



Mount Allison University  
Athletics and Recreation

# ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM





MOUNT ALLISON UNIVERSITY  
ATHLETICS AND RECREATION  
**ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM**

## **PREAMBLE**

The strategic plan for the department of Athletics and Recreation indicates that varsity sports will “serve as a cornerstone contributor to Mount Allison’s academic mission”. We feel that Athletics and Recreation can play an important role in the academic success of our student athletes.

To begin with, our department is invested in our student athletes and we support their unique opportunity to receive a university education at the top undergraduate university in Canada. We recognize the importance of academics and we embrace our role in prioritizing academic success. From a varsity sport perspective, our best opportunity for competitive success comes from having the consistency, stability and experience teams get when they have high numbers of returning players in their programs every year. Strong senior cores come from having team members succeed and excel academically, ensuring they compete for their entire degrees. So while academic success is unquestionably important for our athletes individually, it is also a necessary ingredient for team success.

Many of our student athletes excel academically, as evidenced by having 41 Academic All-Canadians in 2009-2010, and we are proud of their accomplishments. That said, we feel more can be done to support our student athletes. The intent of the Academic Achievement Program is to strengthen our efforts in the area of academic support, to add depth to the support being provided and to improve linkages to the academic community on campus.

### **1. ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM (AAP)**

The Academic Achievement Program has been created to consolidate all of the current and new efforts Athletics and Recreation puts toward assisting student athletes academically. We want our student athletes to understand that AAP is a program they are actively involved with and that their participation increases their likelihood of academic success. There are two broad areas of focus that encompass the various support services included with the program:

#### **1. *Building an Environment for Success***

Varsity Sport teams have a role to play in shaping the environment that will give our student athletes the best opportunity for success. The varsity sport team each student athlete is a member of is one of the most significant influences on their individual university experience while at Mount Allison. As such, our varsity teams recognize and accept this opportunity to positively impact academic behaviours and performance. The four components of AAP, each described in more detail in Section 5, that are essential for ***Building an Environment for Success*** include – *Class Checks, Study Hall, Academic Monitoring and Achievement Course*.

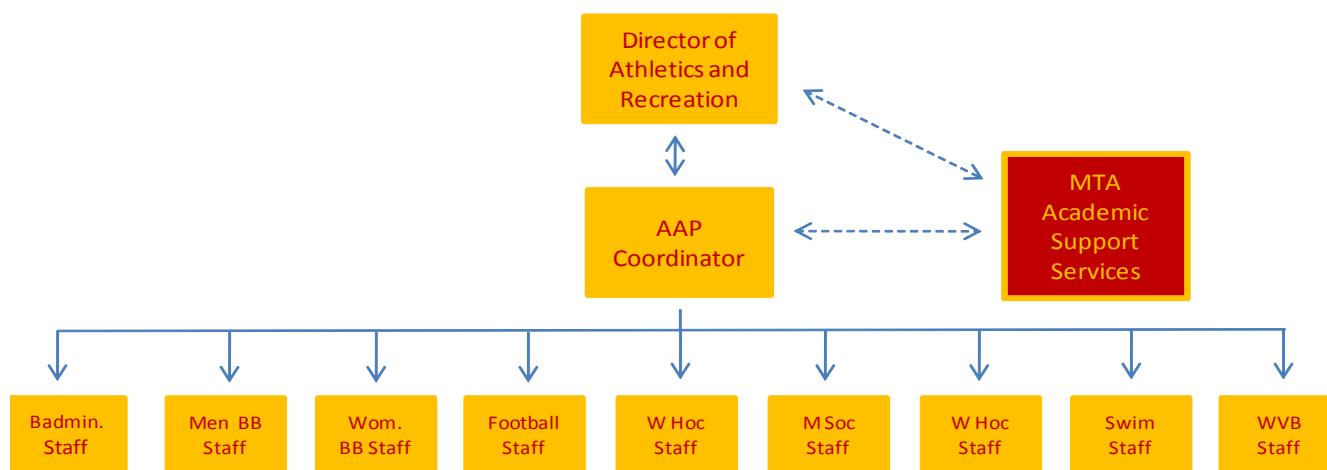
## 2. Connecting Academic Support

In providing academic support and resources for our student athletes, it is not the intention of Athletics and Recreation to attempt actual academic counseling or guidance. Varsity teams will contribute by helping to ensure the connection of our student athletes to Mount Allison's strong set of academic resources. By leveraging the relationship our team personnel and our department have with our student athletes, AAP provides support to help to identify what services our student athletes need and activates the connection of our student athletes to these services.

In particular, the components of *Freshman Orientation* along with *Schedule Creation* and *Support Services & Tutors* all play important roles in the success of **Connecting Academic Support**

## 3. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND EXECUTION

AAP has the following administrative structure



### AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

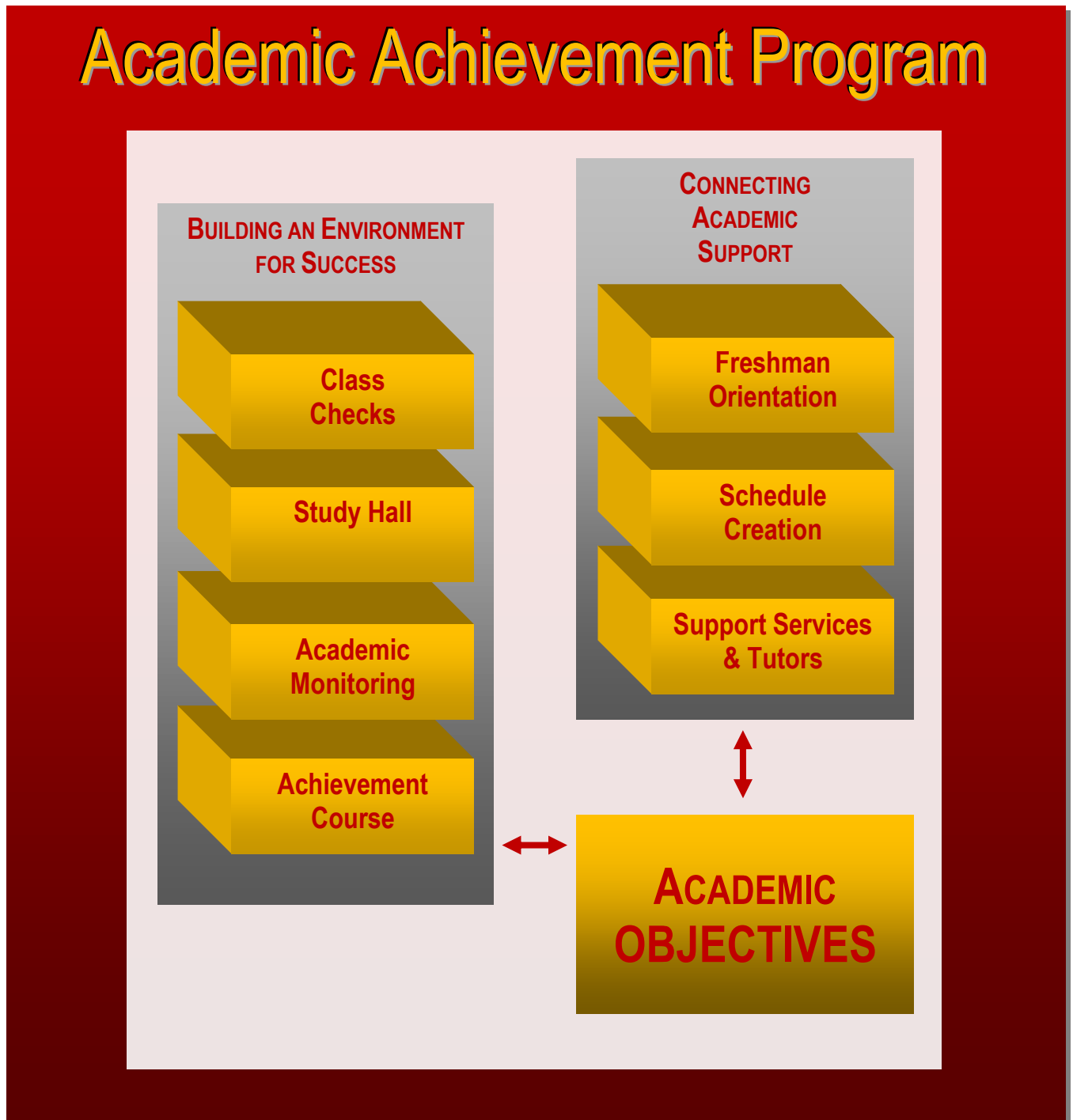
Director of Athletics and Recreation - Responsible to oversee the program. Works closely with AAP Coordinator to review, assess and develop program components as needed. Works with MTA academic support services to ensure optimal effectiveness of program.

AAP Coordinator - Works closely with Director of Athletics and Recreation to oversee the administration of the program. Involved in both direct execution of certain elements of the program and program management in other areas. The AAP Coordinator will be a part-time position with duties assigned accordingly.

Varsity Coaching Staffs - Responsible for understanding and supporting the implementation of the program.

#### 4. COMPONENTS OF AAP

The Academic Achievement Program uses 7 components spread across the two major areas of focus to positively impact student athletes' academic success. A third element of the program, academic objectives, connects back to the two areas of focus. The diagram below reflects the entire program. Also, each of the 7 program components is explained below.



## 5. DESCRIPTION OF EACH COMPONENT

<b>BUILDING AN ENVIRONMENT FOR SUCCESS</b>	
<b>COMPONENT #1</b>	<b>Class Checks</b>
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	The premise of class checks is quite simple. Students will be monitored to ensure that they are attending classes regularly, with applicable team consequences if they are found to not be attending classes. The intent here is to help establish a culture where regular class attendance is an understood necessity.
<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	AAP Coordinator, Coaching staffs
<b>EXECUTION</b>	The quantity of class checks will vary from team to team and will be determined jointly by the Director of Athletics and Recreation, the AAP Coordinator and each varsity staff. The focus for class checks will be 1 <sup>st</sup> year students and returning students who are shown to be at risk academically.
<b>COMPONENT #2</b>	<b>Study Hall</b>
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	Study Hall will be used differently by each individual varsity team, but the intent is to institutionalize time in student athlete schedules that is directed toward study and school work. Where possible, study hall time will be used to provide subject specific assistance (eg. commerce tutorial, chemistry tutorial, etc..)
<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	AAP Coordinator, Coaching staffs
<b>EXECUTION</b>	Study Hall will be implemented at the discretion of varsity coaching staffs. Study Halls may not be used by all teams but where applicable, they will be administered by the varsity coaching staff. Teams may also choose to use generic study hall sessions led by the AAP Coordinator.
<b>COMPONENT #3</b>	<b>Academic Monitoring</b>
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	Academic monitoring will be used to gauge how student athletes are progressing academically and to identify at risk student athletes and also appropriate moments for intervention and additional support. All student athletes will benefit from academic monitoring but in particular, at risk students will have clearly established processes for the reporting of academic progress. Also, semester end and year end assessments will be used to evaluate progress and to properly identify action plans for success.
<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	AAP Coordinator, Coaching staffs, Director of Athletics and Recreation
<b>EXECUTION</b>	Assessments will be coordinated by the AAP Coordinator and completed by the AAP Coordinator, the Director of Athletics and Recreation and the various varsity staffs. Varsity students will have an assessment at semester and year end with necessary action steps identified. In semester monitoring will also be used with specific monitoring plans to be established for at risk students.
<b>COMPONENT #4</b>	<b>Success Course</b>
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	Success Course is a course offered as additional assistance to help our student athletes with areas such as time management, study habits, writing skills, etc.. The exact format of the success course is TBD for 2010-2011.
<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	AAP Coordinator, Success course facilitator
<b>EXECUTION</b>	The exact format for Success Course is to be determined for 2010-2011. It will be offered during the 1 <sup>st</sup> semester by the Success Course facilitator.

<b>CONNECTING ACADEMIC SUPPORT</b>	
<b>COMPONENT #5</b>	<b>Freshman Orientation</b>
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	One of the big, and predictable, challenges amongst our varsity athletes are the struggles that can happen with first year students being overwhelmed with struggling to manage the freedom and the demands of university life. Freshman orientation will happen in two stages: <i>1. Summer contact</i> – once athletes are confirmed as students, Athletics and Recreation, through each applicable varsity team, will initiate contact to encourage and ensure that new students make contact with the faculty advisors assigned to them; <i>2. Fall Orientation</i> - immediately upon arrival at Mount Allison, and before the start of classes, all freshman student athletes will go through an academic orientation session.
<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	AAP Coordinator, Coaching staffs, Director of Athletics and Recreation
<b>EXECUTION</b>	Freshman orientation will be coordinated by the AAP Coordinator and completed in conjunction with the Director of Athletics and varsity staffs. On-site orientations may be offered in group sessions.
<b>COMPONENT #6</b>	<b>Schedule Creation</b>
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	Some academic challenges could be avoided or minimized if students had better direction for the construction of their schedules and for the selection of their classes. The AAP program, through freshman orientation and semester & yearend reviews, will help ensure that student athletes connect with their faculty advisors and also consider all necessary information when choosing their classes and building their schedules.
<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	AAP Coordinator, Coaching staffs
<b>EXECUTION</b>	The AAP Coordinator will work with the Director of Athletics and Recreation and faculty advisors to ensure that all student athletes' schedules are properly reviewed and assessed for appropriateness.
<b>COMPONENT #7</b>	<b>Support Services &amp; Tutors</b>
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	In some instances, the assistance of additional support services from the Wellness Centre and the use of tutors will be required for aiding the academic performance of student athletes. The AAP program standardizes a process for the request for and use of tutors. Fundamental to the success of tutors will be using a process that identifies the need for tutors and introduction of their use in a timely fashion.
<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	AAP Coordinator, Coaching staffs, Director of Athletics and Recreation
<b>EXECUTION</b>	The AAP Coordinator will administer a process for the application and assignment of tutors for varsity athletes.

## **6. ACADEMIC STANDARDS & OBJECTIVES**

This section is divided into two parts – academic standards and academic objectives. Academic standards are the required benchmarks that dictate the parameters for student athletes' involvement for varsity programs. Academic objectives are the benchmarks for academic success that we are collectively working to accomplish.

The academic standards and objectives for Mount Allison varsity athletes have been constructed using both CIS/CCAA eligibility regulations and overall student body trends for the university.

### **Academic standards**

1. All Mount Allison student regulations (eg. Good standing, academic probation, etc..) apply.
2. Student athletes must complete a minimum of 18 credit hours per academic year to be eligible for competition in the subsequent academic year (CIS and CCAA regulation).
3. Student athletes must be enrolled in a minimum of 9 credit hours each semester in order to be eligible for competition (CIS and CCAA regulation).
4. Student athletes must achieve a GPA of 2.0 or higher on a minimum of 18 credit hours to be eligible for Athletic Financial Awards (AFAs) (CIS regulation).

### **Objectives**

1. Each varsity team's academic performance will exceed the overall student body's performance when it comes to percentage of students in good standing (Good Standing and Dean's List) (Approximately 80% in good standing).
2. The average credit hours completed by our student athletes meet or exceed 24 credit hours per year.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

As stated throughout this document, academic success is an integral part of the Mount Allison experience and it is a priority that Athletics and Recreation has full intention of supporting. With the introduction of the Academic Achievement Program, student athletes have the necessary support network to succeed academically and to ultimately become Mount Allison University graduates.