



# Division I-AAA Legislative Headlines



*A newsletter provided by  
**The Division I-AAA Athletics Directors Association**  
on NCAA legislative trends and issues affecting Division I-AAA*

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## **MANAGEMENT COUNCIL MEETING**

Concerning international prospective student-athletes who participate on a professional team, reinstatement penalties after August 2003 will be stricter than those currently in effect. The discussion occurred because of legislation approved in April by the Council and Board that established a new definition of a professional team. (A professional team now is defined as one that provides any of its players more than actual and necessary expenses or declares itself to be professional). The Council agreed that for:

- i. prospects who participate on a professional team after their first opportunity to enroll in a collegiate institution following expected high school graduation, their eligibility should not be reinstated; and
- ii. prospects who participate on a professional team and receive no more than expenses before the first opportunity to enroll, they would be subject to a one-game for one-game withholding penalty not to exceed the loss of one season of eligibility.

For each game played professionally, the prospect would be withheld from one collegiate contest up to the number of allowable games in an NCAA season, currently 28 in men's basketball. These reinstatement conditions become effective August 1, 2003. The current reinstatement condition for prospects or student-athletes who participate on a professional team and receive only expenses is to withhold the individual from a maximum of 20 percent of the number of professional contests played or eight games, whichever is less.

In other action, the Council requested that the Championships/Competition Cabinet and the Men's Basketball Committee study the impact of the new provisional and reclassifying membership timeline on an institution's eligibility to be an automatic qualifier for NCAA championships. Specifically, in men's basketball, it now takes 15 years (seven-year provisional period, eight-year waiting period for automatic qualification) for an institution that joins the NCAA to be eligible to be the automatic qualifier from a conference to the men's basketball championship. The waiting period for an institution that reclassifies to Division I from Division II is 13 years.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

Concerning academic reform, the Board reviewed various recommendations related to the Academic Reform Initiatives, particularly the proposed changes in the academic standards. The Board gave

general support, but expressed concern related to several proposals, including:

- Limiting student-athletes to no more than six remedial hours earned during the freshman year for eligibility purposes. Requiring 40 percent of degree requirements and 100 percent of the minimum GPA required for graduation by the start of the third year of enrollment; and noted that a possible option would be to require a minimum 2.0 GPA for course work taken during the second academic year.
- The impact of a 40 percent of degree requirement standard and the GPA rule on junior college transfer students.
- The frequency of GPA certification (once a year versus each term), administrative inconsistencies in academic reporting procedures, and uncertainty regarding when student-athletes should be declared eligible or ineligible.

Proposal No. 02-39 – Exception for prize money event for Olympic/national teams.

Amended Intent: To provide an exception to the new definition of a professional team (Proposal No. 01-96) to permit prospective and enrolled student-athletes to compete on Olympic or national teams that are competing for prize money, provided the student-athlete does not accept prize money or any other compensation (other than actual and necessary expenses).

**Impact:** *This proposal is consistent with several exceptions that already have been legislatively adopted permitting student-athletes to participate in Olympic and national level competitive activities.*

Proposal No. 02-62 – Basketball – First Contest. Modified the start date for two specified certified events sponsored by the National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC) and Black Coaches Association (BCA).

**Impact:** *Changes the start date for the two events in question to be consistent with other certified events.*

Proposal No. 02-36 – Division I Men’s and Women’s Basketball Issues Committees. At the request of the chair of the existing Basketball Issues Committee, agreed to adopt emergency legislation to establish two, separate 16-voting-member standing Division I Men’s and Women’s Basketball Issues Committees that are exempt from the requirement that no subdivision shall have more than 50 percent representation on any committee and to specify the permanent structure of these committees.

**Impact:** *Standing committees will ensure appropriate attention is given to each sport and its specific issues, being understood that the two groups could meet together when necessary to consider common issues.*

Proposal No. 02-41 – Women’s basketball recruiting calendar – USA Olympic Festival. Intent: In women's basketball, to delete the provision permitting coaches to evaluate prospects during official tryouts for the USA Basketball Olympic Festival.

**Impact:** *The USA Basketball Olympic Festival has been discontinued for several years, and the governing body has indicated that there are no plans to conduct the festival in future years. Thus, it is no longer necessary to provide for an exception to the recruiting calendar to permit coaches to evaluate prospective women’s basketball student-athletes engaging in official tryouts for the festival.*

Proposal No. 02-42 – Men’s basketball recruiting calendar. Intent: In men's basketball, to revise the fall contact period to end on October 5.

**Impact:** *The previous ending date conflicted with the start of practice.*

## **GOVERNANCE SUBCOMMITTEE**

The Governance Subcommittee agreed to review in October draft legislative proposals, which would:

- a. Create a Division I-AA/I-AAA Presidential Governance Committee, which would be composed of one president from each of the 20 Division I-AA and I-AAA conferences represented in the Division I governance structure, to provide input to the seven Division I-AA and I-AAA members of the Board of Directors, who also would represent their conferences on the committee.

*Impact: Gives every Division I-AAA conference a direct line of communication to the Board.*

- b. Establish a “sunset” for legislative proposals that are not forwarded to the Board of Directors within four legislative Management Council meetings, with a provision that the Management Council could extend the timeframe for a particular proposal, if necessary.

*Impact: Eliminates proposals that have been hanging around in the system with little support from the membership.*

- c. Permit alternates for Division I-AA or I-AAA members who are unable to attend a Division I Board of Directors meeting, given the fact that the seven Division I-AA and I-AAA members are representing the interests of the remaining 13 conferences and that the absence of a member is a significant percentage of the Division I-AA/I-AAA representation.

*Impact: Increases Division I-AAA representation at Board meetings.*

Both the Board and the Management Council meet again in October. The October meetings are legislative meetings, so much information will be available before and after the meetings.

## **INTERNATIONAL PROSPECTIVE STUDENT-ATHLETE QUESTIONNAIRE**

The NCAA staff has prepared a questionnaire to help member institutions gather information about potential international student-athletes. The document focuses on a student-athlete's involvement in activities that may result in eligibility issues. This document is not a required form; it is simply a tool to be used in the recruiting process. The questionnaire is [available in Rich Text Format](#), which can be used in most word-processing programs. Also, Form 02-10 (General Amateurism and Eligibility Form for International Student-Athletes) is now available in all three divisions. The form is posted with the other 2002-03 NCAA compliance forms, which are [available online](#).

## **GOVERNANCE**

In January 2001, the NCAA formed an Ad Hoc Review Committee to study the effectiveness of the NCAA governance structure since its establishment in 1997. The committee designed a survey instrument that was distributed to chief executive officers, athletics directors, faculty athletics representatives, and senior woman administrators at NCAA member institutions, and conference officials. Unfortunately, the overall response from the membership was only 34 percent. The responses from athletics directors (54 percent – 564 out of 1,054) were organized by division but were not separated out within Division I.

In essence, the survey was created to obtain responses in three general areas:

1. The effectiveness of the current governance structure;
2. The key issues facing the Association; and
3. The effectiveness of the National office staff in serving the needs of the membership.

*Concerning the effectiveness of the current governance structure, 38 percent of the Division I athletics directors agreed the process is simpler under the new governance structure, 58 percent disagreed, and three percent did not know. Sixty-five percent of the Division I athletics directors agreed that more meetings should be conducted in Indianapolis, 22 percent disagreed, and 11 percent did not know.*

Concerning key issues facing the Association, the maintenance of sound academic standards was the highest priority for the NCAA. Student-athlete welfare, ensuring institutional control, and maintaining sound academic standards were considered the most important core principles by the athletics directors in all divisions, while the three least important core principles were balance in the recruiting process, financial assistance to student-athletes, and limiting time spent on intercollegiate athletics.

Concerning the effectiveness and importance of staff recommending a course of action for addressing issues, approximately 40 percent stated the staff was very effective, while approximately 20 percent stated that this was a very important role for the staff.

The vast majority of respondents liked direct communication with member institutions such as memorandums, e-mails, and overview reports for CEOs as very important. Concerning the reliance placed on the The NCAA News, 90 percent indicated they relied on the printed version more than the Internet version. The survey also reflected a low acceptance rate for “high-tech communication vehicles.”

Following are the biggest concerns identified in the survey:

- As division autonomy grows, the Association as a whole is diminished;
- As the new structure has achieved greater presidential control, a concern exists that overall presidential involvement may be less than it was in the previous structure. In that regard, presidents believe that a greater effort is needed to identify CEOs who have the knowledge and interest to assume leadership roles; and
- CEOs should be more involved in conference affairs.

The next edition of Division I-AAA Legislative Headlines will list the most pressing issues facing the Association, as identified in the survey.



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