Members Present
Fred Brooks, Peggy Gallagher, Kerry Heyward, Cheryl L. Levick, Mike Metzler, Sandy Miller, Parth Modi, Chester Phillips, George Pierce, Andrew Sumner, Kris Varjas- Chair, Dena Freeman-Patton, Marvin Lewis, Robert Slavis.

Members Not Present
Perry Binder, Richard Fendler, Justin Hails, Corneill Stephens, Rebecca Stout, Gail Barksdale, James Greenwell.

Call to Order
Ms. Varjas called the meeting to order at 11:37 p.m. All members were present as noted above. The minutes reflect major action items and the sense of the meeting discussion. Detailed notes are available on file in the athletic department.

Approval of Minutes
The committee unanimously approved the September 23, 2010 Senate Committee on Athletics minutes.

Committee Chair’s Report
Ms. Varjas distributed copies of the University’s strategic plan to the committee. She shared with the committee that Risa Palm, the Senior Vice President & Provost, will host a retreat on March 12, 2011 to plan the implementation of the strategic plan. Ms. Varjas will attend as the athletic department’s representative to get a sense of how athletics fits into the plan.

Athletic Director’s Report
Ms. Levick distributed and reviewed a handout that highlighted the athletic performance of all sports. The inaugural football season was very successful, especially the winning record and 16,750 average attendance. She noted that the 2011 football schedule was released yesterday and the priorities used in constructing the schedule were to have at least six home games, to open on a Thursday night and to have one “big” game.

Ms. Levick shared with the group how the GSUAA (Georgia State University Athletic Association) Restructuring was progressing. A transition committee, composed of members of the current GSUAA, was formed last fall to review and recommend amendments to the association’s by-laws. This process continues and will be completed by the association’s next meeting in May. The amendments will result in a smaller body with an advisory role. The current board members will have an opportunity to move from the GSUAA board onto the PAC Board, which will have a fund-raising and promotional role. The first meeting of the PAC Board is scheduled for February 24. Some of the functions that the GSUAA Board has been covering will move to the Senate Committee on Athletics, such as oversight of compliance and gender equity.

Ms. Levick reminded the group that this restructuring will allow faculty to be more involved and give the committee more of a voice as it advocates for athletics.
Ms. Levick provided the committee with a facilities update. A graphics project to enhance the Sports Arena was recently completed along with an expansion of the west side of the Sports Arena. This expansion includes a new weight room and athletic training room. The football practice facility located at 188 MLK is in its final phase of construction. This phase will complete the locker room, athletic training room, equipment room and band storage and is expected to be completed by June 2011. A Master Facility Plan has been completed and will be reviewed by President Becker soon. Once this plan is approved by the President, it will be presented to this group.

Sand Volleyball will begin competing in the spring of 2013. The department’s current head women’s volleyball coach will be the head coach for both programs. The head coach will hire one more fulltime coach in fall 2011. Women’s Lacrosse is still being considered as the second women’s sport to be added. A final decision has not been made due to facilities challenges.

**Student-Athlete Development Report**

Ms. Freeman-Patton presented the fall semester academic highlights. This year's student-athletes maintained a 3.01 cumulative GPA for the fall semester, while the semester GPA fell slightly to a 2.95 GPA. The teams that achieved the highest fall semester GPA are women's golf and men's cross country. We had 26 student-athletes receive President's List honors this semester, which is the highest in Georgia State's history. There were also 59 Dean's List recipients as well as 153 that achieved AD's Honors Roll status. The department celebrated 19 graduates this fall, some of whom had already completed their degrees last summer. Two of them are still competing and currently in graduate school.

**Old Business**

Members of the committee thanked the athletic department for the tour of the Sports Arena and Courtland North buildings before the January 26th men’s basketball game. It was very educational and helpful. Ms. Varjas noted that it’s important for the Committee to see and experience all the department has to offer rather than just hearing about it during these meetings. The committee and athletics department will plan a tour of the football practice facility for next fall. If Committee members are interested in other tours, they can be arranged.

Mrs. Heyward, chair of the subcommittee on By-Laws, reviewed with the group the subcommittee’s recommended bylaw changes and distributed a handout in their packet that detailed the changes. She noted these changes give a good overview of what this Committee has been and should be doing. Ms. Varjas stated that perhaps the committee should not finalize the by-law changes until the GSUAA by-laws are final. Mrs. Heyward answered that we should move forward with these recommendations, because the clear delineation of responsibilities between the two committees has already been approved.
Ms. Heyward reviewed with the group the current voting privilege structure for the committee.
Section 11, Part A- “The Committee on Athletics shall be composed of the Associate Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students, the Director of Athletics, at least seven members of the university faculty elected at large; three students; one staff senator; and the appointed University voting representatives to intercollegiate athletic governing bodies (FAR). The faculty and student members shall be elected by the University Senate and shall be voting members. The appointed University representatives to intercollegiate governing bodies shall be ex-officio, non-voting, members of the Committee on Athletics”.

Currently the bylaws state the Faculty Athletic Representative, Associate Vice President for Student Life and Director of Athletics are listed as members but the bylaws do not clarify if they should be voting members. The bylaws only state that the faculty and student members who are elected by the University Senate shall be voting members. Dr. Sumner noted that other committees, such as Budget and Faculty Affairs have the same restrictions. Ms. Heyward shared with the committee that the Senate By-Laws state that appointed members cannot vote in the Senate, but there is no mention of them not being able to vote on subcommittees such as this one. Since there isn’t any consistency among other similar subcommittees, it is up to this committee to determine its own voting privileges. Ms. Levick noted that her experience has been that the director of athletics has never voted, but the FAR always has.

*The committee unanimously approved to modify the bylaws to allow the Associate Vice President for Student Life and FAR to vote, but not the Director of Athletics.*

Ms. Varjas asked for discussion on other changes. Mr. Metzler asked if there should be a more formal reporting structure on Academics as bylaw number seven says “advise.” Should there be a formal operational structure for that? Would that strengthen the Committee in the eyes of the NCAA? Ms. Levick noted that the Assistant Athletic Director for Student-Athlete Development will continue to provide this committee with a brief report/update each meeting. The Committee is empowered at this time to question, ask for details, and/or request action on these reports and/or the athletic department. The National Association of Academic Advisors (N4A) is an association that evaluates and certifies the academic components of athletic departments that meet the standards of the NCAA and N4A. The Student-Athlete Development Department was certified by this body last spring. The current language of bylaw number seven is broad to allow this committee some flexibility and breadth.

She also stated that per bylaw number eight, the Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance will give a compliance report to this committee every year. In addition, the CAA does an audit of our compliance office every four years. Our next audit by the CAA will be conducted this April.

The committee unanimously voted to change the language in bylaw number eight to:

“*Review the Compliance program for the department, including receipt and review of the Compliance Audit.*”
Mr. Metzler, from the Subcommittee for NCAA Academic Support Services Self Evaluation, updated the group on the status of its evaluation. The subcommittee is working closely with Mrs. Freeman-Patton to conduct the academic support services review. The committee got a late start because of the snow days, but is in the process of identifying key players on campus to conduct interviews with. The evaluation is still on schedule, even with the snow delays, and the group will reconvene soon to verify timeline.

Ms. Levick asked the subcommittee to come back next meeting with a recommended ratio of academic advisors to student-athletes. Ms. Freeman-Patton reported that the department’s current ratio is 60-80 per advisor and the N4A has a baseline minimum of 100 per advisor.

Ms. Varjas shared with the group that she met with the Executive Committee of University Senate to try to get Ms. Levick an opportunity to address the University Senate once a year. The Executive Committee was willing to listen but not ready to commit. Her goal is for this Committee to have an annual presentation to the University Senate. Ms. Levick noted that the standard question during the NCAA Certification process is “How does your Director of Athletics interact with the campus community?” It worries her that the Committee does not have that connection to the University Senate. Having the Director of Athletics address the University Senate should be mandated as part of the Compliance component of the NCAA certification process. Ms. Varjas stated that as a Committee, the group needs to push that it is as important to the University Senate as other committees.

Mrs. Gallager suggested that another outlet for the Athletic Director to interact with the campus community would be through Mrs. Risa Palm’s meetings with department chairs. Mr. Slavis will research what other schools in Georgia and the CAA are doing and report back to the committee during its next meeting.

New Business
Ms. Varjas presented the group the 2011 Fall sports competition schedules. The committee unanimously approved the schedules.

Mr. Slavis shared with the committee that every international student who applies to GSU must go through the same application process. This consists of having their transcripts translated and evaluated by an outside agency. The preferred outside evaluator for GSU is Josef Silny & Associates. This outside evaluation adds anywhere from $120 to $370 to the application costs of international prospective student-athletes. This added cost is in addition to the $95 that they are required to pay for the NCAA Eligibility Center to perform a similar review. This is a serious recruiting disadvantage for GSU because many schools that we are recruiting against do not require prospective students to use an outside evaluator. The evaluations are done in-house by the schools. In addition to the cost, the use of the outside evaluator extends the time of the application process and the GPA evaluations have not been consistent with those done by the
NCAA. The Special Talents Committee is the University Committee which reviews prospective students who are in some way deficient of the GSU admission requirements. All departments are able to present candidates to the Special Talents Committee. If an international student needs to be reviewed by the Special Talents Committee, the timeframe for review can be affected greatly by the outside evaluation process. This puts a strain on the Committee's ability to evaluate the prospective student's admission file before the start of the next semester.

Mrs. Gallager noted that the University is hiring a new associate provost for international initiatives who may look to review the process. Mr. Slavis will research what other schools in Georgia and in CAA are doing and report back next meeting.

Mr. Lewis shared with the committee that the Athletics Business Office works closely with Housing staff to accommodate the needs of our student-athletes. Currently, we reserve approximately 215 beds annually (60 beds in Lofts; 155 beds in Commons). The price points of the Commons and Lofts are high for equivalency sports to maximize scholarship dollars, so coaches have asked about the new Freshman Dorm. The Freshman Dorms cost less but have a drawback in that student-athletes can only live there as freshmen and must move off campus or live in the higher priced Lofts or Commons in subsequent years. Therefore, after discussions with Housing, the new Piedmont North looks like a good option for some of our equivalency sports in that their student-athletes can live in these dorms for all four years and the price point is similar to the Freshman Dorm.

Mrs. Varjas asked the committee if someone could attend the University Senate Committee of Chairs meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 23 at 12 noon in her absence. Mike Metzler and George Pierce said they would check their schedules and get back to her.

**Future Meetings**
The next meeting will take place on Thursday, March 24 in room 1025 (Dean’s Conference Room) of the College of Education. Lunch will be served beginning 11:00 and the meeting will begin at 11:30.

**Adjournment**
The meeting was adjourned at 1:07 p.m.