The Lees-McRae College athletic department soared to new academic heights this past fall, combining for a grade point average of 3.13 as a department, which ranks as the highest in school history for a single semester announced Director of

Athletics Craig McPhail Thursday.
“This is a tribute to understanding faculty, dedicated coaches and committed student-athletes, along with many other helpful resources,” said McPhail. “I am proud of all of those who helped contribute to this success, it has been a goal of the department’s to reach and maintain a 3.0 GPA and we have achieved it!”
Thirteen of the Bobcats’ 17 intercollegiate athletic programs posted a combined team GPA of 3.0 or higher during the fall 2012 semester, including six teams with a GPA over 3.2. Overall, 154 student-athletes (includes multiple sport participants) registered a grade point average over 3.2 for the fall 2012 semester; 192 (includes multiple sport participants) posted a GPA of 3.0 or higher.
Women’s tennis led the way with a team GPA of 3.48, while women’s cross country and women’s volleyball each eclipsed the 3.4 plateau with marks of 3.437 and 3.425, respectively. Women’s track and field recorded a GPA of 3.33 for the semester, with 20 student-athletes breaking 3.0 and 18 eclipsing the 3.2 mark.
Women’s lacrosse posted a team GPA of 3.314 with 10 student-athletes over a 3.0, while men’s soccer recorded the highest single-semester GPA in program history with a 3.30. The women’s soccer team continued its academic success with a mark of 3.254 as 20 student-athletes posted a 3.0 or higher, including 17 with over a 3.2. Cycling recorded a GPA of 3.218 as a team, with 40 riders topping 3.0 and 31 achieving a 3.2 or higher.
Men’s tennis, men’s volleyball, softball, and women’s basketball each performed well in the classroom this fall as well, each recording a team GPA over 3.1 while combining for 31 student-athletes with a 3.0 or higher and 21 over a 3.2. Men’s basketball, men’s cross country, men’s track and field, and men’s lacrosse combined for 32 student-athletes with over a 3.0 while 26 posted a GPA over a 3.2.
Much of the Bobcats’ academic success this past semester can be attributed to the CATS (Challenging Athletes to Succeed) program, which partners with the Burton Center for Student Success to provide student-athletes with services that assist in balancing achieving academic success with athletic responsibilities.
The primary objectives of the CATS program are to prepare student-athletes to achieve academic progress towards their degree, provide student-athletes with academic success services and tools to reach their goals academically, and provide career and life development resources that will prepare student-athletes for their lives outside of college and athletics.
Lees-McRae’s coaching staff and the department as a whole bought into what the CATS program can do this past semester, totaling more than 4,500 study hall hours during the fall as part of their commitment to success, both on the court and in the classroom.
“This is great progress for our athletic department,” said McPhail. The commitment to a well-balanced intercollegiate experience is crucial as we recruit the right-fit student-athlete to Lees-McRae.”