

# **Framing the Future: Reforming Intercollegiate Athletics**

**The Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA)**

*<http://www.neuro.uoregon.edu/~tublitz/COIA/index.html>*

**Adopted on 15 June 2007 by vote of the Coalition membership**

**Full Text ([PDF](#) or [HTML](#))**

**Summary ([PDF](#) or [HTML](#))**

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## SUMMARY

The Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA) is an alliance of 55 Division IA faculty senates whose mission is to provide a national faculty voice on intercollegiate sports issues. Our underlying premise is that intercollegiate athletics, while providing positive benefits to athletes, the campus and the broader community, at times clashes with the educational goals and mission of our institutions. These conflicts, which by many measures are on the increase, have the potential of undermining the values and aims of higher education. This paper identifies the current, major challenges facing intercollegiate athletics and offers a set of proposals that are meant to enable college sports to be integrated into the overall academic mission and remain a positive force on our campuses.

This paper is the result of a lengthy deliberative and revision process. The initial version was developed over the period of January through March 2007 by the COIA Steering Committee in consultation with the NCAA leadership. A second draft was prepared by the COIA Steering Committee and sent out for evaluation to many external groups including the NCAA, the Association of Governing Boards (AGB), the Faculty Athletics Representatives Association (FARA), the Division IA Athletics Directors Association, the Division IA Faculty Athletics Representatives (DIA FARs), the Knight Commission, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the College Sports Project, and the National Association of Athletic Academic Advisors (N4A). Their thoughtful comments formed the basis for a third draft which was reviewed by all COIA faculty senates in early May 2007. Representatives of COIA member senates met at Stanford in mid-May 2007 to revise the third draft. The final version was formally adopted by a vote of the entire COIA membership in June 2007.

The 28 proposals in this paper cover four major areas of concern: academic integrity and quality, student-athlete welfare, campus governance of intercollegiate athletics, and fiscal responsibility. The level of implementation - local, conference, and/or national - is identified for each proposal. This paper is meant to stimulate dialog at these various levels with the ultimate goal of having these proposals accepted as standard working policies and practices.

Proposals earmarked for local action should initially be addressed by the campus governance body, usually the Faculty Senate or equivalent, in close consultation with the campus Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR) and the Campus Athletics Board (or equivalent) where applicable. Success of these proposals on each campus will ultimately depend on the commitment and leadership exhibited by the University President (*i.e.*, the head administrator of the campus on which the student-athletes are registered). We strongly urge each University President to take an active role in addressing the issues and proposals raised in this paper. The COIA understands that not all local proposals will be appropriate for all institutions because each school has its own unique atmosphere, faculty governance system and athletics department. We hope each institution will carefully review the proposals in this paper and initiate a campus wide dialog resulting in the adoption of those proposals that fit local needs and strengthen the academic mission.

Several proposals in this paper are focused at the conference level. The FARs are the institutional liaisons to the conferences and as such are in the best position to evaluate and champion this group of proposals. The COIA encourages FARs to work closely with their conference commissioners and university presidents to discuss, promote and accept these proposals.

Most reforms proposed here can only be implemented successfully at the national level. Five require changes in or enforcement of existing NCAA legislation. The rest are proposed as best practices to become part of the NCAA certification process. The COIA continues to work closely with NCAA leaders to formulate strategies enabling these proposals to be adopted as national policies and practices.

## OVERVIEW

The Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA), an alliance of 55 Division IA (DIA) faculty senates, provides a faculty senate voice on athletic reform issues. Formed in 2002, the primary goal of the COIA is to ensure that college sports are fully integrated within the academic goals, values and missions of our universities and colleges. Although many individual reforms have been discussed at local, conference, and/or national levels, there have been few attempts to distill and unify these concepts into a single cohesive framework. This white paper, written and approved by faculty leaders across the country, attempts to fill this gap by providing a structure for a comprehensive set of athletic reform proposals. Here we enunciate the principles underlying sports in a collegiate setting, and propose 28 reforms within the four, broad categories of academic integrity and quality, student-athlete welfare, campus governance of intercollegiate athletics, and fiscal responsibility. The level of implementation – local, conference, and/or national – is explicitly identified for each suggested reform. We also propose the convening of a yearly national conference of stakeholder groups to develop and implement practical solutions that will allow intercollegiate sports to thrive and prosper into the indefinite future. This paper was approved by the COIA membership in June 2007.

## INTRODUCTION

### Why Should Faculty Care About Athletics?

*"When the public -- both local and en masse -- begin to believe that the value of the institution is to be measured by the success of its athletics teams, the core mission of the university is threatened. The central role of the faculty is ignored in favor of winning the big game or recruiting the next young man with athletics star potential. And the ability of the university to successfully educate and push forward the boundaries of knowledge and the creative arts is compromised."*

NCAA President Myles Brand at the NCAA Annual Convention, 01-08-2005

Discussions of the contemporary college sports scene have generated two increasingly opposing groups. Pessimists are quick to point to on- and off-field misbehavior by student-athletes, resume-padding by highly paid coaches, fake courses run by faculty, admission of unqualified student-athletes, and a facilities "arms race". On the other side are the optimists who do not believe that these reports are an accurate reflection of the conduct of intercollegiate athletics as a whole. Instead, optimists are encouraged because student-athlete graduation rates are up, academic requirements have been raised, and athletics is the primary gateway for some to attain a post-secondary education. The polarizing rhetoric by these two groups leaves little opportunity for a more nuanced, middle-of-the-road view that accepts the positive benefits of intercollegiate sports while acknowledging the need to ameliorate its problematic aspects.

Fortunately, most faculty members are neither jaded pessimists nor sunny optimists but down-to-earth realists. We understand that the status of intercollegiate athletics and the educational experiences of our students lie somewhere in between these two views. Faculty members worry that the culture of big-time sports, influenced by television and the mass media, is inching ever closer to a professional model. At the same time, we continue to strive for the ideal collegiate sports model where the term "student-athlete" draws no objections based on doubt about the academic engagement of college athletics, even when referring to student-athletes in high profile sports.

Most Americans believe that the primary mission of our universities is to teach, learn, and conduct research. Any lessening of our academic integrity in our athletic programs will do far more harm “than a dozen losing seasons ever could” (Knight Commission, 2001). The primary question for faculty and those responsible for the academic integrity of our universities is: how the faculty can ensure there is an appropriate relationship between athletics and the university as a place of learning?

## What Can Faculty Do to Strengthen Academic Integrity within Our Athletics Programs?

*"Of all the major constituencies in a university, faculty members are in the best position to appreciate academic values and insist on their observance. . . . They have the greatest stake in preserving proper academic standards and principles, since these values protect the integrity of their work and help perpetuate its quality."*

Former Harvard University President Derek Bok, in his 2003 book, *Universities in the Marketplace*.

The faculty is the steward of academic integrity on our campuses. Faculty members are specifically responsible for developing and upholding academic standards, maintaining intellectual rigor, monitoring student performance, providing career opportunities, and facilitating personal growth. The faculty is historically and, at some institutions, legislatively mandated to oversee all aspects of student life. The faculty adheres to two fundamental principles: that all students are treated fairly and equally, and that all students are provided with opportunities to succeed academically. Given these principles, it is imperative that faculty not only be concerned about athletics reform but in fact take the lead in developing and implementing reform initiatives and solutions.

To achieve these goals, the COIA has taken two complementary approaches: (1) writing papers and reports that identify problematic issues and propose feasible solutions; and, (2) developing respectful dialogues and strong partnerships with national organizations involved in intercollegiate athletics.

Over the lifetime of the COIA, the organization has drafted three white papers and two reports focusing on reform in college sports. The COIA papers have proposed best practices to guide campuses in developing policies appropriate for their local programs. Each paper has focused on a specific area of reform, with the 2003 Framework outlining the general reform agenda and mission of the COIA, the 2004 Governance document defining specific roles for faculty in athletics decisions, and the 2005 Academic Integrity in Intercollegiate Athletics paper dealing with issues ranging from admissions to athletics advising. COIA reports to the NCAA Presidential Task Force (2005) and to the NCAA Working Group Reviewing Initial Eligibility Trends (2006) have further elaborated our concerns and remedies. These papers and reports have resulted in NCAA by-law proposals currently in the NCAA legislative pipeline as well as provided a basis for conversations on athletics reform on many campuses. Several schools have adopted the COIA recommendations as campus policies (e.g., [www.colorado.edu/FacultyGovernance/STCOM/ATHLCOMM/athletic-ref.html](http://www.colorado.edu/FacultyGovernance/STCOM/ATHLCOMM/athletic-ref.html)).

### COIA POLICY PAPERS

[www.neuro.uoregon.edu/~tublitz/COIA/policypapers.htm](http://www.neuro.uoregon.edu/~tublitz/COIA/policypapers.htm)

[A Framework for Comprehensive Athletics Reform](#) (2003)

[Campus Athletics Governance: the Faculty Role: Principles, Proposed Rules, and Guidelines](#) (2004)

[Academic Integrity in Intercollegiate Athletics: Principles, Rules, and Best Practices](#) (2005)

### COIA REPORTS

[www.neuro.uoregon.edu/~tublitz/COIA/policypapers.htm](http://www.neuro.uoregon.edu/~tublitz/COIA/policypapers.htm)

[A Report to the NCAA Presidential Task Force](#) (2005)

[A Report to the NCAA Working Group to Review Initial Eligibility Trends](#) (2006)

The COIA has also worked to develop strong collaborative ties with several like-minded organizations including most importantly the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the Knight Commission. We have also met and maintained communication with the Association of Governing Boards (AGB), the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the National Athletic Academic Advisors Association (N4A), Division IA Faculty Athletics Representatives (DIA FARs), the Faculty Athletic Representatives Association (FARA), the Division IA Athletic Directors, and the Division III College Sports Project. This relationship-building effort has enabled COIA to provide a missing and much needed faculty senate voice on sports reform issues at the national level with these groups through which many sports reform efforts must be directed.

Association of Governing Boards  
(AGB; [www.agb.org](http://www.agb.org))  
 American Association of University Professors  
(AAUP; [www.aaup.org](http://www.aaup.org))  
 College Sports Project  
([www.collegesportsproject.org](http://www.collegesportsproject.org))  
 Division IA Faculty Athletics Representatives  
(DIA FARs; [oneafara.org](http://oneafara.org))  
 Division IA Athletic Directors Association  
([www.d-1a.com](http://www.d-1a.com))  
 Faculty Athletic Representatives Association  
(FARA: <http://org.elon.edu/ncaafara/fara.html>)  
 Knight Commission  
([www.knightcommission.org](http://www.knightcommission.org))  
 National Association of Athletic Academic  
Advisors (N4A; [www.nfoura.org](http://www.nfoura.org))  
 National Collegiate Athletic Association  
(NCAA; [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org))

Since an early point in the COIA's development, the COIA has found the NCAA to be a partner, acknowledging differences on some specific issues, yet working actively with the COIA to strengthen faculty awareness of the need for change and involvement in long-term reform. Established in 1905, the NCAA mission is to “govern competition in a fair, safe, equitable and sportsmanlike manner, and to integrate intercollegiate athletics into higher education so that the education experience of the student-athlete is paramount” ([www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org)). Under the leadership of NCAA President Myles Brand, the NCAA in the past five years has promulgated a series of unprecedented changes whose goals have been to strengthen the academic performance of student-athletes and to re-establish the primacy of academics in intercollegiate athletics enterprise. The interests, issues, and governance of the NCAA are complex, and it is true that from the COIA’s point of view, many longstanding problems remain. However, the emergence of the NCAA as an agent of positive change has altered the framework in which athletics reform can be pursued at the local, conference and national levels.

“*The Second-Century Imperatives*” report is the most recent reform effort undertaken by the NCAA. Issued in October 2006 by a 50-member presidential task force (PTF), it assessed the current state of intercollegiate athletics from a presidential viewpoint and suggested a wide range of improvements. The primary message of the PTF report was “taking reform home,” a call for university presidents (*i.e.*, chief campus administrator) to work with their faculty to initiate reform on their individual campuses. The PTF appropriately focused on local, institutional level changes. The proposed PTF reforms are strongly supported by the COIA and we encourage their adoption and implementation at the institutional level.

## Where Do We Go From Here?

The PTF report did not attempt to be comprehensive and thus did not address several important aspects of the intercollegiate athletics enterprise that directly or indirectly impact academic quality. The aim of this white paper is to fill this void by providing a faculty voice on the major issues surrounding college sports that have an impact on academic quality and standards. Through the reforms proposed here, the long term goal of this paper is to ensure that athletics remains fully integrated into the academic mission of our universities. This goal will be achieved only if the faculty takes a leadership role in acknowledging the need for reform, getting stakeholders to work together, identifying specific problems, and developing real world, functional solutions. Success of these proposals is dependent on DIA faculty leaders and their campus Faculty Senate or equivalent (hereafter referred to as the “faculty campus governance body”) strongly championing these reforms at the local, conference and national levels.

## PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE PROPOSED REFORMS

The unique value of intercollegiate athletics lies in its potential to enhance the educational experience of student-athletes through engagement in sports. In the best of worlds, participation in college athletics plays an important role in the personal development of student-athletes, provides a community framework for other students, and develops strong institutional loyalty among students, alumni, faculty, and broader communities. When in concert with the educational mission of the institution, intercollegiate athletics clearly adds value to the educational experience of our student-athletes and to the institution as a whole. The success of college sports, however, has created a series of issues that threaten the academic integrity and financial stability of our universities and colleges. These issues will become increasingly problematic until reforms are implemented. Ensuring that college sports are aligned with academic goals requires acknowledgement of the following fundamental principles, which form the foundation for the reforms presented in this paper:

- **Intercollegiate athletics must be in alignment with the educational mission of the institution.** The fundamental mission of a university is academic in nature. Higher education institutions provide educational opportunities, promote personal growth, and generate and disseminate knowledge. College athletics must adhere to and support the institution's academic mission in all its activities, including providing students with opportunities to succeed academically.
- **College sports must adhere to the collegiate athletics model.** When consistent with educational goals, the benefits of intercollegiate athletics are tangible: they develop life skills and character in student-athletes, create a focus for the campus community, and maintain relationships between universities and its alumni and public. However, the primary reason for student-athletes to attend a college or university is to receive an education. Their athletic endeavors should be entirely subsidiary to their educational goals. Unlike professionals, college student-athletes do not receive compensation for participating in their sport, and what financial aid they do receive is strictly limited to paying for the costs of their education. The goals associated with athletic participation must complement rather than supplant the goals of education and personal growth.

## PROPOSED REFORMS

Addressing the current challenges facing intercollegiate athletics requires attention to four overarching areas: academic integrity and quality; student-athlete welfare; campus governance of intercollegiate athletics; and fiscal responsibility. For each area, we identify the current issues and propose specific reform measures that in our opinion are the most urgent and which require immediate implementation. For each reform we also include the level at which it should be implemented, *e.g.*, local at the individual institutional level, regional at the conference level, or national through action by the NCAA. Of the 28 proposals here, 23 are put forward as best practices, policies that have worked well at some schools or which address problems that have resisted solution. We recommend these 23 best practice proposals, denoted as “*NCAA certification*”, become part of the NCAA re-certification process. Four proposals, listed as “*NCAA legislation*”, are offered as new NCAA by-laws affecting all schools. One proposal requests continued enforcement of current NCAA legislation.

The reforms here are the product of much internal discussion by the COIA members. Outside groups, including the NCAA, the AGB, the FARA, the Division IA FARs, the Knight Commission, the AAUP, the Division IA Athletic Directors, the College Sports Project, and the N4A were each sought out for advice on previous drafts. This paper incorporates many of their thoughtful suggestions.

# 1. Academic Integrity and Quality Reforms

*"Intercollegiate athletics programs shall be maintained as a vital component of the educational program, and student-athletes shall be an integral part of the student body. The admission, academic standing and academic progress of student-athletes shall be consistent with the policies and standards adopted by the institution for the student body in general."*

NCAA Constitution, Article 2.5

A fundamental principle of the NCAA, expressed in Article 2 of its Constitution, is that student-athletes shall be held to the same academic standards as all other students at the institution. The NCAA enforces this principle for Division I schools through its Athletics Certification Process, during which each institution is required to demonstrate that its admissions and academic policies are applied consistently for athletes and non-athletes and that they are administered by the same academic officials for all students. But while it has established a clear standard, the NCAA does not have the resources to monitor the implementation of these principles at every Division I school, nor is it their responsibility to do so. Moreover, certification occurs only once every 10 years. The maintenance of academic integrity and quality for all students, including student-athletes, is the primary responsibility of the institution's faculty. The faculty's role begins with the recruiting and admissions processes and continues through to graduation. As with all other students, faculty must be deeply involved in all academic aspects of the student-athlete's university experience. Faculty involvement includes overseeing admissions policies to ensure that admitted student-athletes are able to perform at the university level and that they have a reasonable prospect of obtaining a degree; setting minimum standards for eligibility to compete that are consistent with the goal of having every student-athlete graduate; and ensuring that student-athletes are not denied the opportunity to pursue their own educational objectives because of the demands of participation in athletics. In short, the faculty is charged with enabling student-athletes to attain their academic potential and preparing them for the post-university real world. Faculty must take the lead in pressing for academic reforms that allow student-athletes to reach their educational and life goals.

## **1.1 Institutional Admission and Recruiting Policies**

- 1.1.1 Student-athletes should be admitted based on their potential for academic success and not primarily on their athletic contribution to the institution. General admissions policies should be the same for all students, student-athletes and non-student-athletes. Campus administrators and campus faculty governance bodies should work together to develop admission policies consistent with the educational mission of the institution. [[COIA 2005 Report to NCAA Presidential Task Force Section VIII recommendations 1-3 & goal 2](#); local and national (NCAA certification)]
- 1.1.2 The academic profiles of freshmen or transfer student-athletes as a group and by sport should be similar to those of the entering freshman class or the non-athlete transfer cohort, as applicable. Data on the academic profiles of entering student-athletes and non-student-athletes should be reviewed at least annually by the Campus Athletics Board or the campus faculty governance body. [[COIA 2005 Report to NCAA Presidential Task Force section VIII recommendations 1-3 & goal 2](#); local and national (NCAA certification)]
- 1.1.3 Special admissions of freshman and transfer student-athletes should reflect the same philosophy as special admissions of non-student-athletes. Data on the academic performance of student-athlete special admits should be reviewed at least annually by the Campus Athletic Board or the campus faculty governance body. [New; local and national (NCAA certification)]
- 1.1.4 Faculty should be involved in developing and overseeing campus policies regarding recruiting of student athletes. [New; local and national (NCAA certification)]

## 1.2 The Primacy of Academics

- 1.2.1 No academic programs or majors should be designed specifically for student-athletes or created for the purpose of allowing student-athletes to maintain their eligibility. Qualified student-athletes should be allowed and in fact encouraged to pursue the major of their choice and to have the same access to academic classes and programs as other students without explicit or implicit athletic consequences. Data on student-athletes' choice of major should be gathered and evaluated by the campus faculty governance body or the Campus Athletic Board and should also be provided to all prospective recruits. [*New; local and national (NCAA certification)*]
- 1.2.2 To preserve academic integrity, the campus faculty governance body or the Campus Athletic Board should monitor student-athlete enrollment by course. [*COIA 2005 Academic Integrity in Intercollegiate Athletics section 3.1; local and national (NCAA certification)*]
- 1.2.3 Academic Progress Rate (APR), Graduation Success Rate (GSR) and other available graduation rate data should be reviewed annually by the campus faculty governance body to sustain processes that will improve the academic success and graduation rates of student-athletes. [*New; local and national (NCAA certification)*]
- 1.2.4 The NCAA should continue to enforce rigorously contemporaneous and historical penalties for teams and institutions that fail to meet NCAA APR and GSR standards. [*New; national (enforcement of existing NCAA legislation)*]
- 1.2.5 To ensure that student-athletes are acquiring the educational foundation leading to a degree, athletic eligibility shall be dependent on the maintenance of a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale. [*New; local, conferences and national (NCAA legislation)*]

## 2. Student-Athlete Welfare Reforms

*"If the Knight Commission felt that everything was going on as it should be, there wouldn't be a Knight Commission."*

Amy Perko, executive director of the Knight Commission, in response to a question about whether a plan for stricter academic standards is working, Chronicle of Higher Education, 09-14-2006

Local and national surveys, including results from the 2007 NCAA GOALS and SCORE studies, document high levels of student-athlete satisfaction with their collegiate experience. Aggregate survey data, however, frequently obscure important financial, academic and social welfare issues that significantly and oftentimes negatively affect the educational experience of many individual student-athletes. For example, student-athletes would be more secure in the knowledge that their scholarships will be renewed annually assuming they remain in good academic standing and adhere to athletics department and campus codes of conduct. Course assignment completion and exam preparation would be improved if competitive events and athletics practices were scheduled to minimize missed classes and lost study time. Concerted efforts to enhance student-athlete integration into campus life would likely arrest the increasing isolation of student-athletes from the rest of campus. Such integration must be a responsibility shared across all stakeholder groups, including faculty, instead of leaving it solely to the athletic department. Strengthening academic oversight of athletics learning centers would enhance the quality and integrity of these facilities. Improvements in these areas would enable student-athletes to participate more fully in the academic and social aspects of campus life.



## **2.1 Athletics Scholarships**

- 2.1.1 Athletics scholarships should be awarded on a year-by-year basis with the presumption that they should be renewed up to four times for a total award of five years, or until graduation, whichever comes first, for students who are in good academic standing, conform to campus codes for student behavior, conform to the athletics department's standards of conduct, and adhere to team rules. Institutions should establish criteria and a mechanism for revoking a scholarship. The final authority for revoking a scholarship should rest with the campus' chief financial aid officer or with the chief academic officer. A student awarded an athletics scholarship who is no longer participating in athletics should be counted against the NCAA maximum number of awards for that sport, unless the scholarship is revoked. [[COIA 2005 Academic Integrity in Intercollegiate Athletics section 2.1](#); local and national (NCAA legislation)]

## **2.2 Competition and Practice Scheduling**

- 2.2.1 Individual athletic competitions, as distinct from conference, regional and national tournaments and championships, shall not be scheduled during final exam periods unless an exception is granted by the Campus Athletics Board or equivalent. [[COIA 2005 Academic Integrity in Intercollegiate Athletics section 4.3.6](#); local, conferences, and national (NCAA legislation)]
- 2.2.2 Individual athletic competitions and associated travel should be scheduled to minimize lost class time. Institutional policies designed to minimize lost class time should be described. [[COIA 2005 Academic Integrity in Intercollegiate Athletics section 4.3](#); local, conferences, and national (NCAA certification)]
- 2.2.3 Athletically-related activities (e.g., formal and informal practices, team meetings, and any activities at which the attendance of student-athletes is required) should be scheduled outside the prime times for academic classes. Each institution should explain how it achieves this scheduling goal. [New; local, conferences and national (NCAA certification)]

## **2.3 Integration into Campus Life**

- 2.3.1 Life skills and personal development programs for student-athletes should have as a goal the integration of the student-athlete into the rest of the student population. These programs should help student-athletes develop an appropriate balance between their athletic time requirements and their paramount need for academic and social integration. Administrators, faculty and athletic departments should mitigate the time demand on student-athletes to allow them to pursue the full range of educational experiences open to other students. [[COIA 2005 Report to NCAA Presidential Task Force section VII recommendation 2b & 2e](#); local, conferences, and national (NCAA certification)]

## **2.4 Campus Integration of Academic Advising for Student-Athletes**

- 2.4.1 Academic advising and academic support for student-athletes should be structured to give student-athletes as valuable and meaningful an educational experience as possible and not just to maintain their athletic eligibility. [[COIA 2005 Report to NCAA Presidential Task Force section VII recommendation 2c](#); local, conferences, and national (NCAA certification)]
- 2.4.2 The academic advising facility for student-athletes should be integrated into and report through the existing academic advising structure and not through the Athletics Department. [[COIA 2003 Framework for Comprehensive Athletics Reform section I.4](#); local and national (NCAA certification)]
- 2.4.3 The campus academic advising structure or the office of the chief academic officer should have oversight of and regularly review the academic advising of student-athletes. [[COIA 2003 Framework for Comprehensive Athletics Reform section I.4](#); local and national (NCAA certification)]
- 2.4.4 Athletic academic advisors should be appointed by and work for the campus academic advising structure and not solely for the Athletics Department. [[COIA 2003 Framework for Comprehensive Athletics Reform section I.4](#); local and national (NCAA certification)]

## **3. Campus Governance of Intercollegiate Athletics Reforms**

*“The bad part is (the athletics department) is something that has to be watched so carefully because when you get in trouble, it's something you get hammered on all across the nation, from the press and your own constituents.”*

Karen Holbrook, president of Ohio State University, providing an explanation for the sizable amount of time spent by university presidents on intercollegiate athletics. Indianapolis Star, 01-09-2006

It is universally agreed that athletics programs, like all other programs at universities and colleges, must adhere to and support the academic mission. Most athletics departments aspire to attain this goal. Ensuring that athletics activities are consistent with the institution’s educational mission requires formal campus oversight processes and increased conversation between athletics and the rest of campus. Campus Faculty Athletics Representatives (FARs) play a key role in both issues because of their knowledge of and involvement in many aspects of athletics including NCAA certification and student-athlete eligibility. The COIA formally acknowledges and deeply appreciates the efforts of the campus FARs to ensure the academic integrity of their programs. However, the increasing complexities of intercollegiate athletics on most Division IA campuses require additional, broad-based campus oversight through the Faculty Senate (or equivalent) and other official campus governance bodies. These campus groups should work closely with the FAR, AD and campus president to provide input on academic, fiscal, and student-athlete welfare issues. To be successful, governance reforms must be supported by the University President who has the ultimate responsibility for integrating athletics into academics. Effective presidential leadership on this issue will only occur as a result of close consultation with and advice from faculty through faculty governance structures.

### **3. Campus Governance of Intercollegiate Athletics**

- 3.1 Each NCAA member institution should establish a Campus Athletic Board. The charge of this Board should be to monitor and oversee campus intercollegiate athletics. A majority of Board members should be tenured faculty who should be appointed or elected through rules established by the campus faculty governance body. The Faculty Athletic Representative should be an *ex officio* voting or non-voting member of the Board. The chair of the Board should be a senior (tenured) faculty member. An Athletic Director should not be chair. [[COIA 2004 Campus Athletics Governance - the Faculty Role section 2B](#); local and national (NCAA legislation)]
- 3.2 Major athletic department decisions (e.g., hiring of the athletic director and key athletic department personnel, changes in the total number of intercollegiate sports, initiation of major capital projects, etc.) should be made in consultation with the Campus Athletic Board and leaders of the campus faculty governance body and appropriate faculty committee(s). [[COIA 2005 Report to NCAA Presidential Task Force section VII recommendation 1b](#); local and national (NCAA certification)]
- 3.3 The Faculty Athletic Representative (FAR) should be appointed by the University President based on recommendation by the campus faculty governance body. The FAR appointment should be made for a specific term and a review of the performance of the FAR should take place prior to reappointment. Such a review should include meaningful participation by the campus faculty governance body, or the Campus Athletic Board. [[COIA 2004 Campus Athletics Governance - the Faculty Role section 1B](#); local and national (NCAA certification)]
- 3.4 The Athletic Director, Faculty Athletic Representative and the Campus Athletic Board chair should report orally and in writing at least once a year to the campus faculty governance body. Their reports should include a focus on academic benchmarks including the APR, GSR, graduation rates and the percentage and progress of student athlete special admits. [[COIA 2005 Report to NCAA Presidential Task Force section VII recommendation 1c](#); local, conferences and national (NCAA certification)]
- 3.5 Leaders of campus faculty governance body should report annually to the University President (1) that the faculty has been able to fulfill its responsibilities in regard to athletic governance, or (2) that it has not, in which case the report should specify the obstacles that have prevented it from doing so. These reports should be made available to the NCAA during re-certification [[COIA 2004 Campus Athletics Governance - the Faculty Role section 3A](#); local and national (NCAA certification)]

### **4. Fiscal Responsibility Reforms**

*“It is America, and it doesn’t bother me if (baseball player) Alex Rodriguez makes \$25 million a year because that’s private (business). It doesn’t matter to me what Allen Iverson (of the NBA) gets. But at the university level, in athletics, there has to be some stability.”*

Skip Bertman, Louisiana State University athletics director, on “excessive” college pay packages, USA Today, 01-04-2007

One of the biggest issues currently facing university presidents and athletics department administrators is athletics cost containment. Recent NCAA data demonstrate that athletics department budgets across the country are rising much more quickly than that of the rest of the university. Finding sufficient resources to underwrite these increases is straining institutional finances already burdened by rising academic expenses. The impact of this growth is particularly severe at institutions, such as the non-BCS schools, that do not have the ability to offset mounting expenditures with new revenue sources. The non-BCS schools, for example, feel pressure to schedule football games during the week in order to compete

for precious television coverage otherwise dominated by the major conferences. The 2006 NCAA Presidential Task Force report proposed many excellent approaches that begin to tackle this complex situation. The COIA fully supports the PTF fiscal reform package. Here we propose additional reforms that complement the PTF proposals. The PTF and COIA proposals together form a strong foundation that addresses the challenges associated with keeping athletic expenses in alignment with institutional values, mission and goals. As with the other reforms proposed in this paper, strong leadership on these fiscal responsibility reforms must be exerted by the University President. Successful implementation of these proposals will only occur through a close working relationship between the University President, faculty leaders, and senior athletics department personnel. Schools, particularly those within conferences, should work with each other to develop strategies to control costs that do not raise anti-trust concerns.

#### **4. Fiscal Responsibility**

- 4.1 The Athletic Department's budgets, revenues and expenditures should be transparent and aligned with the mission, goals and values of the institution. The University President should take the lead to ensure that fiscal reports, including dash board indicators as listed in the 2006 NCAA Presidential Task Force report, are issued annually and made available to the campus faculty governance body. The President should work closely with faculty leaders, existing faculty committees, and athletic department personnel to achieve these goals. [[COIA 2005 report to NCAA Presidential Task Force section I](#); local, conferences and national (NCAA certification)]
- 4.2 The overall annual growth rate in the Athletic Department's operating expenditures should be no greater than the overall annual growth rate in the university's operating expenditures. [*New*; local, conferences and national (NCAA certification)]
- 4.3 The athletic department budget should be integrated into the university general budget process where feasible. The proposed athletic department budget should be evaluated by the same process as the budget for academic units. [[COIA 2005 report to NCAA Presidential Task Force section I](#); local and national (NCAA certification)]
- 4.4 The University President should take the appropriate steps to fuse athletic fundraising efforts into those of the rest of the university, including eliminating separate, athletic-only 501(c)(3) entities and establishing faculty representation on the board of the institutional fund-raising entity [*New*; local and national (NCAA certification)]
- 4.5 Commercialization policies in athletics should be comparable to other commercialization policies conducted throughout the University and should include meaningful faculty participation in their oversight. [*New*; local and national (NCAA certification)]

## **ROAD MAP FOR REFORM**

*"In my view, faculty must take a leadership role on academic reform issues."*

NCAA President Myles Brand at the Sport Business Journal Intercollegiate Athletic Forum in NYC, 12-10-2003

It is increasingly clear that national sports reform cannot be implemented without the strong support of and leadership by faculty. The COIA, as an organization of faculty governance bodies, has emerged as

one of the primary faculty voices for a realistic and feasible reform agenda. Success will not be possible, however, if faculty do not work together with other stakeholder groups. Dialogue is a necessary first step to identify and delineate the issues, and collaboration with groups mentioned throughout this document is imperative for forward progress. To achieve the reform goals outlined requires consensus, concerted effort, and action at a variety of levels, from local to conference to national.

At the **local** level, the campus faculty governance body, usually the Faculty Senate, is the most likely primary venue for these conversations. Faculty leaders must bring all stakeholders to the discussion table, including the President, Athletic Director, Governing Board members, FAR, student-athletes, campus athletic boards, and the faculty at large. The COIA understands that each institution is unique, with its own ethos, atmosphere and culture. Each campus will therefore need to review each reform individually to ascertain its local appropriateness. What works well on one campus may be unsuitable at other institutions. Schools already in the “reform mode” may find that many of the current recommendations are already in place on their campuses. The course of action for these schools might be to connect directly with other universities in their conferences to put together a conference-wide roadmap. Schools that feel they have no official faculty voice on athletics issues may find these recommendations daunting. For those schools, the course of action might be to form a core group of informed faculty to meet with administrators and begin the process of defining shared governance on their campus. Whatever the current circumstances, the proposed reforms in this document should be used by faculty governance bodies as a starting point to design their own campus-specific agenda.

Ultimate success of these proposals depends on the commitment and leadership shown by the University President. Most university presidents directly oversee athletic departments and are in a position to effect change. For example, it is only the university presidents who can protect athletics directors and coaches who demonstrate adherence to the educational mission of the institution even though that might potentially risk competitive success. The COIA cannot be more emphatic in calling for university presidents to initiate and oversee local, campus-wide discussions leading to implementation of new policies and procedures that ensure the integration of athletics into the institution’s academic mission. However, even the most courageous and steadfast University President will be unable to achieve these goals without strong, consistent backing from the faculty and the board of governors/trustees. Without that support, university presidents will be unable to withstand the onslaught of public criticism from boosters and others who remain wedded to the separation of athletics from academics.

Other reforms described in this white paper are aimed at the **conferences**, which oversee many aspects of intercollegiate athletics. We strongly encourage conferences to hold frank discussions with their member institutions on the issues raised here, including but not limited to athletics scheduling, student student-athlete welfare, integration of athletics into academics, eligibility standards, and athletics expenditures. We believe the conference commissioners in conjunction with Faculty Athletic Representatives and university presidents can and should provide the necessary leadership and critical mass to initiate and direct these conversations in a profitable direction.

Still other reforms detailed here can only be implemented successfully at the **national** level. Many of them require changes in NCAA legislation. The COIA looks forward to working closely with the NCAA leadership and its members to move these proposals forward with the shared goal of achieving long-term sports reform.

Although most of the proposals presented here address the need for academic primacy over all athletic endeavors, the COIA is not unaware that financial needs drive many athletics decisions. Many issues currently facing college sports, including over-commercialization, the athletics “arms race,” pay-for-play, rapidly rising athletics budgets, coaches’ compensation, and competition between academic and

athletics fundraising, all stem from a local inability to rein in athletics expenditures. This problem, which threatens the long term health of intercollegiate athletics, is beyond the control of university presidents, Conference Commissioners or even the NCAA.

Solutions to the problems of intercollegiate athletics outlined here and in our previous papers and reports will only be obtained through respectful conversation and a strong consensus of all the stakeholder groups. Towards this goal, we propose the initiation of annual national summit meetings of all stakeholders for the explicit purpose of developing and implementing practical solutions that will allow intercollegiate sports to thrive and prosper into the indefinite future.

# APPENDIX A: LIST OF PROPOSALS

## 1.1 Institutional Admission and Recruiting Policies

- 1.1.1 Student-athletes should be admitted based on their potential for academic success and not primarily on their athletic contribution to the institution. General admissions policies should be the same for all students, student-athletes and non-student-athletes. Campus administrators and campus faculty governance bodies should work together to develop admission policies consistent with the educational mission of the institution. [[\*COIA 2005 Report to NCAA Presidential Task Force Section VIII recommendations 1-3 & goal 2\*](#); local and national (NCAA certification)]
- 1.1.2 The academic profiles of freshmen or transfer student-athletes as a group and by sport should be similar to those of the entering freshman class or the non-athlete transfer cohort, as applicable. Data on the academic profiles of entering student-athletes and non-student-athletes should be reviewed at least annually by the Campus Athletics Board or the campus faculty governance body. [[\*COIA 2005 Report to NCAA Presidential Task Force section VIII goal recommendations 1-3 & goal 2\*](#); local and national (NCAA certification)]
- 1.1.3 Special admissions of freshman and transfer student-athletes should reflect the same philosophy as special admissions of non-student-athletes. Data on the academic performance of student-athlete special admits should be reviewed at least annually by the Campus Athletic Board or the campus faculty governance body. [New; local and national (NCAA certification)]
- 1.1.4 Faculty should be involved in developing and overseeing campus policies regarding recruiting of student athletes. [New; local and national (NCAA certification)]

## 1.2 The Primacy of Academics

- 1.2.1 No academic programs or majors should be designed specifically for student-athletes or created for the purpose of allowing student-athletes to maintain their eligibility. Qualified student-athletes should be allowed and in fact encouraged to pursue the major of their choice and to have the same access to academic classes and programs as other students without explicit or implicit athletic consequences. Data on student-athletes' choice of major should be gathered and evaluated by the campus faculty governance body or the Campus Athletic Board and should also be provided to all prospective recruits. [New; local and national (NCAA certification)]
- 1.2.2 To preserve academic integrity, the campus faculty governance body or the Campus Athletic Board should monitor student-athlete enrollment by course. [[\*COIA 2005 Academic Integrity in Intercollegiate Athletics section 3.1\*](#); local and national (NCAA certification)]
- 1.2.3 Academic Progress Rate (APR), Graduation Success Rate (GSR) and other available graduation rate data should be reviewed annually by the campus faculty governance body to sustain processes that will improve the academic success and graduation rates of student-athletes. [New; local and national (NCAA certification)]
- 1.2.4 The NCAA should continue to enforce rigorously contemporaneous and historical penalties for teams and institutions that fail to meet NCAA APR and GSR standards. [New; national (enforcement of existing NCAA legislation)]
- 1.2.5 To ensure that student-athletes are acquiring the educational foundation leading to a degree, athletic eligibility shall be dependent on the maintenance of a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale. [New; local, conferences and national (NCAA legislation)]

## **2.1 Athletics Scholarships**

- 2.1.1 Athletics scholarships should be awarded on a year-by-year basis with the presumption that they should be renewed up to four times for a total award of five years, or until graduation, whichever comes first, for students who are in good academic standing, conform to campus codes for student behavior, conform to the athletics department's standards of conduct, and adhere to team rules. Institutions should establish criteria and a mechanism for revoking a scholarship. The final authority for revoking a scholarship should rest with the campus' chief financial aid officer or with the chief academic officer. A student awarded an athletics scholarship who is no longer participating in athletics should be counted against the NCAA maximum number of awards for that sport, unless the scholarship is revoked. [[COIA 2005 Academic Integrity in Intercollegiate Athletics section 2.1](#); local and national (NCAA legislation)]

## **2.2 Competition and Practice Scheduling**

- 2.2.1 Individual athletic competitions, as distinct from conference, regional and national tournaments and championships, shall not be scheduled during final exam periods unless an exception is granted by the Campus Athletics Board or equivalent. [[COIA 2005 Academic Integrity in Intercollegiate Athletics section 4.3.6](#); local, conferences, and national (NCAA legislation)]
- 2.2.2 Individual athletic competitions and associated travel should be scheduled to minimize lost class time. Institutional policies designed to minimize lost class time should be described. [[COIA 2005 Academic Integrity in Intercollegiate Athletics section 4.3](#); local, conferences, and national (NCAA certification)]
- 2.2.3 Athletically-related activities (e.g., formal and informal practices, team meetings, and any activities at which the attendance of student-athletes is required) should be scheduled outside the prime times for academic classes. Each institution should explain how it achieves this scheduling goal. [New; local, conferences and national (NCAA certification)]

## **2.3 Integration into Campus Life**

- 2.3.1 Life skills and personal development programs for student-athletes should have as a goal the integration of the student-athlete into the rest of the student population. These programs should help student-athletes develop an appropriate balance between their athletic time requirements and their paramount need for academic and social integration. Administrators, faculty and athletic departments should mitigate the time demand on student-athletes to allow them to pursue the full range of educational experiences open to other students. [[COIA 2005 Report to NCAA Presidential Task Force section VII recommendation 2b & 2e](#); local, conferences, and national (NCAA certification)]

## **2.4 Campus Integration of Academic Advising for Student-Athletes**

- 2.4.1 Academic advising and academic support for student-athletes should be structured to give student-athletes as valuable and meaningful an educational experience as possible and not just to maintain their athletic eligibility. [[COIA 2005 Report to NCAA Presidential Task Force section VII recommendation 2c](#); local, conferences, and national (NCAA certification)]
- 2.4.2 The academic advising facility for student-athletes should be integrated into and report through the existing academic advising structure and not through the Athletics Department. [[COIA 2003 Framework for Comprehensive Athletics Reform section I.4](#); local and national (NCAA certification)]



- 2.4.3 The campus academic advising structure or the office of the chief academic officer should have oversight of and regularly review the academic advising of student-athletes. [[COIA 2003 Framework for Comprehensive Athletics Reform section I.4](#); local and national (NCAA certification)]
- 2.4.4 Athletic academic advisors should be appointed by and work for the campus academic advising structure and not solely for the Athletics Department. [[COIA 2003 Framework for Comprehensive Athletics Reform section I.4](#); local and national (NCAA certification)]

### **3. Campus Governance of Intercollegiate Athletics**

- 3.1 Each NCAA member institution should establish a Campus Athletic Board. The charge of this Board should be to monitor and oversee campus intercollegiate athletics. A majority of Board members should be tenured faculty who should be appointed or elected through rules established by the campus faculty governance body. The Faculty Athletic Representative should be an *ex officio* voting or non-voting member of the Board. The chair of the Board should be a senior (tenured) faculty member. An Athletic Director should not be chair. [[COIA 2004 Campus Athletics Governance - the Faculty Role section 2B](#); local and national (NCAA legislation)]
- 3.2 Major athletic department decisions (*e.g.*, hiring of the athletic director and key athletic department personnel, changes in the total number of intercollegiate sports, initiation of major capital projects, *etc.*) should be made in consultation with the Campus Athletic Board and leaders of the campus faculty governance body and appropriate faculty committee(s). [[COIA 2005 Report to NCAA Presidential Task Force section VII recommendation 1b](#); local and national (NCAA certification)]
- 3.3 The Faculty Athletic Representative (FAR) should be appointed by the University President based on recommendation by the campus faculty governance body. The FAR appointment should be made for a specific term and a review of the performance of the FAR should take place prior to reappointment. Such a review should include meaningful participation by the campus faculty governance body, or the Campus Athletic Board. [[COIA 2004 Campus Athletics Governance - the Faculty Role section 1B](#); local and national (NCAA certification)]
- 3.4 The Athletic Director, Faculty Athletic Representative and the Campus Athletic Board chair should report orally and in writing at least once a year to the campus faculty governance body. Their reports should include a focus on academic benchmarks including the APR, GSR, graduation rates and the percentage and progress of student athlete special admits. [[COIA 2005 Report to NCAA Presidential Task Force section VII recommendation 1c](#); local, conferences and national (NCAA certification)]
- 3.5 Leaders of campus faculty governance body should report annually to the University President (1) that the faculty has been able to fulfill its responsibilities in regard to athletic governance, or (2) that it has not, in which case the report should specify the obstacles that have prevented it from doing so. These reports should be made available to the NCAA during re-certification [[COIA 2004 Campus Athletics Governance - the Faculty Role section 3A](#); local and national (NCAA certification)]

### **4. Fiscal Responsibility**

- 4.1 The Athletic Department's budgets, revenues and expenditures should be transparent and aligned with the mission, goals and values of the institution. The University President should take the lead to ensure that fiscal reports, including dash board indicators as listed in the 2006 NCAA Presidential Task Force report, are issued annually and made available to the campus faculty governance body. The President should work closely with faculty leaders, existing faculty committees, and athletic department personnel to achieve these goals. [[COIA 2005 report to NCAA Presidential Task Force section I](#); local, conferences and national (NCAA certification)]

- 4.2 The overall annual growth rate in the Athletic Department's operating expenditures should be no greater than the overall annual growth rate in the university's operating expenditures. [*New; local, conferences and national (NCAA certification)*]
- 4.3 The athletic department budget should be integrated into the university general budget process where feasible. The proposed athletic department budget should be evaluated by the same process as the budget for academic units. [[COIA 2005 report to NCAA Presidential Task Force section I](#); *local and national (NCAA certification)*]
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- 4.5 Commercialization policies in athletics should be comparable to other commercialization policies conducted throughout the University and should include meaningful faculty participation in their oversight. [*New; local and national (NCAA certification)*]