



Association of
Student-Athletes

Association of Student Athletes

Informational Toolkit & Best Practices



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Laying the Groundwork

Purpose

The purpose of the Association of Student-Athletes is to provide NAIA student-athletes with a voice in the governance of the NAIA while incorporating the ideals of Champions of Character. The ASA allows student-athletes to have an input on the issues that directly impact them every day.

The purpose of an ASA will vary across conferences and campuses; however, the following purposes can serve as a basic guideline when developing an ASA.

- Cultivate a student-athlete voice within the institution and/or conference
- Be a link between the needs of student-athletes, athletic departments, institutions, and conferences
- Review rules, regulations, and policies proposed through NAIA legislation
- Support the campus and/or conference community through outreach efforts

Importance

ASA's serve as a tool of student-athlete engagement. Engagement is a predictor of retention and adding value to the student-athlete experience at every level. ASA's have the potential to become a critical conduit for the evaluation, development, and support of the strategic initiatives related to student-athlete development.

Conference-level ASA's provides student-athletes the chance to engage in the legislative process, develop an understanding of how it works, and advocate for positive change affecting the well-being of their constituents.

Additionally, conference-level ASA's provide real-world leadership experience and holistic student-athlete development.

Crafting ASA Operational Guidelines

Mission Statement

A mission statement defines the ASA's purpose and primary objectives. These statements are set in the present tense, and they explain why the ASA exist. Mission statements tend to be short, clear, and powerful.

Examples:

- Conference: The North Star Athletic Association (NSAA): The purpose of the NSAA Board Student-Athletes (BOSA) is to engage in ongoing education and collaboration that will



benefit the health, safety and development of the student-athletes. BOSA will also serve as the voice of all NSAA student-athletes in the NSAA's governance. The BOSA provides a platform for student-athletes to discuss issues of concern to them, offer feedback to NSAA membership, and propose legislation or policy changes, as appropriate. The BOSA will serve as an advocacy group on behalf of NSAA student-athletes to enhance their collegiate athletics experience. Additionally, the BOSA will offer its members the opportunity to develop their leadership skills as they represent and empower all NAIA student-athlete.

- **Campus: Park University Gilbert:** The mission of the Student-Athlete Council (SAC) at Park University Gilbert is to build and uphold a culture of respect, equality, and good sportsmanship. Members strive to enhance the total student-athlete experience and enact positive change through service and collaboration with the community.

Constitution

Once your ASA has developed a mission statement, a set of bylaws should be established (See Appendix B). These bylaws are important in creating and maintaining infrastructure and rules that current and future members of the organization can follow. ASA bylaws should include, but are not limited to, the following information:

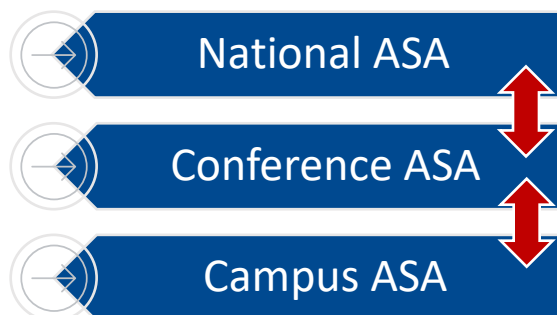
- **Purpose:** The bylaws should state the purpose or mission of the organization in order to give the ASA consistent direction.
- **Selection Process:** The main goal of the selection process is to afford consistent representation at each ASA meeting. The selection process is divided into two areas – nominations and vacancies.
- **Attendance Policy:** Full representation is crucial at ASA meetings. The ASA should create a policy which encourages active attendance at meetings and provide an action plan for when absences occur.
- **Officers and Nomination/Election Process:** Officers (Executive Board)- The Executive Board should include a chair, vice-chair and perhaps one or two more representatives (e.g. secretary, treasurer.) The ASA should determine important duties and responsibilities of the Executive Board, including specific job descriptions for each position, terms of office, and election procedures.
- **Robert's Rules of Order (See Appendix A):** There should be an established order of speaking, voting, and proposing motions at each ASA meeting. The recommended method is Robert's Rules of Order.



Committee Membership

The membership of the ASA should be representative of the diversity of your institution's population and involve representatives from diverse sports. Each member serves as a liaison between the committee and their individual conference/team.

The below flow chart represents the communication flow and membership of the three levels of NAIA ASA:



Organizational Structure

A conference-level ASA is usually made up of:

- One or two representatives from each institution (depending on conference size)
- There is a concentrated effort to have a diverse and gender-balanced group
- Typically, there is representation from multiple sports (teams)
- One to two mentors serve as advisors for the group. They are selected from member institutions. The Mentor/Advisor of the group typically reports directly to the conference commissioner (if the mentor is not the commissioner). The Mentor/Advisor often has a seat on the conference-level governance structure providing input into budget, Champions of Character Initiatives, and conference-level legislation/regulation.
- The conference-level group then elects their leadership

Communication

It is important that every ASA develops a communication plan. This plan should establish how information is gathered from and sent out to various groups; who has the authority to speak on behalf of the committee; and how ASA successes are shared with a larger audience. It is recommended that campus ASAs involve their athletic communications office or sports information directors in the creation and execution of the communications plan.



Campus Contact/Liaison Roster

Maintaining not only an ASA roster (with contact information, sport, term, etc.), but also a list of important ASA contacts and general student-athlete contact information is crucial to an effective communication flow.

Meetings

The college student population is a transient one, with an average tenure of four to five years at the institution. Thus, the conference and/or athletics department is instrumental in maintaining consistency from year-to-year and representative- to-representative. One way to achieve consistency is for the conferences and/or athletics department to maintain accurate, historical records of committee actions and demographics. Running an efficient, effective, and consistent meeting will enable each campus to perform this task.

Schedule

Establishing a consistent meeting schedule will help ensure that representatives of each sport team are in attendance. Try to have your meetings at a time convenient for most ASA members. If possible, once the schedule has been established, try, and stay with that schedule for the entire semester, at least. This will go a long way toward ensuring consistency of representation.

Agenda

The purpose of the agenda is to structure the meeting and to organize meeting topics so that issues are addressed in an orderly manner. It is best to allot more time for pressing issues. Agendas should be created and distributed (email) to ASA members ahead of time for their review. There are many sections to an efficient agenda, including the following:

1. Welcome. Members are introduced and welcomed to the group before proceeding to other business.
2. Minutes. Review the minutes of previous meetings at the beginning of each meeting to see if there are any outstanding issues that need to be addressed.
3. New Business. Current issues and concerns that affect the campus and the student-athletes should be discussed. Topics of discussion for this section should be collected and added to the agenda prior to the meeting.
4. Any supplements to enhance the discussion at the meeting should be distributed prior to the meeting with the agenda.



Best Practices and Engagement Topics

Best Practices

Encourage

Encourage student-athlete engagement and input within athletic departments and conference offices. Invite a wide variety of groups/individuals to ASA meetings, including campus president, Faculty Athletic Representative (FAR), NAIA National Office staff, athletic directors, sports information directors, student affairs leadership, and/or coaches. Promote ASA attendance at national and regional meetings and conferences.

Enhance

Work to enhance student-athlete well-being on campuses. Help establish professional and/or personal development programs for student-athletes. Be an active leader in creating and implementing new ideas.

Explore

Explore options on how ASA and other student-athletes can partner with other groups or participating in community events. Explore ways to partner with local/national organizations to give back and promote team-building as well as leadership opportunities for ASA members.

ASA Engagement Topics

NAIA Student-Athlete Wellness

- Mind: Mental health, Coping Skills, Stress Management
- Body: Wellness, Nutrition, Exercise, Disordered Eating, Injury Prevention, Supplements, Drug Education and Testing.
- Character: [Champions of Character](#), Character building, and Identity and Values

Life after athletics

- Resume building
- Career planning
- Personal branding
- Personal finance
- Internships

Leadership

- [NAIA "The Room"](#)
- Leadership Styles
- Advocacy

Roberts Rules of Order – Simplified

Guiding Principles:

- Everyone has the right to participate in discussion if they wish, before anyone may speak a second time.
- Everyone has the right to know what is going on at all times. Only urgent matters may interrupt a speaker.
- Only one thing (motion) can be discussed at a time.

A **motion** is the topic under discussion (e.g., "I move that we add a coffee break to this meeting"). After being recognized by the president of the board, any member can introduce a motion when no other motion is on the table. A motion requires a second to be considered. If there is no second, the matter is not considered. Each motion must be disposed of (passed, defeated, tabled, referred to committee, or postponed indefinitely).

How to do things:

You want to bring up a new idea before the group.

After recognition by the president of the board, present your motion. A second is required for the motion to go to the floor for discussion, or consideration.

You want to change some of the wording in a motion under discussion.

After recognition by the president of the board, move to amend by

- adding words,
- striking words or
- striking and inserting words.

You like the idea of a motion being discussed, but you need to reword it beyond simple word changes.

Move to substitute your motion for the original motion. If it is seconded, discussion will continue on both motions and eventually the body will vote on which motion they prefer.

You want more study and/or investigation given to the idea being discussed.

Move to refer to a committee. Try to be specific as to the charge to the committee.

You want more time personally to study the proposal being discussed.

Move to postpone to a definite time or date.

You are tired of the current discussion.

Move to limit debate to a set period of time or to a set number of speakers. Requires a 2/3^{rds} vote.



You have heard enough discussion.

Move to close the debate. Also referred to as calling the question. This cuts off discussion and brings the assembly to a vote on the pending question only. Requires a 2/3^{rds} vote.

You want to postpone a motion until some later time.

Move to table the motion. The motion may be taken from the table after 1 item of business has been conducted. If the motion is not taken from the table by the end of the next meeting, it is dead. To kill a motion at the time it is tabled requires a 2/3^{rds} vote. A majority is required to table a motion without killing it.

You believe the discussion has drifted away from the agenda and want to bring it back.
"Call for orders of the day."

You want to take a short break.

Move to recess for a set period of time.

You want to end the meeting.

Move to adjourn.

You are unsure the president of the board announced the results of a vote correctly.

Without being recognized, call for a "division of the house." A roll call vote will then be taken.

You are confused about a procedure being used and want clarification.

Without recognition, call for "Point of Information" or "Point of Parliamentary Inquiry." The president of the board will ask you to state your question and will attempt to clarify the situation.

You have changed your mind about something that was voted on earlier in the meeting for which you were on the winning side.

Move to reconsider. If the majority agrees, the motion comes back on the floor as though the vote had not occurred.

You want to change an action voted on at an earlier meeting.

Move to rescind. If previous written notice is given, a simple majority is required. If no notice is given, a 2/3^{rds} vote is required.

Unanimous Consent:

If a matter is considered relatively minor or opposition is not expected, a call for unanimous consent may be requested. If the request is made by others, the president of the board will repeat the request and then pause for objections. If none are heard, the motion passes.



• **You may INTERRUPT a speaker for these reasons only:**

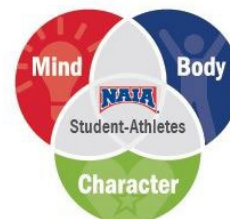
- to get information about business –point of information to get information about rules– parliamentary inquiry
- if you can't hear, safety reasons, comfort, etc. –question of privilege
- if you see a breach of the rules –point of order
- if you disagree with the president of the board's ruling –appeal
- if you disagree with a call for Unanimous Consent –object

Quick Reference					
	Must Be Seconded	Open for Discussion	Can be Amended	Vote Count Required to Pass	May Be Reconsidered or Rescinded
Main Motion	✓	✓	✓	Majority	✓
Amend Motion	✓	✓	Majority	✓	
Kill a Motion	✓	Majority	✓		
Limit Debate	✓	✓	2/3rds	✓	
Close Discussion	✓	2/3rds	✓		
Recess	✓	✓	Majority		
Adjourn (End meeting)	✓	Majority			
Refer to Committee	✓	✓	✓	Majority	✓
Postpone to a later time	✓	✓	✓	Majority	✓
Table	✓	Majority			
Postpone Indefinitely	✓	✓	✓	Majority	✓

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Campus Association of Student-Athletes

CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS



Article I – The name of this student organization shall be the [institution] Association of Student-Athletes

Article II – MISSION/PURPOSE:

To advocate for all [institution] student-athletes and to serve as ambassadors for [mascot] athletics at the local, conference, and national levels; while advancing the mission of [mascot] athletics by participating in campus and community leadership activities.

Article III - MEMBERSHIP/REPRESENTATIVES:

Section I – The [institution] Association of Student-Athletes will be comprised of two student-athletes from each NAIA-affiliated varsity athletic team, as selected by that team's head coach. One representative should ideally be an upperclassman; and the other representative should be a freshman or sophomore. Provisions can be made for a limited number of at-large or ex-officio representatives. Members will be responsible for representing their teams; as well as keeping their teammates informed of all ASA discussion topics, key issues and group events/programming. **(Enter more specific criteria here, at your discretion)**

Section II - [institution] Association of Student-Athletes will complete annual paperwork required to be a Recognized Student Organization with the [institution] Office of Student Life. Benefits of this action include the possibility of funding support from the institution as well as a possible seat on the [institution] Student Government Association.

Article IV – OFFICERS/EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Section I – The Executive Committee (officers) shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary. The ASA representative to the conference ASA must be a member of the Executive Committee and approved by the Advisory Board.

Section II – The President presides over all meetings, appoints chairs, and represents the group on any appropriate campus/community councils or committees. The President also casts any tie-breaking votes on organizational proposals or action items.

Section III – The Vice President assumes duties of the President in his/her absence and serves as a standing committee chair. The Vice-President may also represent the group on any appropriate campus or community council/committee.



Section IV – The Treasurer is responsible for any funds allocated to the group; either through campus funding or fundraising activities.

Section V – The Secretary is responsible for compiling and disseminating meeting agendas and minutes; as well as any updates to the group's constitution & bylaws.

Section VI – Officers for each academic year are elected at the final group meeting of the preceding academic year through a vote of the members. Officers must have served on the council for one previous year (excluding council's inaugural year). Vacancies will be replaced at advisor discretion.

Article V – ADVISORY BOARD

Section I – The Advisor of the [institution] Association of Student-Athletes *shall be the Campus Character Liaison. A larger Advisory Board will consist of the CCL, AD, FAR, SWL, and one Head Coach.*

Article VI – STANDING COMMITTEES

Section I - The following standing committees will be established during the initial organizational meeting. The Executive Committee may appoint additional committees if approved by a majority vote of ASA.

Section II – Orientation Committee

The primary responsibilities of the committee is to work in concert with department leadership to conduct an August student-athlete orientation which may include: introductions of personnel; purpose of ASA; NAIA Champions of Character explanation; mission of the institution; campus resources; conference and national rules; drug education; mental health awareness; and other topics specific to the institution.

Section III - Presence/Social Media Committee

The primary responsibilities of the committee is to develop strategies to promote SAAC (internally and externally) and generate campus and community-wide interest in SAAC events. Additional responsibilities include social media reach performed in concert with Sports Information Director and responding to any request from the conference or national office.

Section III – Servant Leadership Committee

The primary responsibility of this committee is to develop and promote community/campus service projects throughout the year. This committee will also organize the [mascot] athletics home opener attendance event in which all student-athletes from all teams are expected to attend the first home contest of each peer team.

Section IIII – Awards Committee

The primary responsibility of the committee is to organize and host the year-end awards banquet.

Section VI – Standing committee chairs will be elected by a vote of the membership. All committees must have at least two members and multi-sport representation.



Article VII – MEETINGS

Section I – An annual meeting calendar will be established by the Executive Committee prior to the start of the academic year. The full ASA will meet the first week of each month (virtually during summer). During the third week of each month, the Executive Committee and Committee Charis will meet with the advisor. Once per semester, the larger Advisory Board will join a full ASA meeting. Once per year, the full ASA meeting will be open to all student-athletes. **Institutions may identify a sponsor to provide meals at the larger monthly gathering.**

Section II – All ASA representatives are expected to be present at all meetings with the requirement of advanced written notice of excused absences (travel, competition, exams) given to the secretary at least four days in advance. Meeting attendance will be documented and a representative may be replaced based on poor attendance and/or lack of participation. Representatives shall remain as their team representative so long as they maintain good standing with the team and with the institution.

Article VIII - AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Section I – Constitutional amendments require a majority vote of the members present at the time of amending.



STUDENT-ATHLETE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAAC) CONSTITUTION

Valley City State University

PURPOSE:

The Valley City State University Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) is in place for the purposes of:

1. Providing a communication link between varsity athletes and the athletic administration.
2. Encouraging communication and unity among and between varsity athletes and teams.
3. Increasing involvement and awareness of athletic programs on campus and in the community.

MEMBERSHIP:

The committee will be composed of **2-3 athletes** from each varsity team. Each team will have **one vote** for decision-making purposes.

MEMBERSHIP PROCESS:

The membership process will go as follows:

- President/New Members are selected by campus SAAC and Approved through Athletic Director and Representative's Overseeing.
- Secretary and Vice President is selected by SAAC Members only.
- Each member is expected to serve a one-year term and may be re-elected. Any varsity student-athlete is eligible for appointment.

COACHES:

By signing off on each representative, coaches are held liable for the accountability and representation of their chosen representatives. Coaches must take this process and representation seriously.

Coaches and are encouraged to attend SAAC events. Upon being updated about SAAC events, coaches will be expected to hold SAAC Members accountable, as well as encourage and keep their team updated with SAAC events.



MEMBERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Attend all committee meetings.
2. Represent the team's views, opinions, and voice in council meetings. Keep team up to date on current SAAC issues and communicate the team's views back to committee.
3. Encourage team members to assist with any projects deemed significant by the committee.
4. SAAC is an important representation of the VCSU Athletics Department in which each member represents their team, the school, and VCSU Athletics. We expect members to fully participate in all meetings and events. The following guidelines must be met in order to remain eligible for this honored position:
 - Members are prohibited from missing more than **one** unexcused mandatory meeting or event, or disciplinary action will take place. If a member cannot attend, they must contact the **SAAC Secretary/President** no later than two days prior to the meeting, where excused/unexcused absences will be determined.
 - Each member must participate in/work a minimum of **2 SAAC events** each year.
 - Each member must try to get team participation in these events.
 - Each member must strive for compassionate collaboration and unity within the athletics department.

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS:

During the Spring Semester, the committee will vote on the following executive officer positions for the next school year:

1. **President** - Works alongside of the SAAC Advisor in all aspects of committee development and function, and acts as the chair of the committee. Is responsible for the performance and obligations of the officers as well as the entire SAAC, and organizes and conducts the monthly meetings which includes setting the agenda and collecting the appropriate information needed for each meeting. The president will also be responsible for the organization and implementation of the committee's community related activities and functions. Continuing relationships and communication with University administration is also a key duty for the President.
 - The President will also serve as the NSAA Board of Student-Athletes (BOSA) representative for Valley City State University. This includes conferences calls, communication, and involvement with all other NSAA BOSA members and Conference Commissioner.
2. **Vice-President** - Works alongside the SAAC President in follow-up of all aspects of committee development and function, responsible for the organization and implementation



of the committee's on-campus activities and functions. The vice-president will also assume the president's responsibilities as needed.

3. **Secretary** - Responsible for maintaining all records, including meeting minutes, attendance, and will assist the president in preparing the agenda and any information to be sent to membership before each scheduled meeting. The secretary will also distribute meeting minutes to each coach and athletic director following each meeting.

EXECUTIVE OFFICER PROCESS:

The executive officer positions will be a nomination process, followed by a voting process within the committee. This process will go as follows:

- The SAAC Advisor will make sure that there is interest in all positions. If not, he/she will ask for additional nominations.
- There will be an additional March SAAC meeting made to handle SAAC Executive Officer voting. The order of presenting/voting will go: President, Vice President, and Secretary.

All Executive Officers must be in place by the **end of April**. After the new Executive Officers are selected, the current Executive Officers will include the new ones in SAAC Executives meetings.

ACTIVITIES:

Committee Meetings - Committee meetings will be held on an agreed time by the VCSU SAAC and Advisors.

The committee's function is to provide an opportunity for interaction between VCSU University student-athletes and the athletic administration.