APR is an important element in Division I. The APR minimum for teams is .93. APR follows the coach. Mark explained the allocation of points and how the APR score is calculated. Penalties are incurred when APR declines.

UNA Athletic staff will visit the campus of Jacksonville State University.

In the transition process, UNA athletics will hire a compliance and academic support staff member with Division I experience.

Mark Linder discussed the Connect1 program. The program is used to connect with students who are struggling with depression, anxiety and suicide. Suicide rates are increasing. In the spring of 2017, challenges for the Connect1 program will be launched. The Connect1 program was recognized at the NCAA Division II National Convention.