

ATHLETICS

GWU President William Downs Elected to Big South Conference Executive Committee

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON SEPTEMBER 19, 2022



- ▲ Gardner-Webb President Dr. William Downs, right, presents the new Vice President and Director of Athletics, Dr. Andrew Goodrich, with a Runnin' Bulldog hat and shirt.

Council of Chief Executive Officers Unanimously Approved Selections for 2022-23

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—The Big South Conference Council of Chief Executive Officers unanimously approved the league's Executive Committee for the 2022-23 academic year, and Gardner-Webb University President Dr. William Downs was elected to serve the Executive Committee as an At-Large Member. The University of North Carolina-Asheville Chancellor Dr. Nancy Cable has been elevated to Big South President, and Charleston Southern University President Dr. Dondi Costin is the new Vice President.

The Big South Conference Executive Committee has the authority to make decisions, when necessary, for the Big South Council of Chief Executive Officers. Additionally, the Executive Committee hears any appeals regarding penalties imposed by the Commissioner.



▲ Dr. William Downs

“Gardner-Webb is proud to compete in the Big South Conference, and I value the collaborative working relationships that we have with leaders of all the member institutions,” affirmed GWU President William Downs. “The landscape of college athletics is changing with unprecedented speed, and it is especially important that our University have a strong voice at the table as we work to shape the future.”

Since his arrival on the GWU campus in 2019, Downs has enthusiastically supported the University’s over 600 student-athletes and 22 NCAA Division I teams. He also led the first athletics brand update in over 35 years.

Downs’ career spans over two decades of service in higher education. Before GWU, he was dean of the Thomas Harriot College of Arts & Sciences at East Carolina University (ECU) in Greenville, N.C. He had been at ECU since 2014 and was also the W. Keats Sparrow Distinguished Chair in the Liberal Arts and a professor of political science. He’s also held positions at Georgia State University and was a research fellow at Harvard University’s Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies.

A Raleigh, N.C., native, Downs earned his Bachelor of Arts in political science (with a minor in journalism) from North Carolina State University (Raleigh) in 1988, and his Master of Arts (‘90) and Doctoral (‘94) degrees in political science from Emory University (Atlanta). Downs is married to Kimberly Harwood Downs, and they have two children, Rachel and Bradley.



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