REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISON I ACADEMIC CABINET
JUNE 27-28, 2011, MEETING

***KEY ITEMS*.**

1. **Review of NCAA Division I Academic Eligibility Requirements for Two-Year College Transfers.** The NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet continued its discussion of possible changes to two-year college transfer academic requirements. Based on membership and two-year college feedback regarding the most recent draft package of concepts, the cabinet refined the concepts and sponsored legislative proposals for the 2011-12 legislative cycle. Specifically, the cabinet sponsored three separate proposals in this area; increased academic standards, a year of academic preparedness and a new waiver structure.

2. **Review of NCAA Division I Initial-Eligibility Requirements.** The cabinet discussed potential changes to initial-eligibility requirements. The cabinet considered a spectrum of potential changes. Specifically, the cabinet explored increases to the current initial-eligibility model including an increase to the minimum core grade-point average. In addition, the cabinet considered the development of alternative initial-eligibility models.

***ACTION ITEMS*.**

1. **Legislative Items.**

   - None.

2. **Nonlegislative Items.**

   - None.

***INFORMATIONAL ITEMS*.**

1. **Legislative: Cabinet Sponsored Proposals for the 2011-12 Legislative Cycle.**

   a. **Transfer Regulations: Two-Year College Transfer Academic Requirements.**

      (1) Recommendation. The cabinet agreed to sponsor legislation to modify the current two-year college transfer academic requirements as follows:

         (a) Qualifiers.

i. Increase minimum required transferable grade-point average under current NCAA Bylaw 14.5.4.1(b) from 2.000 to 2.500.

ii. Expand current men's basketball physical education activity course limit of two credits under current Bylaw 14.5.4.1.2 to all sports.

(b) Nonqualifiers.

i. Increase minimum required transferable grade-point average under current Bylaw 14.5.4.2(d) from 2.000 to 2.500 for purposes of competition only during the initial year in residence at the four-year institution. Receipt of athletics aid and practice would be permissible if all other transfer requirements are met while presenting a transferable grade-point average at or above a 2.000 but below 2.500.

ii. Expand current men's basketball physical education activity course limit of two credits under current Bylaw 14.5.4.2.4 to all sports.

iii. Amend transferable core-credit requirements under current Bylaw 14.5.4.2(b) to include three semester or four quarter hours of natural/physical science in addition to current English and math requirements.

(c) 4-2-4 Transfers.

- The proposal makes the increased academic standards applicable to 4-2-4 transfers. Specifically, 4-2-4 transfers who were deemed qualifiers would be subject to the 2.500 transferable grade-point average and physical education activity course limits. 4-2-4 transfers who were deemed nonqualifiers would be subject to the 2.500 transferable grade-point average, physical education activity course limits and core-credit requirements (i.e., English, math and science). Transferable credits from the four-year institution and/or two-year institution could be used to meet the core-credit requirements.

(2) Effective Date. In order to assure appropriate notice, an effective date of August 1, 2013, for student-athletes initially enrolling full time at a collegiate institution on or after August 1, 2013, is proposed. This allows for a full year of education after legislative adoption for student-athletes, the two-year college community and the NCAA membership before a student-athlete enters a two-year institution and is subject to the increased standards.

(3) Rationale. The proposed modifications were developed based on current data which indicate transfers from two-year institutions tend to underperform academically at four-year institutions on all academic measures studied by the NCAA [e.g., graduation rates, NCAA Division I Academic Progress Rate (APR), eligibility after initial year in residence, "0/2" rates] compared to transfers from four-year institutions or nontransfers. Additionally, statistical prediction modeling of four-year college outcomes from two-year college academic variables indicated three key predictors of academic success at the four-year institution. The key predictors are: (1) two-year college grade-point average; (2) a low number of physical education activity courses; and (3) successful completion of core credits in English, math, and natural or physical science. High school academic record (e.g., qualifier versus nonqualifier) does not provide additional predictive value once a two-year college academic profile is established and thus the cabinet is recommending increased standards for both qualifiers and nonqualifiers.

The cabinet's decision to raise the minimum grade-point average to compete from 2.000 to 2.500 was based on data indicating that two-year college transfers with grade-point average's below 2.500 experience academic issues at the four-year institution at a higher rate than other students. To mirror the academic outcomes of nontransfer student-athletes or four-year transfer student-athletes in their junior year of enrollment, the minimum grade-point average would need to be raised higher than a 2.500. However, given the other increased standards recommended by the cabinet (e.g., limit on physical education activity courses and the establishment of a core curriculum for nonqualifiers) the cabinet recommends 2.500 as the appropriate grade-point average increase at this time.

The data on physical education activity courses show that student-athletes taking larger numbers of physical education activity courses underperform academically. In addition, the data show that one third of two-year college transfers are transferring nine or more physical education activity courses.

Additionally, the data demonstrate that completion of a core curriculum of English, math and science are predictive of academic success. Therefore, the cabinet is recommending that three credits of natural/physical science be added to the current English and math requirements.

(4) Estimated Budget Impact. None.

(5) Student-Athlete Impact (Academic or Athletic). Establishes legislation that data predicts will assist two-year college student-athletes in achieving academic success at a four-year institution and graduation.

b. Eligibility Requirements – Year of Academic Readiness at Two-Year Collegiate Institution.

(1) Recommendation. The cabinet agreed to sponsor legislation to provide an opportunity for student-athletes who are academically underprepared for four-year college work to engage in a foundational year during their initial year of full-time enrollment at a two-year institution without that year impacting either the student-athlete's five-year clock or benchmark triggers for purposes of percentage-of-degree requirements. Specifically proposed aspects of this year of academic readiness include:

(a) Must occur during first year of enrollment at the two-year institution and during the student-athlete's initial year of collegiate enrollment.

(b) No competition would be allowed during this year of academic readiness, although a student-athlete could practice and receive athletically related financial aid.

(c) Eligibility for use of the year of academic readiness would be based on the student-athlete being certified as a nonqualifier by the NCAA Eligibility Center.

(d) The student-athlete and two-year college would be required to acknowledge through the NCAA Eligibility Center that he/she has used the year of academic readiness during initial year of enrollment at the two-year institution.

(e) A student-athlete's five-year period of eligibility would not be triggered until after the year of academic readiness. Additionally, full-time terms completed during this year of readiness would not

be counted in relation to progress-toward-degree percentage benchmarks. A student-athlete would be considered a full-time college student for purposes of applying additional NCAA legislation.

(f) Student-athletes must attend a two-year college(s) full time for a minimum of five full-time semesters/seven quarters prior to transfer to the Division I institution. Terms of enrollment must be consecutive, although existing exceptions would remain applicable (i.e., military service, Peace Corps, church mission).

(g) On enrollment at an NCAA institution the student-athlete engaging in the year of academic readiness will have two seasons of competition remaining regardless of seasons used at the two-year institution.

(h) For student-athletes engaging in the year of academic readiness, in-person on- or off-campus contact could not occur until the third year of enrollment at a two-year institution.

(i) Student-athletes engaging in the year of academic readiness could receive six years of athletically related financial aid within a seven year period.

(j) Failure to meet all requirements of the year of academic readiness (e.g., competition during first year, transfer prior to five semesters/seven quarters) would result in the year counting for purposes of clock, progress-toward-degree benchmarks and recruiting contacts. Additionally, the student-athlete would no longer be considered to have engaged in the year of academic readiness for purposes of allowing the extended term of athletically related financial aid.

(k) The year of academic readiness will not be considered a denied participation opportunity for purposes of a five-year clock extension request.

(l) This proposal does not impact any current NCAA legislation related to time between high school graduation and enrollment at a two-year institution (e.g., pre-enrollment amateurism, delayed enrollment, plus-one) nor does it impact current legislation regarding multiple two-year college attendance.

(m) All of the conditions and requirements for the year of academic readiness must be met or the student-athlete will trigger the five-year clock and all progress-toward degree requirements on initial full-time collegiate enrollment.

(2) Effective Date. In order to assure appropriate notice, an effective date of August 1, 2013, for student-athletes initially enrolling full time at a collegiate institution on or after August 1, 2013, is proposed.

(3) Rationale. In an effort to assist students who are graduating from high school without foundational academic skills to succeed academically at four-year collegiate institutions, and evidence of current enrollment patterns at two-year institutions on a part time, often self-funded basis by student-athletes in order to engage in remedial coursework, the cabinet puts forward this proposal as means to provide additional time for underprepared student-athletes to gain the academic fundamentals necessary to succeed ultimately in a four-year college. Specifically, the year of academic readiness provides the opportunity for student-athletes who need remediation the means to obtain the academic foundation by allowing for access to aid (federal and athletics), not triggering their NCAA clock or progress-toward-degree standards and appropriately emphasizing an academic focus. The proposal notes the current educational shift toward remediation/foundational learning skill development occurring at the two-year level, since many NCAA institutions do not offer remedial courses. Further, the proposal allows for relative ease of administration and the potential for academic development on an individualized basis that could lead to more academic options upon transfer.

(4) Estimated Budget Impact. None.

(5) Student-Athlete Impact (Academic or Athletics). Provides an opportunity for underprepared student-athletes to gain the academic foundation needed to be academically successful at a four-year institution and graduate.

c. Transfer Regulations – Two-year Transfer – Waivers.

(1) Recommendation. The cabinet agreed to sponsor legislation to expand the NCAA Division I Progress-Toward-Degree Waivers Committee from an eight-member body to a 14-member body and divide the group into two

subcommittees; one authorized to consider progress-toward-degree waiver requests and one addressing two-year college transfer requests.

(2) Effective date. The effective date for the implementation of the waiver subcommittee would be August 1, 2012. This provides time for the waiver subcommittee to be in place, establish guidelines and directives prior to the new legislation taking effect.

(3) Rationale. The focus on the academic preparedness and potential academic success of two-year transfers when transferring to NCAA four-year institutions, as evidenced by the other cabinet proposals, requires waiver appeals be heard by an academic governance body with the appropriate expertise to evaluate such waivers.

(4) Estimated Budget Impact. Minimal in that the current committee only meets by teleconference, not in person.

(5) Student-Athlete Impact (Academic or Athletics). Provides an avenue for assessment of the academic preparedness of two-year college transfers.

d. Six-Semester Transcript Requirement.

(1) Recommendation. The cabinet agreed to sponsor legislation to require prospective student-athletes to submit all official transcripts, representing the first six semesters of high school, to the NCAA Eligibility Center prior to a prospective student-athlete's signing of a National Letter of Intent (NLI) or an institution's written offer of financial aid. Violations would be considered de minimis and not affect a prospective student-athlete's eligibility. Further, prospective student-athletes from foreign countries and home schooled prospective student-athletes would be excluded from the requirement.

(2) Effective Date. August 1, 2012. This will ensure consistent application of the legislation to all prospective student-athletes and provide appropriate notice.

(3) Rationale. Previous proposals, including NCAA Division I Proposal No. 2006-46-A, have been adopted with the intent of improving the academic information shared between prospective student-athletes and institutions, as well as with the NCAA Eligibility Center. This proposal is intended to continue this pattern of facilitating academic information sharing in a timely manner while minimizing overall administrative burden. Ensuring

six semesters of transcripts are available for evaluation prior to signing of an NLI or an institution's written offer of financial aid will allow for identification of potential academic issues regarding NCAA initial-eligibility requirements and timely discussion of academically sound potential solutions. Additionally, prospective student-athletes who are able to take advantage of early academic certification will be identified and processed in a manner that will allow for campus and NCAA resources to be appropriately allocated in relation to final eligibility certifications.

(4) Estimated Budget Impact. None.

(5) Student-Athlete Impact (Academic or Athletics). Allows for early identification of potential academic issues to assist prospective student-athletes.

2. Nonlegislative.

a. Review of Division I Initial-Eligibility Requirements. The cabinet discussed potential changes to initial-eligibility requirements. The most current data were presented to inform the cabinet's discussion. Discussion centered on the full spectrum of potential changes, including a review of previously discussed options.

In reviewing the spectrum of potential changes, the cabinet noted interest in having presidential/NCAA Division I Board of Directors input prior to the cabinet formalizing any specific proposal. Specifically, the cabinet noted the option to pursue specific changes to the current initial-eligibility model (e.g., core course taking patterns, increased grade-point average) as juxtaposed to the development of alternative initial-eligibility models which could represent fundamental and significant change from the current initial-eligibility model.

The cabinet expressed initial preference for an alternative, multi-category model for initial eligibility. This model could continue the current nonqualifier distinction resulting in student-athletes who are nonqualifers being ineligible for competition, practice and athletically related financial aid. The model also could establish a category of prospective student-athletes whose secondary academic record clearly identifies them as prepared to be academically successful, and therefore, eligible for athletics aid, full practice and competition as an entering freshman. This could be based on six-semester certification standards. Prospective student-athletes who were not identified as nonqualifers or meeting

the standard to be clearly prepared to be academically successful, would be eligible for athletics aid and limited practice as entering freshman. These student-athletes could also meet specific additional academic profiles that evidence likelihood of academic success to earn the ability to engage in full practice activities and competition (e.g., through additional academic assessments like writing and reading exams academic preparedness could be demonstrated).

b. **Initial-Eligibility Waivers and Prospective Student-Athlete Reviews.** The cabinet received a report on the number and outcome of initial-eligibility waivers indicating that the NCAA academic and membership affairs staff has reviewed 573 initial-eligibility waivers for 2010-11. In addition, the academic and membership affairs staff has processed 298 prospective student-athlete review cases.

In addition, the cabinet approved an initial-eligibility waiver directive to guide the NCAA staff and NCAA Division I Initial-Eligibility Waivers Committee's review of initial-eligibility waivers that centered on academic preparedness of student-athletes on enrollment at an NCAA member institution.

c. **Progress-Toward-Degree Waivers.** The cabinet received a report regarding progress-toward-degree waivers indicating that the academic and membership affairs staff processed 577 requests for the 2010-11 academic year.

d. **Academic Fraud.** The cabinet was provided an update on the review of current NCAA legislation, interpretations and policies related to academic fraud committed by student-athletes, including feedback gathered from the membership during seminars, focus group calls and meetings at National Association of Academic Advisors for Athletics (N4A). The cabinet will continue to examine issues related to academic fraud.

e. **Academic Eligibility Waiver Policies and Procedures.** The cabinet approved changes to the Initial-Eligibility Waivers Committee Policies and Procedures and Progress-Toward-Degree Waivers Committee Policies and Procedures. The primary updates included removal of minimum threshold language and redefining quorum for appeal teleconferences in the Initial-Eligibility Waivers Committee Policies and Procedures.

f. **Academic Cabinet Policies and Procedures.** The cabinet approved amendments to its policies and procedures to properly reflect the duties and makeup of the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet Administrative Committee and to modify its selection of a cabinet chair to more closely align with policies and procedures within the Division I governance structure generally.

g. Discussion of High School All-Star Game Limits. The cabinet discussed the current high school all-star game limits in response to a third-party request to sponsor a proposal to eliminate current restrictions. The cabinet declined to sponsor a proposal to either eliminate or lessen the restrictions noting the potential academic impact.

h. Election of New Chair and Administrative Committee. The cabinet elected Herman Holt; Faculty Athletics Representative, University of North Carolina, Ashville, Big South Conference, as chair. In addition, the cabinet appointed Herman Holt, Carolyn Callahan, Faculty Athletics Representative, University of Virginia, Atlantic Coast Conference and Jackie Mynarski, Senior Compliance Administrator, Mid-American Conference as the Administrative Committee.

Committee Chair: Carolyn Callahan, University of Virginia, Atlantic Coast Conference
Cabinet Liaisons: Diane Dickman, Academic and Membership Affairs
Alex Smith, Academic and Membership Affairs
Jennifer Strawley, Academic and Membership Affairs