Appalachian State University Faculty/Staff Guest Program

Appalachian State University student-athletes have a long tradition of success, both academically and athletically. For 13 consecutive semesters Appalachian’s student-athletes have achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. We attribute much of that success to the amazing faculty and staff that are a part of the Appalachian State community. In an effort to further develop an environment that facilitates communication, understanding and collaboration to assist student-athletes in meeting their academic, career and personal goals, Academic Services for Student-Athletes (ASA) has developed a Faculty/Staff Guest Program.

The Faculty/Staff Guest Program is a way for faculty and staff members to become more familiar with the student-athlete experience and the ASA department. It will also allow our student-athletes to show gratitude and appreciation for all of the time and hard work that is put in by our faculty/staff.

Purpose:

The Faculty/Staff Guest program will allow faculty and staff members at Appalachian to get a better idea of what it’s like to be a student-athlete. The Faculty/Staff Guest Program will give student-athletes at Appalachian an opportunity to say “thank you” to faculty and staff members who have made a difference in their collegiate experience.

Division I student-athletes face a unique set of challenges as they participate in intercollegiate athletics. They put in long hours each day, as they go to class, attend study hall and take advantage of other academic resources, participate in weight room workouts, meet with athletic trainers when injured, and go to practice, not to mention competing both at home and away when in season. Each student-athlete must also adhere to strict NCAA guidelines regarding academic progress and eligibility while balancing their athletic pursuits. Each varsity team has an Academic Advisor in ASA, who serves as a key contact for student-athletes seeking academic assistance and helps the student-athletes navigate their academic career. Advisors are in contact with faculty through progress reports, phone calls and e-mails, and are liaisons with the Athletic Department.
GOALS

Faculty/Staff Guest Program Goal # 1
To further develop and maintain a campus environment that facilitates communication and collaboration among faculty and staff, ASA academic advisors, university administration and athletics staff, (including others as necessary) who assist student-athletes in meeting their academic, career and personal goals.

Faculty/Staff Guest Program Goal #2
Provide the academic community with the opportunity to learn about the student-athlete experience by fostering faculty/staff and athletics relationships that create a better understanding of the student-athlete experience.

Faculty/Staff Guest Program Goal #3
Allow our student-athletes to show appreciation and gratitude for the faculty/staff at Appalachian State University.
Program Description:

Faculty/Staff Nominations/Invitation:
Responsible Individual(s): Team Academic Advisor(s)
Procedure:
1. Student-athlete will nominate/invite a faculty/staff member who has made a difference in the student-athlete’s tenure at Appalachian State University.
2. Student-athlete’s academic advisor will draft a letter inviting the faculty/staff member to participate in the program. The academic advisor will send the invitation via email to the nominated faculty/staff member. The letter shall include at least two dates from which the faculty/staff member can choose; whom the faculty/staff member should RSVP; how the faculty/staff member should RSVP (e.g., via email or telephone); the deadline to RSVP, and an itinerary of the day’s activities. (Appendix A)
3. Academic advisor will confirm the date of the faculty/staff member’s participation with a representative (e.g., assistant coach, director of operations) from the student-athlete’s sport. Academic advisor and representative also will confirm the faculty/staff member’s itinerary.
4. Academic advisor will send the itinerary to the faculty/staff member via email. (Appendix B)

Game Day Experience:
Responsible Individual(s): Sports Contact and Team Academic Advisor(s)
Procedure:
1. On the day of the event the sports contact and advisor will work together to host the faculty/staff guest.
2. Each sport will have the flexibility to create their own unique experience, however, we believe there are a few best practices (Appendix C) that everyone should consider as a part of their program.

Program Assessment:
Responsible Individual(s): Team Academic Advisor(s)
Procedure:
1. Within 5 days of the faculty/staff guest event the advisor will email a brief survey to our guest to ensure that our programming is in alignment with our purpose and goals.
2. The feedback from our participants will allow us to adjust our programming as needed.
3. At the conclusion of the season the advisor and sports contact will evaluate the program.
Dear Dr. Smith,

As a student in your class and a member of the Appalachian State University Men’s Football team, I want to thank you for all you do in support of students at Appalachian. The academic success of student-athletes is the top priority of the Appalachian State University department of athletics. Our stellar faculty are part of the reason that student-athletes here have earned a department-wide cumulative GPA above 3.0 for the past thirteen semesters.

As a student-athlete, my collegiate experience is somewhat unique among students. While it is a great privilege to represent our University, balancing academics and athletics, including team travel away from campus, can be extremely challenging. Caring faculty members, like yourself, help us to navigate these challenges and succeed as students. I would like to invite you and one guest (may not be prospective student-athlete) to be part of the department of athletics’ Faculty/Staff Guest Program and join me for a game day experience with the football team. Below are the available games for you to choose from:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Opponent</th>
<th>RSVP By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/17/2018</td>
<td>Georgia State University</td>
<td>11/09/2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/24/2018</td>
<td>Troy University</td>
<td>11/06/2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please RSVP To: (Team Academic Advisor)
Tracy A. Keller
Assistant Director of Academic Services for Student-Athletes
Football Advisor
(kellerta@appstate.edu)

Below is a tentative itinerary of the game day events. If you are able to join us for the Faculty/Staff Guest Program we will send the final itinerary the week of the competition.

11:15 am – Mountaineer Walk
11:45 am – Mark E. Ricks Athletics Complex Facilities Tour
12:30 pm – Mike Sirignano, Assistant Athletics Director of Athletic Performance
12:40 pm – Tracy Keller, Assistant Director of Academic Services for Student Athletes
01:30 pm – Pre-Game Field Experience
02:15 pm – Faculty/Staff Guest to seats for kickoff
02:30 pm – Kickoff GO APP STATE

If you have any questions regarding our Faculty/Staff Guest Program please contact the team advisor listed above. Again, I want to thank you for making an impact on my academic experience here at Appalachian State University. We look forward to hosting you for our game day experience.

Go App!

Sincerely,

John Doe
Men’s Football
Appendix B

Faculty/Staff Guest Program
Game Day Itinerary
Saturday, November 17th, 2018
2:30 PM EST Kick-Off
Boone, NC

Saturday, November 17th, 2018

11:15 AM .......... Mountaineer Walk
11:45 AM .......... Mark E. Ricks Athletics Complex Tour with Tracy Keller
12:30 PM .......... Mike Sirignano, Asst. AD of Athletic Performance
(Overview of student-athlete training)
12:40 PM .......... Tracy Keller, Academic Services for Student Athletes
(Overview of typical day for student-athlete)
01:30 PM .......... Pre-Game Field Experience with Tracy Keller
02:15 PM .......... Faculty/Staff Guest to seats for kickoff
02:30 PM .......... Kickoff! GO APP STATE

Reminders:

- Please be on time or early as many of our activities are time sensitive
- Please wear App State Gear or Black and Gold on Game Day
- Wear comfortable shoes as we will be doing a lot of walking

Contacts:

Stacy Sears
Director, Academic Services for Student-Athletes
(c) 828-265-6601

Tracy A. Keller (Team Advisor)
Assistant Director, Academic Services for Student-Athletes
(c) 828-234-0249
Appendix C

Best Practices:

- **Participation**
  - Athletics academic advising staff and coaches should encourage student-athletes to nominate a faculty member or invite a University staff member to participate in the programming.

- **Guest Time**
  - When planning your Faculty/Staff Guest itinerary, please be mindful of the guest’s time. If you present a long day full of activities it may discourage some faculty/staff from wanting to participate. I suggest keeping the programming at three to four hours in duration. This does not include the actual game.

- **RSVP**
  - Give a firm RSVP deadline to make sure that you have enough time to set up your programing.

- **Academic Session**
  - Team academic advisor should try to be a part of the itinerary. This is a critical part of the program, as it allows the athletics academic advising staff to build positive relationships with faculty members and University staff members. Have them talk about a typical day for a student-athlete and what travel looks like. They can also give statistics about your program and all the great things the team is doing in the classroom. Again, this is important, as later on if a student is having issues or needs help in that guest’s class, the faculty member will feel comfortable contacting the team academic advisor.

- **Athletics Swag (Gear)**
  - The team contact should work with their equipment person to include gear as part of the program. If this is something your team wants to do, work with the team advisor to include shirt sizes as part of the confirmation email.

- **Facilities Tours**
  - This is not a must but most guests would love an inside look at what the locker room, weight room, and training rooms look like.

- **Pre-Game Meals**
  - Not a must but if your team can accommodate a pre-game meal it’s a nice touch.

- **Recognition (Positive Media)**
  - This is something you want to highlight for your team. The team contact should work with the sports information office and/or marketing office to recognize the faculty member or University staff member via team and athletics department social media outlets. If time permits, publicly recognize the faculty member or University staff member on the field before the contest or during a timeout. At a minimum, recognize the faculty member or University staff member via a “thank-you” on the video board or over the PA system.
- Tickets
  - For ticket events, the team contact should obtain two tickets to the game (one for the faculty member or staff member, and one for his/her guest). This will increase their chances of attending. **IMPORTANT:** Please work with compliance to make sure that you are explaining to the guest about recruiting rules and making sure that they do not invite someone who is a potential prospective student-athlete.