

**Santa Monica College
Athletics Report-Probation
May 5, 2015**

Summary:

On or about February 5, 2015, the former Assistant Athletic Director, Byanca Barajas, was made aware of a student ineligibility issue occurring last year involving the Swim and Dive Head Coach Steve Contarsy. During the 2014 Swim and Dive season, a student athlete who had not been cleared for competition competed. Contarsy had the student swim after repeated weekly eligibility reports which showed the student to be ineligible to compete. Based on the weekly eligibility reports, some e-mails between the former Athletic Director and Contarsy, and a discussion with Contarsy, it was clear Contarsy should not have had the student participate in any competition.

After a discussion with SMC Senior Management staff, a “self-report” letter from Dr. Tsang was generated on February 10, 2015, and sent to Commissioner White documenting the incident(s) and proposing sanctions for SMC Swimming and Diving.

Commissioner White accepted the self-imposed sanctions and the removal of the Head Coach, Steve Contarsy; however, several previous violations of the CCCAA Constitution and By-Laws, some of which are listed below, had occurred and were also “wrapped” into the latest incident:

1. *Although football is under the jurisdiction of the Southern California Football Association (SCFA) and Commissioner Jim Sartoris, I am aware of a variety of sanctions which resulted in placing the Football Program on probation and denying them Post Conference (PC) participation.*
2. *In the Fall of 2013, the Men’s and Women’s Soccer teams had their coaches sanctioned by the CCCAA for failing to properly report Statewide Stats.*
3. *In the Fall of 2014, the WSC sanctioned the SMC Basketball Program and placed them on a one year probation. The head coach received a two game suspension and the assistant coach a three game suspension.*
4. *In the Spring of 2015, I received the letter from President Tsang reporting that the SMC Men’s Swim and Dive Program had an ineligible athlete participating in four meets. This occurred after the coach had been properly notified.*

As a result of the review by the WSC-Commissioner White, the following sanctions were issued to Santa Monica College and accepted by Dr. Chui Tsang. Please reference CCCAA Constitution Bylaw 7.4.12.10.2

1. *The entire Athletic Program will be placed on probation for a period of one year, 2015-2016.*
2. *The Swim and Dive Program will be banned from Post Conference competition for the year 2015-16.*
3. *Santa Monica College will submit an overall written plan to address eligibility, recruiting, and game day issues.*
4. *Santa Monica College will submit in writing a weekly report summarizing the progress being made and identifying any other problems and how they were handled.*

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Athletics Issues per WSC Commissioner's Letter:

Eligibility:

Updated

A meeting was convened by the Vice President of Student Affairs on April 8, 2015 in the Vice President's conference room in order to develop a process between Admissions and Records and Athletics related to student athlete eligibility. Those in attendance were: Mike Tuitasi, VPSA; Lee Johnston, Director of Information Services; Dean of Admissions Esau Tovar; Dean/Athletic Director/Chief Al Vasquez; Assistant Athletic Director Reggie Ellis; Senior Eligibility Clerk, Ronnie Felder; Eligibility Clerk, Hector Alarcon; and Athletics Administrative Assistant, Kim Stallings. The purpose of the meeting was to develop a seamless system of checks and balances in order to make certain the eligibility process is reviewed and approved once a student is entered into the system-from beginning to end.

Lee Johnston developed a flowchart in order to set-up the guidelines for the system checks and the process will involve more automation. In the interim, the authority for the eligibility clerks to view the comprehensive educational plans for the student athletes was approved so there should be no delay in an athlete's eligibility to compete. Since SMC migrated over to a newer system for the development of comprehensive educational plans for all SMC students, including student athletes, this "stop" in the process had become a recent problem. As the new process is developed, we will keep you apprised of the progress.

Initial Report Information

This issue must be addressed through the Vice President's of Student Affairs-Athletics and Enrollment Management-Eligibility. The eligibility component for the student athletes in the Athletics Department is currently handled through the Admissions and Records (AR) area of Enrollment Management. At times, this has caused delays in the processing and occasionally, paperwork has gone missing. In an attempt to make certain paperwork does not "get lost", for the Fall 2014 semester, we implemented the scanning of all documents submitted from Athletics to AR which has added an additional and time consuming burden to the staff of the Athletics Department.

A meeting has been scheduled in order to determine the best process to make certain all of the eligibility requirements are being met and reported to the coaches, the Athletics Administrative Assistant, the Assistant Athletic Director and the Athletic Director. Although this has been attempted in the past, with the issue of suspension now a possibility, this needs to be resolved so eligibility issues are rectified at the earliest instances.

Recruiting:

Updated

The Assistant Athletic Director, Reggie Ellis, met with the coaches from the Women's Basketball program to review recruiting materials and processes for Women's Basketball for next season. We also discussed in generalities the recruiting issues during the individual meetings with the head coaches so we do not have a repeat of last year's basketball incident. All the coaches were receptive to the information and we will be updating them again after we return from the WSC conference meetings in early May.

As questions have come up from individual coaches, we have been able to answer them so as to not violate any by-laws of the constitution. And as previously mentioned, we are also working with the lead faculty to develop recruiting plans for all of our sports teams.

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Initial Report Information:

Just last fall, as mentioned in the Commissioner's Report to Dr. Tsang, the Men's Basketball team was attempting to hold an "open" gym for basketball try-outs. The issue was brought to the attention of the Commissioner without making any notifications to the Head Coach, Assistant Athletic Director or the Athletic Director. The information had also been placed onto the SMC Athletics website-this was clearly a violation. After a discussion between the Athletic Director and the Commissioner, the "open gym" was cancelled and the Head Coach and Assistant Coach were suspended with the proper paperwork being sent to the Commissioner.

It is the intent of Athletics management staff to hold individual meetings with all of the coaches so there is clear guidance for recruitment. The new Assistant Athletic Director, Reggie Ellis, will be drafting some documents in order to better assist the coaches-both head coaches and assistant coaches-with their recruiting plans. The position of Faculty Lead will also be the "lead" in the overall development of the recruitment plans for all of the sports within the Athletic Department.

Game Day Management:
Updated

We are continuing to work through the game day management issues with the VPSA Mike Tuitasi. In order to strengthen the roles of each of the positions helping out on game day, such as the Men's and Women's Equipment Specialists and the Athletic Assistant; we are considering making the half time Project Manager a full time position for next fall. Not only would the position require game day management responsibilities, the position would also be responsible for updating the web site and overall responsibility for stats of all of the sporting events.

This would give SMC Athletics a dedicated position with responsibility for managing game day activities and the follow-up regarding scores and posting information on the website.

Initial Report Information

At SMC, the game day management is handled by a half-time Project Manager who is also the Head Coach for Men's Basketball. There have been some issues in the past with game management and Athletics management will be looking to strengthen the position of the game day manager.

As there have been occasions when decorum was not completely followed, we will also be discussing this issue with the coaches in order to make certain they are following the WSC, SCFA, and CCCAA Decorum policies.

The issues listed above will be updated through the probation period of 2015/2016 year. In the next report, we will be developing a timeline to show the progress of the probation issues.

General Information:
Updated

With the end of the sport season quickly approaching, the student athletes of SMC have done a great job representing the district. The Men's Volleyball team recently won the state title by defeating El Camino College in San Diego. The SMC Corsairs had not won the Men's Volleyball title since 1981 and last year was the runner-up.

Our Women's Tennis Team dominated the field this year with an SMC first-Mayra Jovic, won the state singles championship and with her tennis partner, Izabel Nazdracheva, also won the doubles championships. Mayra is only the seventh player in CCCAA history to win both titles in the same year!

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In the Men's Swimming and Diving competition, Gabriel Miranda won the state final in the 500 meter freestyle competition. Overall, it was a very good year for the SMC Corsair Student Athletes.

A star SMC Women's Tennis player had previously auditioned for a commercial and after several call backs, received a part in a commercial which was featuring a top male and female tennis players for a major sporting goods company. After some discussion with the WSC Commissioner, as to the by-laws and the CCCAA Constitution, it was determined that the SMC student athlete could participate in the commercial; however, she participated without any compensation due to a rule prohibiting compensation.

Initial Report Information

Shortly after receiving the information from Commissioner White in a meeting with SMC President Dr. Tsang and Executive Vice President Shimizu on Wednesday, February 25, 2015, I held a mandatory meeting with all Athletics staff on Friday, February 27, 2015. There were three (3) options for attendance with a meeting in the morning, afternoon, and late afternoon.

Vice President Michael Tuitasi attended the first meeting conveying the seriousness of the problem and the potential sanction of suspension of the entire Athletics program. Many of the coaches were surprised by the strong reaction from the WSC; however, it was explained the current problem was being added with other problems from the past.

In addition to the large group meetings, individual meetings have already been held with the following Head Coaches: Men's Basketball, Women's Basketball, Men's Soccer, Women's Soccer, Men's Volleyball, Women's Volleyball, Men's and Women's Track and Field, and Women's Softball. We will continue to schedule and hold meetings with all of the head coaches so everyone truly understands the seriousness of the situation.

Coaches Corner-Weekly Meetings:

Updated

We are continuing to have our "Coaches Corner" meetings and the next one is scheduled just after the WSC meetings in Ventura on May 4th and 5th. Once we have finalized the information from the WSC meeting, we will be having another Coaches Corner meeting in order to brief the coaches.

Initial Report Information

Athletics management will also begin hosting a weekly "Coaches Corner" so both the assistant coaches and head coaches can come in and ask clarifying questions that may be applicable to the other team sports. The weekly meetings will begin the week of March 23, 2015, and we will update the status of the meetings in our future reports.

Coaches Handbook:

Updated

The handbook is in the final stages of completion with the review of the per-diem rates for student athletes being finalized after meeting with the Chief Budget Officer for the District. Other issues which needed to be reviewed were overnight trips and accommodations and when overnight trips are appropriate.

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Previous Report Information

A “Coaches Handbook” was recently located and has not been updated since the 2008/2009 season. The Assistant Athletic Director will be updating the handbook and once completed, we will make distribution available to all of the coaches and staff members. The handbook will cover many areas including the three listed by Commissioner White which are Eligibility, Recruitment, and Game Day Management. The completion of the updated handbook is mid-April for content and the end of April for distribution.

Administration and Trustee Support:

Updated

With the recent wins of the student athletes winning state finals, the Board of Trustees will be honoring the student Athletes at the next Board of Trustees meeting. This will be an exciting event for our student athletes to be honored for their hard work.

Previous Report Information

It is clear there is support for more oversight and training from both the senior administration and the Board of Trustees of SMC. This support will be critical as we move toward implementing the changes that will affect the “culture” that has been present within Athletics for several years.

Swim and Dive Sanctions: As we have discussed and clarified, the Men’s and Women’s Swim and Dive programs are eligible for any “post season” competition this season; however, they will not be allowed to have any post-season competition next season.

I want to thank you, Commissioner White, for allowing the post season competition this season since the season had already started and none of the students were aware of any issues or problems. Allowing SMC to compete post season has provided SMC student athletes with the drive to be successful and win several state championships this season!

Who We Serve: All of the changes will be designed to reflect more accountability and transparency in order to better serve our student athletes.