Approved by the Board of Trustees

September 23, 2021

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Board Meeting

September 23, 2021

## APPOINT MEMBER TO THE ATHLETIC BOARD, URBANA

**Action:** Appoint Member to the Athletic Board

**Funding:** No New Funding Required

On recommendation of the Chancellor, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and Vice President, University of Illinois, Associate Professor Nikki Usher (Department of Journalism) is being proposed for the vacant faculty appointment to the Athletic Board of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. The appointment will be effective December 2021 and continue for the term designated or until a successor has been appointed. (Biographical sketch for the nominee is attached.)

The Athletic Board is a committee concerned with intercollegiate athletics at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. In its oversight of the academic and educational aspects of the intercollegiate athletics program, it is a committee of the Urbana-Champaign Senate. The board also serves as an advisory committee to the Chancellor and the Athletic Director on the financial management, personnel, and other operational aspects of the intercollegiate athletics program.

The board consists of nineteen members: two faculty representatives to the Big Ten; seven other faculty members; four alumni of the Urbana-Champaign campus; three students; and three *ex officio* members without a vote: a designee of the Chancellor, the University Comptroller or designee, and the Athletic Director. A slate of faculty nominees is provided to the Chancellor by the Urbana-Champaign Senate. The slate of student nominees is provided to the Chancellor by the Urbana-Champaign Senate, the Illinois Student Senate, and the Student Athletic Advisory Board to fill one student position each. The slate of alumni is provided by the Urbana Campus Alumni Advisory Board. The Chancellor reviews the nominees and forwards recommendations to the President of the University for action by the Board of Trustees, pursuant to the bylaws of the Senate. As previously discussed, and at the direction of the President and the Board of Trustees, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign is evaluating possible modifications to this approval process.

The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes, The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The President of the University concurs.

**Nikki Usher** – Associate Professor, College of Media

Nikki Usher, Ph.D., is an associate professor in journalism with affiliations in communication and political science. Although relatively new to Illinois, Professor Usher has extensive experience teaching and mentoring Division I student athletes at the University of Southern California and George Washington University. Professor Usher is currently a member of the Senate Committee for Student Life. She was part of a living and learning community, residing for two years from 2016 to 2018 in a dorm with her family. As part of this experience, Professor Usher had extensive training in student affairs concerns, including those concerning varsity athletes, veterans, and historically underrepresented groups. Prior to COVID, she frequently attended Illinois revenue and non-revenue sports as well as club sports such as hockey. An avid tennis player, Professor Usher has spent considerable time at the Atkins Tennis Center, engaging with players and coaches and celebrates the women’s team’s 3.77 GPA achieved in 2020.