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Former Georgia Southern staff members provided impermissible academic assistance

July 7, 2016 12:00pmEmily James

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Two former Georgia Southern University staff members violated NCAA ethical conduct rules when they provided three football student-athletes with impermissible academic assistance, according to a decision issued by a Division I Committee on Infractions panel.

A former assistant compliance director provided a student-athlete with a flash drive containing her previous work for a course in which the student-athlete was enrolled. The student-athlete later pulled an assignment from the flash drive and submitted it as his own work. When the professor discovered the work, the student-athlete and former assistant compliance director worked together to draft responses that stated the student-athlete was solely accountable. During the interview process, after initially denying the involvement of the former assistant compliance director, the student-athlete stated that the staff member provided him with the flash drive and instructed him to tell a false story.

The former assistant director not only violated the NCAA's ethical conduct rules when she provided the student-athlete with impermissible academic assistance and influenced him to provide false and misleading information but also failed to cooperate with the NCAA enforcement staff's investigation.

A former assistant director of student-athlete services also violated NCAA ethical conduct rules when she drafted and submitted 10 extra credit assignments on behalf of two football student-athletes. She obtained the student-athletes' login and passwords, and submitted the assignments without the student-athletes' knowledge.

Penalties and corrective measures include the following:

- Public reprimand and censure for the university.
- Two years of probation for the university from July 7, 2016, to July 6, 2018.
- Three-year show-cause orders for the former assistant compliance director and former assistant director of student-athlete services from July 7, 2016, to July 6, 2019. During that time, an NCAA school employing either individual must appear with the individual before a Committee on Infractions panel.
- A vacation of records in which student-athletes participated while ineligible. After the release of the public report, the university will identify the competition affected.
- A reduction of two scholarships for the football program during 2016-17. If the university already has extended the scholarship agreements to prospects for 2016-17, the university may serve the reduction during 2017-18.
- A reduction in the number of official visits for the football program during 2016-17 by 10 percent from the university's four-year average.
- A reduction of fall 2016 football evaluations by 10 percent from its four-year average.
- A \$5,000 fine plus an amount equal to 1 percent of the football program's operating budget (self-

imposed by the university).

Members of the Committee on Infractions are drawn from NCAA membership and members of the public. The members of the panel who reviewed this case are Michael F. Adams, chancellor, Pepperdine University; Jill Pilgrim, attorney in private practice; David Roberts, vice president for athletics compliance at the University of Southern California; Gregory Sankey, chief hearing officer, chair of the Committee on Infractions and commissioner of the Southeastern Conference; and Sankar Suryanarayan, university counsel, Princeton University.

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