

## N4A



many of us are now Seesaw experts along with our children.

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It goes without saying, but what a difference a year makes.

Last December, Lauren Birch from Florida State used this space to write about the proliferation of online courses. She ended by saying “*we should acknowledge the challenges and concerns that [online] classes may have, but also realize there are immense benefits and ways to engage the generation of young scholars who have only grown up in a world full of technology.*” With little warning, we are now living in that virtual world more than ever.

Like many, our academic services team has been working virtually since March 13. We have mastered the ability to host meetings on WebEx, Zoom, Teams, and FaceTime all in the same day. We provide students with direction on navigating Canvas and Blackboard like we are back in college ourselves. And don't forget that

But it is far from easy. This environment is new to all involved, and frustrations boil over daily. Building relationships with students has been replaced with one transactional interaction after another. At times we feel we cannot adequately provide what our students need, especially those with learning challenges. We miss our colleagues.

The easy answer is to say, “When we get back in the office...” But for those who have returned, I doubt it feels the same as before. Technology has become an increasingly integral part of our daily professional lives. Some days it is the bane of our existence; other days it makes everything more efficient. But our reliance on technology in the world of academics is likely here to stay. How do we make it work in our favor?

First, embrace change and seek out solutions. This is a great time to ask your campus partners for increased access to technology that can support your student-athletes. Additionally, look to repurpose your existing technology. Our athletics department partnered with Fabriq a year ago in building an app that connects student-athletes with alums, employers and each other. We are now using the app's

broadcast feature to host live Q&As for student-athletes on topics like navigating online learning and studying for midterms.

Second, take advantage of the inherent benefits of your virtual tools. I have always been an unwavering advocate for in-person tutoring, but we are now embracing the flexibility in providing tutoring and mentoring at any time. Rather than shoe-horning our in-person services into a specific window of time, we are virtually meeting our students and staff where they are. Additionally, the ability to record sessions gives us more protection from academic misconduct than we previously had in-person.

Finally, while virtual happy hours may have run their course, take time to build community. It is no coincidence that our academic services team is closer than ever, uniting in our purpose of elevating lives. Technology provides new ways to pull together as a staff, use our N4A family for ideas and support, and never forget that our jobs are meant to be equally meaningful and fun.

@NAACConnect

## NAAC

**Blake Barlow**

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As Chair of the NAAC Legislation and Governance Committee, my task is to ensure the NAAC membership's voice is heard in NCAA legislation and governance matters. Our Committee is always searching for new opportunities to engage with the NAAC membership and NCAA staff on these matters, and continues to promote NAAC's interests by:

- Soliciting input from the NAAC membership on nationally significant legislative issues
- Providing feedback on legislative matters to the appropriate NCAA governance entities
- Assisting in developing formal NAAC positions on nationally significant legislative proposals
- Advocating for legislative modernization within the NCAA governance structure

While many compliance professionals participate in the NCAA governance process through their institutions or conference offices, the NAAC Legislation and Governance Committee seeks to provide an additional opportunity for compliance professionals to provide direct feedback, take formal positions, and clarify important points throughout the NCAA governance process. Our ultimate goal is for the NCAA membership to adopt clear, concise, and enforceable proposals that do not require multiple question and answer documents or editorial revisions. But this goal cannot be achieved without cooperation from and collaboration with NCAA staff to identify these opportunities to provide timely feedback.

Leeland Zeller, Director of Division I Governance, serves on the Legislation and Governance Committee and provides the Committee a direct communication channel to the NCAA staff. This partnership not only provides NAAC an opportunity to provide direct feedback, but also provides the NCAA staff a forum of experienced compliance professionals to discuss proposals and other legislative or interpretive issues prior

to publishing advisories or taking specific actions. Legislation and Governance has previously partnered with the NCAA to review proposal question and answer documents, educational columns, and other legislative matters prior to publication to the wider NCAA membership.

Given the impact of COVID-19 on intercollegiate athletics, the Legislation and Governance Committee is currently compiling feedback for the NCAA staff on ways to deregulate or modernize certain areas of NCAA legislation, particularly areas that have been granted temporary flexibility through various NCAA Committee decisions. In addition, Legislation and Governance continues to identify opportunities for NAAC to provide feedback on the Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) concepts under consideration by the NIL Legislative Solutions Group. This partnership between NAAC and the NCAA staff is more critical than ever as our legislative and governance model, and role of compliance professionals within it, continues to evolve.