REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION I ACADEMIC CABINET
JUNE 11-12, 2012, MEETING

***KEY ITEMS*.**

1. **Review of NCAA Division I Progress-Toward-Degree Standards.** The NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet continued its review of progress-toward-degree standards and examined research regarding college academic outcomes of student-athletes. The cabinet determined not to recommend changes to grade-point average and credit hour requirements at this time. The cabinet also discussed the possibility of reducing or eliminating some legislative requirements for academically high-achieving student-athletes who are in their third collegiate year or beyond. The cabinet will continue this discussion in September.

2. **Review of Early Academic Certification and Obvious Waiver Standards.** The cabinet reviewed data regarding the current application of the early academic initial-eligibility certification standard and recommended amending the standard. The cabinet noted that amending the early academic certification standard as suggested would maximize early certification decisions for those prospective student-athletes who are nearly certain to meet the eight-semester standard. Additionally, the cabinet reviewed data regarding the obvious waiver standard and a data-based tool to assist in analyzing initial-eligibility waivers. The cabinet modified the obvious waiver standard effective immediately which expands the pool of prospective student-athletes for which a waiver would not need to be filed. The new criteria continue to ensure that these prospective student-athlete's academic profiles predict academic success in the first academic year.

***ACTION ITEMS*.**

1. **Legislative Items.**

   a. **Revision of student-host prohibition to include academic redshirt.**

      (1) Recommendation. The Academic Cabinet recommends the NCAA Division I Legislative Council adopt noncontroversial legislation expanding the current prohibition against nonqualifiers serving as student hosts to include academic redshirts.

      (2) Effective Date. August 1, 2016, for students initially enrolling full time in a collegiate institution on or after August 1, 2016.

(3) Rationale. As a result of the newly adopted initial-eligibility standards, the cabinet reviewed all legislation where classification of the student-athlete as a qualifier or nonqualifier is referenced. Student-athletes, who meet the new initial-eligibility standards for academic redshirts, while allowed to practice during their first academic year in residence at the institution, should be primarily focused on academics during this year to maximize academic outcomes. Therefore, additional activities that could potentially impact this academic focus, such as serving as a student host, should be eliminated where possible.

(4) Estimated Budget Impact. None.

(5) Student-Athlete Impact. None.

b. Revision of the two-year transfer standard for athletically related financial aid and practice.

(1) Recommendation. The Academic Cabinet recommends the Legislative Council adopt noncontroversial legislation amending NCAA Division I Bylaw 14.5.4.2 from not a qualifier to nonqualifiers to specify that only nonqualifers are ineligible for practice and financial aid if two-year college transfer standards are not satisfied.

(2) Effective Date. August 1, 2016, for students initially enrolling full time in a collegiate institution on or after August 1, 2016.

(3) Rationale. As a result of the newly adopted initial-eligibility standards, the cabinet reviewed all legislation where classification of the student-athlete as a qualifier or nonqualifier is referenced. Two-year transfer standards for athletically related financial aid and practice, set forth in Bylaw 14.5.4.2.2 (eligibility for financial aid and practice), specifies that a transfer student from a two-year college who was "not a qualifier" (per Bylaw 14.3.1.1) is eligible for institutional financial aid and practice during the first academic year in residence only if the student meets certain academic provisions. Student-athletes who are classified as academic redshirts are eligible to receive athletically related financial aid and practice during their initial academic year if initially enrolled at an NCAA Division I institution. To the same extent that athletically related financial aid and practice remain available for qualifiers who choose to initially enroll in a two-year institution and do not meet the two-year transfer academic requirements upon transfer, it should remain applicable to academic redshirts without the need to meet another academic standard.

(4) Estimated Budget Impact. None.

(5) Student-Athlete Impact. None.

c. Early academic certification standard.

(1) Recommendation. The Academic Cabinet recommends the Legislative Council adopt noncontroversial legislation to modify Bylaw 14.3.1.1.1 (exception – early academic certification). Specifically, the cabinet recommends that the existing legislation be modified in the following manner:

(a) Decrease the current minimum combined score on the SAT critical reading and math sections from 1000 to 900;

(b) Decrease the current minimum sum score on the ACT from 85 to 75;

(c) Maintain the current core-course grade-point average requirement of 3.000 or higher (based on a maximum of 4.000);

(d) Increase the number of core courses from 13 to 14 on completion of six semesters (or the equivalent); and

(e) Require the successful completion of two additional core courses in the areas of English, math and natural or physical science such that the subject area requirement is three core courses in English, two core courses in math, two core courses in natural or physical science *and* two core courses in English, math or natural or physical science.

(2) Effective Date. August 1, 2013.

(3) Rationale. The cabinet reviewed research regarding early academic certifications and the college outcomes of students who meet the current and recommended new standard. Amending the early academic certification standard in the manner recommended would maximize early certification decisions for those prospective student-athletes who are nearly certain to meet the eight-semester standard. The recommended new standard ensures appropriate academic rigor and achievement at the six semester mark to ensure, with a high degree of certainty, early college success academically.

(4) Estimated Budget Impact. None.

(5) Student-Athlete Impact. None.

2. Nonlegislative Items.

- None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. Legislative.

- None.

2. Nonlegislative.

a. Report of the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet. The cabinet reviewed the report of the February 2012, meeting and April 2012, teleconference.

b. Report of the NCAA Division I Board of Directors Meeting. The cabinet reviewed the report of the April 2012, meeting.

c. Report of the NCAA Division I Committee on Academic Performance. The cabinet reviewed the reports of the February and April 2012, meetings and March 2012, teleconference.

d. Additional Division I Cabinet/Council Updates. The cabinet reviewed the most recent reports of additional Division I cabinets and councils.

e. Review of Legislation and Interpretations. The cabinet reviewed the status of proposals sponsored or requested by the cabinet and proposals reviewed by the cabinet in the 2011-12 legislative cycle. Additionally, the cabinet reviewed interpretations published since the last cabinet meeting with an academic focus.

f. NCAA International Student Records Committee Update. The cabinet reviewed the reports of the March 2012, meeting and May 2012, teleconference.

g. NCAA Eligibility Center Update. The cabinet received an update regarding current certification and high school reviews as well as a timeline of transition from their current physical location to the NCAA national office. Additionally,

information regarding the latest "chalk talk" webinar and priority processing was provided.

h. **NCAA Division I Academic Progress Rate (APR) Release Update.** The cabinet was provided the current timeline for release of APR information.

i. **Two-Year/NCAA Working Group Update.** The cabinet was provided an update of the working group tasked with reviewing potential concepts that may assist academically underprepared prospective student-athletes. The group will hold its first in-person meeting June 26.

j. **Review NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet Policies and Procedures.** The cabinet reviewed and approved their policies and procedures, noting no additional substantive changes since last approved during the February 2012 meeting. These policies are provided in Supplement No. 14 in the cabinet's meeting materials.

k. **Prospective Student-Athlete Reviews.** The cabinet received a report on the number and outcome of prospective student-athlete review cases. During the June 1, 2011 to April 30, 2012 timeframe, the academic and membership affairs staff processed 110 Division I prospective student-athlete review cases.

The cabinet also reviewed the report of the NCAA Division I Student Records Review Committee April and May 2012, teleconferences, and approved the Student Records Review Committee Policies and Procedures and an updated trigger list. Additionally, the cabinet approved a prospective student-athlete review directive to guide the NCAA staff and Student Records Review Committee in the review of prospective student-athlete review cases. The directive places emphasis on the validity of a prospective student-athlete's academic credentials for the purpose of meeting initial-eligibility requirements The directive is provided in Supplement No. 22 of the cabinet's meeting materials.

l. **Initial-Eligibility Waiver and Progress-Toward-Degree Waiver Statistics**. The cabinet received a report on the number and outcome of initial-eligibility waivers indicating that the NCAA academic and membership affairs staff reviewed 571 Division I initial-eligibility waivers in the July 1, 2011 to May 16, 2012 period.

In addition, the academic and membership affairs staff processed 511 Division I progress-toward-degree waiver requests for the period of July 1, 2011 through May 16, 2012.

m. Summer Athletic Activities in Men's Basketball. The cabinet reviewed legislation adopted January 2012 that permits men's basketball student-athletes to participate in eight hours per week of required weight training, conditioning and skill-related instruction during an eight-week period during the summer without enrollment in summer school, provided certain academic conditions are satisfied. The cabinet noted that institutions have the opportunity to seek relief from these academic components through the legislative relief waiver process; however, the cabinet recommended that the NCAA Division I Legislative Council Subcommittee for Legislative Relief deny such legislative relief waivers, given the intent of the summer access legislation. The cabinet will review all cases processed during its June 2013 meeting.

n. Initial Eligibility and Two-Year College Educational Outreach Initiatives. The cabinet received an update on educational outreach initiatives related to the initial-eligibility and two-year college transfers standards adopted during the 2011-12 academic year. A comprehensive educational outreach plan has been developed that considers and addresses the concerns of member institutions, athletics conferences, high school administrators and coaches, the two-year college community, prospective student-athletes and outside professional organizations regarding the impact of the newly adopted academic legislation. The cabinet encouraged staff to continue to seek collaborative relationships with member institutions, high schools and two-year colleges in an effort to facilitate the sharing of information and resources with key constituents.

o. Academic Redshirt Status Relative to Current Qualifier/Nonqualifier Legislation. The cabinet reviewed current recruiting and transfer legislation based on qualifier status in light of the academic redshirt standard effective August 1, 2016. The cabinet agreed that current references to qualifier, nonqualifier and not a qualifier be maintained except in reference to student hosts, where it was agreed that the prohibition be expanded to academic redshirts, and in reference to eligibility for athletics aid and practice for two-year transfers, where it was agreed that the applicable bylaw reference only nonqualifiers due to an academic redshirt's initial-eligibility status allowing for aid and practice if initially enrolled at a four-year institution. Legislative changes were recommended in action items for both of these bylaws.

p. Application of 10 Core-Course Initial-Eligibility Requirement to Prospective Student-Athletes with a Diagnosed Education-Impacting Disability. The cabinet discussed the application of the 10 core-course requirement set forth in Bylaw 14.3.1.1 (qualifier), a component of the new initial-eligibility standard for competition, to prospective student-athletes with a diagnosed education-impacting disability. The cabinet determined that, effective August 2016, a prospective student-athlete's inability to satisfy the 10 core-course requirement due to his or

her education-impacting disability should be reviewed in the initial-eligibility waiver process. As such, the NCAA Division I Initial-Eligibility Waivers Committee can determine specifically how the prospective student-athlete's education-impacting disability may or may not have a direct impact on the 10 core-course requirement and make an individualized assessment about whether the deficiency should be waived or not. The cabinet recommended that it assess the impact of the 10 core-course requirement on prospective student-athletes with a diagnosed education-impacting disability after the 2016-17 academic year and determine whether further discussion is necessary.

q. **NCAA Eligibility Center Obvious Waiver Standard.** The cabinet reviewed the current obvious waiver standard which, if achieved, allows a prospective student-athlete to be certified as a qualifier via an automatic waiver despite not having satisfied the minimum initial-eligibility requirements. Currently, to receive an obvious waiver, a prospective student-athlete must present a maximum core-course deficiency of one unit and a core-course grade-point average that corresponds with his or her standardized test score on a sliding scale that, relative to the initial-eligibility index set forth in Bylaw 14.3.1.1.2 (initial-eligibility index), requires a core-course grade-point average that is approximately .900 grade point units higher for a given test score.

Following a review of data provided by the NCAA research staff, the cabinet noted that there are a number of student-athletes who clearly demonstrate a likelihood of academic success during their initial year of collegiate enrollment at a member institution, but who present a core-course deficiency greater than one unit. Effective immediately, the cabinet amended the obvious waiver standard to allow for a maximum core-course deficiency of two units, with a maximum one-unit deficiency in any given subject area. The cabinet agreed that the current obvious waiver sliding scale remain unchanged but that possible adjustments to the scale be reviewed prior to the 2013-14 academic year.

r. **Initial-Eligibility Waiver Directive.** The cabinet revisited the initial-eligibility waiver directive approved February 2012. During its February meeting, the cabinet had supported a process that takes into account a data-based analysis of a student-athlete's likelihood of academic success during his or her first year of full-time collegiate enrollment at a member institution. As such, the cabinet was presented with a quantitative prediction model that takes into consideration a student-athlete's core-course grade-point average, standardized test score, total number of core-course units, total number of core-course units in English, math and natural or physical science, total number of core-course units earned during grade 12, and the interaction between the total number of core-course units earned and the core-course grade-point average.

The cabinet expressed support for the model and encouraged staff and the Initial Eligibility Waivers Committee, in analyzing initial-eligibility waiver cases, to weigh the likelihood of a student-athlete's academic success relative to the mitigating circumstances presented as reasons for the initial-eligibility deficiency. The cabinet amended the February 2012 initial-eligibility waiver directive to allow a more favorable review of initial-eligibility waiver cases involving academically high-achieving student-athletes who clearly demonstrate a likelihood of academic success during the initial year of full-time collegiate enrollment. The cabinet approved the revised initial-eligibility waiver directive and encouraged the use of the data-based analysis tool during the 2012-13 academic year. The initial-eligibility waiver directive was amended by the cabinet and is attached to this report.

s. **Two-Year College Transfer Waiver Directive.** The cabinet reviewed and approved a two-year college transfer waiver directive to guide the academic and membership affairs staff and the NCAA Division I Two-Year Transfer Waivers Subcommittee in the review of two-year college transfer waivers. Per the directive, institutions seeking a two-year transfer waiver on behalf of a student-athlete for relief of Bylaws 14.5.4 (two-year transfers) and 14.5.6 (4-2-4 college transfers) must present evidence of a likelihood of academic success at the four-year collegiate institution, as well as compelling mitigating circumstances for the deficiency. In assessing a student-athlete's likelihood of academic success, the cabinet supported consideration of the student-athlete's two-year college grade-point average in transferable credit hours and his or her successful completion of transferable credit hours in English, math and natural and/or physical science. The directive is provided in Supplement No. 29 in the cabinet's meeting materials.

t. **Progress-Toward-Degree Waiver Directive.** The cabinet reviewed and approved the Progress-Toward-Degree Waiver Directive to guide the academic and membership affairs staff and the NCAA Division I Progress-Toward-Degree Waivers Subcommittee in its review of progress-toward-degree waivers. The cabinet noted that there have been no changes to the Progress-Toward-Degree Waiver Directive in the most recent academic year. The directive is provided in Supplement No. 26 in the cabinet's meeting materials.

u. **Academic Eligibility Waiver Policies and Procedures.** The cabinet approved the NCAA Division I Initial Eligibility Waivers Committee Policies and Procedures and NCAA Division Progress-Toward-Degree Waivers Committee Policies and Procedures. The cabinet supported and approved amendments to the decision language in the Initial-Eligibility Waivers Committee Policies and Procedures in an effort to mirror the decision language in the Initial-Eligibility Waivers Committee's Initial-Eligibility Waiver Directive. There were no changes to the Progress-Toward-Degree Policies and Procedures. The two policies are

provided in Supplement Nos. 15 and 16 respectively in the cabinet's meeting materials.

v. Progress-Toward-Degree Standards Review. The cabinet continued its review of progress-toward-degree standards and examined research regarding college academic outcomes of student-athletes. The cabinet noted the importance of maintaining progress-toward-degree standards that increase the likelihood of graduation within a five-year period and discussed several options for increasing progress-toward-degree standards, including increasing the required cumulative grade-point average to 2.000 for each academic year of collegiate enrollment and/or requiring the successful completion of nine-semester hours or eight-quarters hours of academic credit during each term of full-time collegiate enrollment. The cabinet indicated that given all other recent academic changes, it did not support increased progress-toward degree standards at this time.

Additionally, the cabinet discussed the possibility of providing academically high-achieving student-athletes with relief from some of the legislative progress-toward degree requirements. Specifically, the cabinet will review if greater flexibility can be provided during the junior and senior year for student-athletes who have demonstrated academic success and are clearly on track to graduate, possibly within four years for example. The cabinet will further examine the possibility of reducing the certification burden for academically high-achieving student-athletes during its September meeting.

w. Four-Year College Transfer Standards Review. The cabinet engaged in a preliminary discussion regarding potential modifications to the current four-year college transfer requirements. The cabinet discussed the significance of the academic year in residence, the potential creation of research-based academic requirements for transfers, the need for sport-specific transfer requirements and the impact that the act of transferring has on individual and team academic success. The cabinet asked the staff to provide additional research related to four-year college transfers and will continue its discussion in September.

x. Eligibility for Postseason Competition between Terms for Multiple-Round Events. The cabinet continued its discussion regarding the application of academic eligibility bylaws relative to multiple-round postseason competition where the competition may begin during a regular academic term, but distinct rounds may occur between terms. The cabinet expressed concern that a student-athlete, under current legislation, may engage in NCAA championship or other postseason activity after failing to successfully complete progress-toward degree requirements during the preceding regular academic term. Additionally, the cabinet noted the ability for student-athletes under current legislation to continue to compete in regular season competition between terms based on the timing of

official certification of ineligibility up to the first day of classes for the next term. The cabinet requested the staff provide specific legislative concepts that could result in earlier required certification of ineligibility between terms that could be applicable regardless of competition for review during its September meeting.

y. **NCAA Division I Institutional Performance Program**. The cabinet received an update and provided feedback on the development of the NCAA Division I Institutional Performance Program, which shall serve to assist member institutions in reviewing their athletics programs based on identified measures that align with the core values and principles of the NCAA, as well as the institution's mission. Discussion centered on the program's efforts to assess issues related to academics, fiscal matters, gender, diversity and the student-athlete experience. The cabinet noted that membership feedback will continue to be solicited throughout the 2012-13 academic year.

z. **NCAA Working Group on the Collegiate Model -- Rules.** The cabinet received an update on the NCAA Working Group on the Collegiate Model -- Rules and provided feedback on the principles developed for NCAA Division I Bylaw 14. The cabinet supported the creation of an operating bylaw focused exclusively on academic legislation and encouraged the movement of legislation that does not directly support academic success to other operating bylaws. To this end, the cabinet encouraged the merging of the bylaws that govern the NCAA Division I Academic Performance Program with those that regulate the academic performance of student-athletes.

In addition, the cabinet provided feedback on the potential elimination of legislation that is directly supported by institutional academic policy. The cabinet was in agreement that legislation that is inconsequential or directly accounted for by institutional academic policy should not be in included in the NCAA Division I Manual.

The cabinet engaged in preliminary discussions regarding the need to define academic fraud. Additionally, the cabinet acknowledged the need to identify the appropriate role of the NCAA in investigating and resolving allegations of a violation of academic integrity. The cabinet asked that the issue of academic fraud be addressed at a future meeting.

aa. **NCAA Enforcement Working Group.** The cabinet received an update on the NCAA Enforcement Working Group and provided feedback. The cabinet commended the working group's progress with creating a multilevel NCAA rules violation structure, an enhanced penalty structure for NCAA rules infractions and for making efforts to expedite cases. The cabinet supported the creation of

penalty guidelines for Level I and II cases and noted that predictability, consistency and transparency should be mainstays of the enforcement process. Discussion centered on the need to define shared responsibility and engage in regular communication with Working Group on the Collegiate Model - Rules. The cabinet provided feedback on the concept of shared responsibility and noted that defining the roles and responsibilities of member institutions, conferences and the national office will be critical to future success.

bb. Election of New Chair and Administrative Committee Update. The cabinet elected Ken White, faculty athletics representative, Utah State University, Western Athletic Conference, as chair. In his capacity as chair, Ken also replaces Herman Holt, faculty athletics representative, University of North Carolina, Ashville, Big South Conference, on the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet Administrative Committee.

Committee Chair: Herman Holt, Jr., University of North Carolina, Asheville, Big South Conference
Staff Liaisons: Diane Dickman, Academic and Membership Affairs
Alex Smith, Academic and Membership Affairs
Jennifer Strawley, Academic and Membership Affairs

NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet June 11-12, 2012, Meeting	
ATTENDEES	**ABSENTEES**
Carray Banks, Norfolk State University, Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference	David Williams, Vanderbilt University, Southeastern Conference
John Bruno, The Ohio State University, Big Ten Conference	
Thomas Burman, University of Wyoming, Mountain West Conference	
Carolyn Callahan, University of Virginia, Atlantic Coast Conference	
Barbara Church, Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference	
David Dosser, East Carolina University, Conference USA	
Eric Hall, Elon University, Southern Conference	
Rhonda Hatcher, Texas Christian University, Big 12 Conference	

Donna Heinel, University of Southern California, Pacific-12 Conference	
Herman Holt, Jr., University of North Carolina, Asheville, Big South Conference	
Loretta Lamar, United States Naval Academy, Patriot League	
Deland Myers, North Dakota State University, Summit League	
Jackie Mynarski, Mid-American Conference	
Annette O'Connor, LaSalle University, Atlantic 10 Conference	
Cinnamon Sheffield, University of North Texas, Sun Belt Conference	
Sean Simmons, Robert Morris University, Northeast Conference	
Shannon Strahl, Gonzaga University, West Coast Conference	
Lloyd Taylor, The Citadel, Southern Conference	
Bradley Teague, University of Central Arkansas, Southland Conference	
Kaitlyn Vincek, Eastern Michigan University, Mid-American Conference, Student-Athlete Advisory Committee	
Ken White, Utah State University, Western Atlantic Conference	
Elaine Wise, University of Louisville, Big East Conference	
NCAA staff liaisons in attendance: Diane Dickman, Alex Smith and Jennifer Strawley	
Additional NCAA staff in attendance: Jackie Campbell, Andrew Cardamone, Stephanie Castera, Steve Clar, Shauna Cobb, Greg Dana, Gary deCastro, Doug Healey, Michelle Hosick, Juliette Kenny, Kevin Lennon, Andrew Louthain, Binh Nguyen, Tom Paskus, Todd Petr, Bill Regan, Lisa Roesler, Tiese Roxbury, Dave Schnase, John Shukie, Laura Wurtz and Kathryn Yurk.	

ACADEMIC AND MEMBERSHIP AFFAIRS
STUDENT-ATHLETE ACADEMIC WAIVER TEAM DIRECTIVE
INITIAL-ELIGIBILITY WAIVERS

1. Overview.

The legislated initial-eligibility standards establish a minimal level of academic achievement necessary to receive athletically related financial aid, practice and compete in a student-athlete's first year of full-time collegiate enrollment at a four-year NCAA Division I or Division II institution. If a student-athlete fails to satisfy these standards, the presumption is that he or she is not adequately academically prepared for the rigors of athletics competition and/or practice in the first year of full-time collegiate enrollment. In creating the initial-eligibility standards, the Divisions I and II membership have determined the baseline standards that a student-athlete should meet in order to be academically eligible. These standards are used as a proxy for the academic readiness of a student to be academically successful during the first year of full-time collegiate enrollment at a four-year NCAA institution. As it is a proxy, there may be instances where a student-athlete has demonstrated that he or she is academically prepared to succeed at a four-year NCAA institution but has not met the legislated standards.

The goal of the initial-eligibility waiver process is to provide student-athletes relief from the legislated initial-eligibility standards in cases where such relief is warranted. This document outlines the cases for which relief may be granted. Institutions seeking an initial-eligibility waiver on behalf of a student-athlete for relief of NCAA Bylaws 14.3.1.2 (core-curriculum requirement) and/or 14.3.1.3 (test-score/grade-point average requirement) must present evidence as outlined herein.

The NCAA Division I Board of Directors has adopted legislation that raises the initial academic eligibility standards for competition, effective August 1, 2016, reinforcing the importance of academic readiness for entering Division I student-athletes. Therefore, within the initial-eligibility waiver process, the threshold for full relief (i.e., receipt of athletically related financial aid, practice *and competition*) will be set correspondingly high.

2. Initial-Eligibility Data Analysis.

Initial academic eligibility standards have been set based on the extensive review of longitudinal data regarding the academic success of student-athletes. Similarly, the initial-eligibility waiver process will take into account a data-based analysis of a student-athlete's likelihood of academic success in his or her first year at an NCAA institution based on the student-athlete's core-course grade-point average, core-course units, standardized test score and other academic factors. NCAA staff will employ this research-based academic formula as part of its analysis of waiver requests to determine whether relief is warranted.

3. Academic Criteria Considered.

a. In addition to the aforementioned data-based analysis, NCAA staff may consider the following components of a student-athlete's academic record.

(1) All SAT/ACT exams, including residual exams administered on campus or subject-area exams (e.g., SAT Subject Tests).

(2) Performance in college courses completed prior to initial full-time enrollment.

(3) Performance on institutional placement exams.

(4) Student-athlete's collegiate course schedule, including placement level.

(5) The history and timing of completed core courses during the student-athlete's secondary-school enrollment.

(6) For international student-athletes from exam-based countries, year-to-year performance as indicated on official transcripts.

(7) Other elements of a student-athlete's academic record as determined by staff on a case-by-case basis. Such elements may include:

(a) The rigor of the courses taken by the student-athlete.

(b) Trending of the student-athlete's academic performance throughout his or her high school years.

b. The following academic credentials will NOT be considered as part of an initial-eligibility waiver:

(1) Coursework that does not satisfy the legislated definition of a core course. For example, if a student-athlete completes coursework that is deemed not core through the core-course review process, this coursework will not be considered as part of the initial-eligibility waiver.

(2) Coursework that was invalidated through the prospective student-athlete review (PSA Review) process. For example, if a student takes courses that are subsequently invalidated through the PSA Review process and, therefore, not used in the initial-eligibility certification process, this coursework will not be considered as part of the initial-eligibility waiver.

(3) College-level coursework. Although the staff may consider documentation regarding the student-athlete's potential to be successful at a collegiate institution, it cannot consider coursework completed as a full-time college student unless that coursework is acceptable coursework for initial-eligibility purposes. In the context of a conditional waiver, the staff may condition relief on the attainment of a certain academic record during the student-athlete's first full-time term of collegiate enrollment.

4. Required Documentation.

Institutions are required to provide, at a minimum, the following supporting documentation with all initial-eligibility waiver requests:

a. A completed initial-eligibility waiver application via the AMA Online Case Management System;

b. All SAT and/or ACT scores, including any scores not listed on the NCAA Eligibility Center final certification report;

c. Letters or statements from the institution and student-athlete explaining the reasons for the deficiency;

d. Evidence of the student-athlete's academic record as outlined in Section 2 Initial-Eligibility Data Analysis section;

e. Evidence of the compelling mitigating circumstance(s), if any, supporting the waiver request;

f. The student-athlete's final certification report from the NCAA Eligibility Center website, if applicable;

g. A copy of the student-athlete's transcript from each high school program attended; and

h. If applicable, an academic support plan that demonstrates how the student-athlete's individual efforts, course-schedule planning and use of academic resources [including appropriate accommodations for any education-impacting disability (EID)], will position the student-athlete to succeed academically during his or her initial year of full-time collegiate enrollment. An acceptable academic support plan must be signed by both the student-athlete and an institutional representative with academic oversight for the student-athlete.

An academic support plan is required in all cases for which the high school core-course grade-point average is below 2.300. In addition, the NCAA staff reserves the right to require an academic support plan be submitted for any initial-eligibility waiver.

5. Information to Be Considered.

When reviewing an initial-eligibility waiver, the staff may consider any information submitted by the applicant institution. In addition to the required supporting documents, the following may be provided or requested by the staff:

a. Letters of recommendation or support;

b. Student-athlete's signed, written statement;

c. For waivers other than EID waivers, case precedent provided by the applicant institution;

d. Evidence of misadvisement or a lack of advisement by the student-athlete's high school or by an NCAA member institution; and

e. Other information as requested.

6. Staff Decisions.

In analyzing all initial-eligibility waiver cases, the staff will review the student-athlete's academic record and weigh the student-athlete's academic record against the initial-eligibility deficiency and the mitigating circumstances presented as reasons for that deficiency.

a. Approvals.

As noted in the overview of the directive, the threshold for receipt of a full approval is high for Division I student-athletes in light of the recently adopted increase in initial-eligibility standards. The staff is granted the authority to approve waivers of initial-eligibility requirements as follows:

(1) When an academically high-achieving student-athlete failed to meet the prescribed initial-eligibility standards, but his or her academic record reflects a level of academic achievement that clearly demonstrates he or

she is academically prepared for college-level work, as supported by NCAA data, and mitigating circumstances are presented that adversely impacted the student-athlete's ability to satisfy initial-eligibility requirements; or

(2) When mitigating circumstances for a deficiency are presented such that absent those circumstances, it is clearly evident that initial-eligibility requirements would have been met.

(3) Special Circumstances: Rarely, circumstances surrounding a waiver request are so unusual that the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet and NCAA Division II Academic Requirements Committee have authorized a "staff special" approval. These are unlikely to ever be replicated given the highly unusual nature of the circumstances, but warrant relief. Such cases are reported annually for review to the Academic Cabinet and Academic Requirements Committee.

b. Partial Approvals.

The staff is granted the authority to partially approve waivers of initial-eligibility requirements in those circumstances that do not meet the criteria for either approval or denial.

(1) Partial Approvals for Athletically Related Financial Aid Only. When a student-athlete's academic record, based on the use of data analysis noted, does not project a likelihood of academic success during the initial year of full-time collegiate enrollment, but there are mitigating circumstances present to warrant a partial waiver of initial-eligibility requirements, a waiver may be partially approved to permit the receipt of athletically related financial aid only.

(2) Partial Approvals for Athletically Related Financial Aid and Practice. When a student-athlete's academic record, based on the use of data analysis noted, demonstrates a likelihood of academic success during the initial year of full-time collegiate enrollment, and there are mitigating circumstances present to warrant a partial waiver of initial-eligibility requirements, a waiver may be partially approved for athletically related financial aid and practice.

The staff is also granted the authority to partially approve a waiver to allow for receipt of athletically related financial aid and limited participation in practice activities when his or her academic record, based

on the data analysis noted, minimally demonstrates a likelihood of academic success during the initial year of full-time collegiate enrollment, but there are mitigating circumstances present to warrant such a partial waiver of initial-eligibility requirements.

c. Conditional Approvals.

The staff is granted the authority to conditionally provide relief for waivers of initial-eligibility requirements as follows:

(1) When a student-athlete graduates from high school and enrolls early in a collegiate institution; and

(2) When the student-athlete's academic record demonstrates his or her academic readiness for college-level work, staff may partially approve an initial-eligibility waiver for the student-athlete to receive athletically related financial aid during the initial term of enrollment.

Further, the staff may condition partial approval of a waiver to permit athletically related financial aid and practice during the following term, or full approval of the waiver on the successful completion of academic requirements as determined by staff during the student-athlete's initial term in residence.

d. Denials.

The staff is granted the authority to deny waivers of initial-eligibility requirements as follows:

- When a student-athlete's academic record does not meet the legislated standards for initial eligibility and:

  (a) No mitigating circumstances are presented;

  (b) The mitigating circumstances are insufficient or do not tie directly to the deficiency; and/or

  (c) The student-athlete's academic record does not warrant partial relief.

7. Written Misadvisement Plans.

Misadvisement and lack of advisement by member institutions and high schools is not, unto itself, sufficient mitigation to warrant a full approval of initial-eligibility standards. In order for misadvisement and/or lack of advisement to serve as sufficient mitigation to warrant a full approval of initial-eligibility standards, the documentation received must *clearly demonstrate* that the student-athlete would have satisfied all initial-eligibility requirements absent the misadvisement and/or lack of advisement. Misadvisement and lack of advisement are not sufficient mitigation to provide full relief in cases where a student-athlete presents a core-course grade-point average/test-score deficiency.

a. Institutional Misadvisement/Lack of Advisement.

In all initial-eligibility waivers citing institutional misadvisement or lack of institutional advisement as a mitigating circumstance, staff has the discretion on a case-by-case basis to request the following supporting documentation:

(1) A written statement of explanation from the person or persons responsible for providing erroneous information regarding initial-eligibility requirements;

(2) Contemporaneous documentation demonstrating the misadvisement (e.g., notes, phone logs);

(3) A written statement from the student-athlete in question demonstrating whether he or she, in good faith, relied on the erroneous information;

(4) The institution's recruitment history of the student-athlete;

(5) A written statement or plan from the institution regarding its actions to educate institutional staff in order to avoid misadvisement of future student-athletes. An institutional misadvisement plan may include, but is not limited to the following:

(a) Education sessions with coaches and other personnel who have a role in counseling student-athletes.

(b) Early placement of student-athletes on the Institutional Request List to identify potential deficiencies early.

(c) Work with the student-athlete's high school to obtain necessary records for initial-eligibility certification.

(d) No sole reliance on other entities (e.g., high school) for information.

(e) More careful evaluation of the student-athlete's transcript to ensure courses are on the high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses.

(f) Advice and encouragement on the completion of additional core courses and/or standardized exams.

b. High School Misadvisement/Lack of Advisement.

In all initial-eligibility waivers citing high school misadvisement or lack of institutional advisement as a mitigating circumstance, staff has the discretion on a case-by-case basis to request the following supporting documentation:

(1) Written documentation from the individual at the high school who provided erroneous information;

(2) A written statement from the individual in question demonstrating whether the student-athlete, in good faith, relied on the erroneous information.

Lack of advisement may be submitted as mitigation if the person or persons at the high school were advising a student-athlete regarding meeting high school graduation requirements, even if those conflict with initial-eligibility requirements.

8. Analysis of Mitigating Circumstances.

The following provides an overview of the mitigating circumstances used to support a request for an initial-eligibility waiver. All mitigating circumstances submitted to support an initial-eligibility waiver request are analyzed to determine whether those circumstances impacted the student-athlete's ability to satisfy initial-eligibility requirements and whether the mitigating circumstances were partially or fully within the control of the student-athlete. As noted in the overview, the threshold for receipt of full relief from initial eligibility is high for Division I student-athletes in light of the recent increases to initial-eligibility standards.

a. Personal Hardship.

Staff may approve waivers involving a student-athlete when circumstances that contributed directly and clearly to a student-athlete's failure to satisfy initial-eligibility requirements are present. In such scenarios:

(1) The circumstances must be out of the student-athlete's control;

(2) The circumstances must involve the student-athlete, the student-athlete's family members, or an individual or individuals with whom the student-athlete has an existing relationship; and

(3) Documentation must be provided to clearly demonstrate the circumstances in question had a direct impact on the student-athlete's deficiency.

b. Presentation of Nontraditional Coursework.

- A student-athlete's completion of courses that do not satisfy the legislated definition of a core course and courses invalidated through the PSA Review process, may NOT be considered as misadvisement in the analysis of a waiver case.

c. Institutional Misadvisement/Lack of Advisement.

(1) The documentation must clearly demonstrate that but for the misadvisement or lack of advisement, the student-athlete would have satisfied all initial-eligibility requirements.

(2) Assertions of high school misadvisement or lack of advisement should be tied to a student-athlete's nonrecruited status at the time of the misadvisement.

d. Nonrecruited Status.

(1) If a student-athlete’s academic record does not reflect a level of academic achievement and demonstrate a clear likelihood of academic success as outlined in Section 7-a-(1) of this document, and as supported by NCAA data, nonrecruited status cannot be used as the sole mitigation to support a full waiver of initial-eligibility requirements. It may support partial waiver relief.

(2) If an institution asserts late recruitment in support of a waiver request, the student-athlete's awareness and knowledge of initial-eligibility requirements may be factored into the staff's analysis.

e. Lost Academic Opportunity.

- If a student-athlete loses an academic opportunity (e.g., a full academic term or terms) due to extenuating circumstances including, but not limited to, an incapacitating injury or illness, extreme financial difficulty, civil unrest or a natural disaster, staff may consider coursework replacing that lost opportunity, even if such coursework is completed outside the applicable core-course time limitation.

f. Student-Athlete Repeating Year of High School.

Staff may approve waivers involving a student-athlete whose grade level is reclassified and he or she subsequently completes coursework outside the core-curriculum time limitation using the following criteria:

(1) The student-athlete's reclassification resulted in the successful completion of post-eighth semester coursework;

(2) The institution recruiting the student-athlete did not have an opportunity to advise the student-athlete to attempt to rectify any core-course deficiency within the student-athlete's first eight semesters of high school;

(3) The student-athlete's only deficiency is one core-course unit of English, and he or she completed an additional unit of English subsequent to his or her eighth semester of enrollment;

[Note: The staff may consider core-course deficiencies in subject areas other than English on a case-by-case basis.]

(4) The student-athlete meets all other initial-eligibility requirements; and

(5) Any other relevant considerations (e.g., overall academic record, high test score, etc.)

g. International Cases.

(1) Test-Score Time Limitation.

When an international student-athlete triggers full-time enrollment at an international institution that does not require an SAT or ACT and, therefore, is not able to present a standardized test score within the applicable time limitation, the following guidelines are applicable:

(a) No recruiting contact with <u>any</u> NCAA institutional staff member prior to initial full-time enrollment in a collegiate institution; and

(b) Minimum required test score was achieved on the individual's initial taking of either the ACT or SAT.

(c) The student-athlete's academic record (optional).

(2) Academic Curriculum/Track.

When an international student-athlete chooses an academic track pursuant to his or her home country's program at an early age (e.g., 13 or 14) and that track does not require an academic subject that is required for NCAA initial eligibility, and he or she presents a core-course deficiency no more than two core-course units in social science/physical science and there is also either late recruitment or no recruitment history, staff will consider the following in support of the waiver request:

(a) The strength of the student-athlete's academic record (e.g., test score, core-course grade-point average);

(b) Whether the student-athlete attempted to rectify the deficiency?

(c) Whether the student-athlete completed higher-level coursework?

(3) Split Files.

Occurs when a student-athlete graduates from an educational system other than the one in which he or she began secondary school.

(a) Delayed graduation issue: Student-athlete's date of graduation is based on the country in which he or she began secondary education.

(b) Key factors to consider:

i. Did the student-athlete have control over the reclassification?

ii. When is the academic year (e.g., September through June; January through December)?

iii. Was the student-athlete appropriately placed in a grade level based on the objective evidence or records at hand?

iv. Was the reclassification based on a language barrier?

aa. What courses were completed after the core-course time limitation?

bb. Does the student-athlete rectify the core-course deficiency (with the inclusion of one additional year of coursework versus multiple years)?

cc. What is the strength of the student-athlete's overall academic record?

dd. Was the student-athlete mainstreamed by his or her high school?

i. Coursework Completed Prior to Grade Nine.

Staff may consider core courses completed prior to grade nine, even if the student-athlete's high school did not award graduation credit for the course, provided the student-athlete's transcript verifies successful completion of the course and he or she demonstrated progression in that academic subject area.

j. Other Circumstances.

There are some circumstances presented in an initial-eligibility waiver case that may not be viewed in a light most favorable to the applicant institution and student-athlete. These circumstances include but are not limited to:

- High school grading scale (e.g., seven-point scale). Standing alone, a high school's grading scale is not viewed as compelling mitigation to provide relief for a core-course grade-point average deficiency.