

**Duke Athletic Council
Spring 2026**

**Annual Report to Academic Council (2025-26)
20 April 2026 dlc**

A. Charge and Membership

The [Athletics Policy Manual](#) (2024) sets out the Athletic Council's duties as follows:

Promote an understanding of intercollegiate athletics and Recreation and Physical Education among faculty members and other members of the Duke community.

Promote the adoption and maintenance of strict academic standards at Duke University and in the NCAA and the ACC by-laws, regulations, and legislation.

Provide general oversight of the athletic budget and review in the spring of each year the projected athletic budget forecast with the Director of Athletics, giving him or her and the President the benefit of its advice concerning allocations of funds for different athletic purposes within the limits of funding made available by the University.

Monitor compliance with Title IX in athletic matters as a shared responsibility with the Director of Athletics. The University Counsel has the primary responsibility for compliance with Title IX provisions. The University Counsel will furnish advice to the Athletic Council. The Chair shall also call on the Vice President for Institutional Equity for additional advice and recommendations. Review the reports of its Academic and Compliance Oversight Committees and take appropriate action.

Determine, with concurrence of the Director of Athletics, what sports shall be classified as intercollegiate; provided that if a new sport is added, it will normally be as a replacement of an existing intercollegiate sport, or the required funds must, to the satisfaction of the President, be identified and provided exclusive of appropriations from the general University budget; determine, with concurrence of the Director of Athletics, what sports shall be dropped as intercollegiate sports and classified as club sports.

Make recommendations to the President, Provost, and appropriate faculty bodies concerning eligibility requirements for participation in intercollegiate athletics and the awarding of financial assistance.

The full membership of the Council can be found [here](#). Current faculty members are: Doriane Coleman, chair (Law School), Leslie Babinski (Sanford School), Kendall Bradley (Orthopaedic Surgery), Tracie Canada (Cultural Anthropology), Mine Çetinkaya-Rundel (Statistical Science), Hedy Lee (Sociology), Martin Smith (Education).

The Council meets in plenary session twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring. The Academic, Compliance, and Executive Committees generally do the same.

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B. 2025-26 Workplan

Consistent with the Athletic Council's duties, the workplan for the 2025-26 year was set by the Executive Committee in consultation with the leadership of the Athletic Department and the Compliance Committee. It included the following:

Receive and discuss report from 2024-25 joint subcommittee of the University Priorities Committee and the Athletic Council on Athletics funding.

Review and discuss Athletics Department financials including revenues, expenses, and future planning in light of the University's values and priorities.

Review and discuss Athletics viewership data and brand.

Receive and discuss report from Athletic Department on campus collaborations.

Receive and discuss report from University Counsel on *House* settlement, the SCORES and SAFE Acts, and sports betting.

Receive and discuss report from Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR) on compliance and student-athlete exit interviews.

Review and discuss student-athlete academic data—all sports.

Following up from work begun in 2024-25, receive and discuss reports re: Football from Athletics (on academic support), Admissions (on standards), and University Counsel (on litigation involving student-athletes).

Discuss with VP/AD Nina King guiding principles for navigating a new athletics landscape.

Meet and receive report from new coaches (Women's Volleyball, Men's Golf, and Baseball) on challenges and opportunities for Duke in this new landscape.

Receive report from representative of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) on student-athlete activities, engagement, and challenges.

Receive report from Recreation and Physical Education on participation numbers, opportunities, and challenges.

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C. Workplan for 2026-27

Subject to the Executive Committee's review and approval, it is expected that in 2026-27 the Athletic Council will continue to monitor the Athletic Department's budget, intercollegiate teams, and student-athlete admissions, academic performance, eligibility, and compliance. Based on discussions this past year, again subject to the Executive Committee's review and approval, it is also expected that the Council will pursue the following:

Developing material to promote an understanding of intercollegiate athletics and Recreation and Physical Education among faculty members and other members of the Duke community, to include information about the ties between Duke Athletics and the Duke brand, community participation in Duke Athletics, Recreation, and Physical Education, the current intercollegiate athletics landscape, and the financing of Athletics.

Ensuring that Duke student-athletes can continue to be excellent both on the field and in the classroom, and that special attention is paid to those student-athletes or categories of student-athletes who may be struggling to balance their academic development with their growing athletics related financial opportunities and obligations.

Systematizing *the academic piece* of exit interviews, expanding them to include student-athletes who leave before graduation and an interim 'mid-Duke' assessment, so that the University has the information necessary to understand the nature of that academic experience, especially as it might continue to evolve in this new landscape.

*Respectfully submitted,
Doriane Coleman, Chair
20 April 2026*