



# U SPORTS

Conference and Annual Meeting.



Member Engagement Session  
**GOVERNANCE**

06/14/2023



# Components.

## 1. 2019 Governance Report

- 2022 U SPORTS AGM Motion
- 2019 Report 7 recommendations

## 2. Student Athlete voice

- subsection
- subsection
- subsection

## 3. Breakout session

## 4. Wrap up/next steps





# 2019 Governance Report.

## 2022 U SPORTS AGM Motion.

### **MOTION**

“the U SPORTS Members request the development of an action plan to address the details and operational logistics of outstanding items remaining from the May 2019 Board Approved Governance Review and Recommendations, including the impact on Governance Policy 80.40, By-Laws and articles, that require further exploration and examination by the Board, Governance Committee, National Office and / or membership.”

### **4 KEY AREAS:**

- I. The development and adherence to a Consultative Spectrum that be utilized by Board, Standing and Operating Committee members
- II. The development of a Board, Standing and Operating Committee “Expectations Guidelines” document, with annual signoffs from respective committee members
- III. Enhancing the effectiveness and value of the Management Advisory Council (MAC), and
- IV. Provide clarity around Committee Structures / how (Operating) Committee members are selected





# Recommendation #1

National office to distribute and adhere to the 'Consultation Spectrum'

## Areas of Focus for 2022-2023

Member consultation process used for following:  
Sport Model – surveys, member calls, committees  
AFA/Eligibility – survey, town halls, AGM session, committees  
Football Roster Limit – member feedback through STSC, committees  
Travel Pool – survey, ad hoc committee

Use of Member Engagement Sessions at 2023 Conference

## Next Steps 2023-2024

Update spectrum as needed

Launch list of decisions that members can access at any time





# Recommendation #2

Similar “consultation Spectrum” to be developed and distributed that is for Board, Committee, and Sub-Committee members

## Areas of Focus for 2022-2023

Focus was on using consultation methods for various decisions and to show engagement through these

Communication of consultation and steps in decision process (eg. Member engagement sessions, sport calendar for berths/format

## Next Steps 2023-2024

Develop and share consultation spectrum for Board, committees

Develop post and regularly update list of decisions that members can reference at any time



# Recommendation #3

National office to develop Board/Committee/Sub-committee “Expectation Guidelines” and have member sign annually

## Areas of Focus for 2022-2023

Focus was on working with conferences to populate committee positions that have ties to conferences. (eg. Finance, Governance, Travel Pool)

After disruption of pandemic, return committees to functioning state and update TORs as applicable

## Next Steps 2023-2024

Finish work done on committee expectations and circulate to committee members

Update list of committees and make decisions on viable of current/new ones





# Recommendation #4

Enhance effectiveness and value of the MAC

## Areas of Focus for 2022-2023

Emphasis was on the value of interaction between U SPORTS staff and conference office staff – two meetings with conferences were had

This resulted in further communication on key topic areas

## Next Steps 2023-2024

Build out yearly schedule for U SPORTS staff and conference staff meetings

Make decisions on format as it relates to MAC



# Recommendation #5

Add to the board a position of “Vice Chair”, to be appointed from among the four Athletic Directors on the Board

## Areas of Focus for 2022-2023

This was accomplished with the introduction of the first Vice Chair in 2019

Was a key role through transition of Board Chair in 2022-2023

## Next Steps 2023-2024

Continue to benefit from regular meeting schedule with CEO, Board Chair and Vice Chair





# Recommendation #6

Investigate solutions to the challenge of larger institutions being underrepresented on the Board

## Areas of Focus for 2022-2023

History since 2019 has gone in positive direction with Board Chairs coming from both Concordia and Carleton

Dr Graham Carr (Concordia) is current Board Chair

## Next Steps 2023-2024

Continue to encourage membership and involvement from healthy cross section of schools and representations



# Recommendation #7

Revise sport specific decision-making process to make it more efficient and clear

## Areas of Focus for 2022-2023

Operationalizing Sport Model for the first time (addition of tennis)

Aligning berth/format decisions for our sports under a unified and consistent calendar so members, STSCs can understand when decisions will be made

## Next Steps 2023-2024

Finalize work on committee expectations and distribute to committees

Finalize committee consultation spectrum as per recommendation #2





# Student-Athlete Voice



# Current State of “Athlete Representation” in Canada.

- Good governance seeks to find the right balance to ensure all members, however defined in the organization’s bylaws, have an opportunity for meaningful input into the decision-making
- U SPORTS exists to serve the student-athlete and facilitate their athletic and academic aspirations, but they are NOT members of the organization
- In most sport organizations, “athlete representation” is an ongoing unresolved challenge





# Future State of “Athlete Representation” in Canada.

Two key questions to consider:

1. What is the capacity of student-athletes (or student-athlete representatives) to participate in the policy process?
2. What is the will to change procedures and structures to reflect a deliberate approach to student-athlete-centered sport?



# Recent Developments in “Athlete Representation” in Canada.

- National Sport Organizations (NSOs) must adopt the Canadian Sport Governance Code by April 2023
- Places athletes at the heart of decision-making structures
- New Sport Canada Athlete Advisory Committee being established





# Some examples of “Athlete Representation Models”.

- Athlete Director Representative on Board
  - a) “Standard” Model;
  - b) “Skills/Competencies-Based” Model;
  - c) “Alumni Representation” Model
- Athlete Advisory Councils



# Key factors to consider when considering the most optimal “Student-Athlete Representation Models”.

- **Accurate and inclusive representation** (i.e., capturing the different issues faced by many sport disciplines within U SPORTS)
- **Lack of Communication** - Vertical (between student-athletes and U SPORTS) and Horizontal (between student-athletes themselves in different sports)
- **Athlete Representative Training** (new skill set)
- **Athlete Representative Qualifications** (former student-athletes must have recently graduated to remain in touch with issues)





# Member Engagement Questions.

1. What will be the most effective way to keep members updated on the list of decisions made and the status of pending decisions?
2. Do you currently operate varsity councils and/or do you have student-athlete representation in other areas of your Athletic Departments?
3. Where do you think student-athlete representation should live in the U SPORTS governance model?



THANK YOU

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