REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION I COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
APRIL 22, 2008, MEETING

***ACTION ITEMS*.**

1. Legislative Items.

- None.

2. Nonlegislative Items.

- None.

***INFORMATIONAL ITEMS*.**

1. Processing Adjustment Requests for Student-Athletes Who Transfer. The NCAA Division I Committee on Academic Performance approved an amendment to its policies and procedures to allow adjustment requests for student-athletes who transfer and meet all the criteria approved by the NCAA Division I Board of Directors in January 2008 to be processed as automatic adjustments to a team's NCAA Division I Academic Progress Rate (APR) during the data submission phase. With the collection of the 2007-08 APR data in fall 2008, an additional 6,000 adjustment requests for student-athletes who transfer could be submitted by institutions. It is estimated that as many as 3,000 of the new requests for student-athletes who transfer will meet all the criteria and can be most efficiently processed during the data submission process. The committee noted this change will increase efficiency in the data collection process and will allow the staff to focus its efforts on other adjustment requests, including those adjustment requests for student-athletes who transfer and do not meet the criteria. This policy change is effective with the collection of the 2007-08 APR data and will not apply retroactively.

2. Occasion-Three and Occasion-Four Historical Penalty Waivers and Appeals. The committee initially approved revisions to the policies and procedures for Occasion-Three and Occasion-Four Historical Penalty waivers and appeals. The revisions provide greater staff authority to render approvals, conditional approvals or partial decisions. In anticipation of the number of teams that could be subject to Occasion-Three and Occasion-Four Historical Penalties, greater staff authority will provide for some decisions to be made more efficiently. Further, the committee noted those teams or institutions desiring to appear before the committee will be afforded that opportunity. The committee requested that the specific roles and responsibilities of the staff throughout the waiver process be further established and communicated. The committee intends to review the revised policies and procedures during the July meeting.

3. **Calculation and Timing of NCAA Division I Academic Performance Program (APP) Financial Aid Penalties in Baseball.** The committee determined that penalized baseball teams subject to historical penalties shall be required to impose the APP penalty against the total counter limit beginning with notification of penalties in the 2010-11 academic year. This option accounts for the full implementation of new baseball financial aid limits, will ensure the penalty is fairly imposed and will eliminate the need to process any requests to delay the imposition of a contemporaneous penalty because a team is returning 27 counters. The committee also determined that the four-year average for historical penalty determination shall be calculated using the actual number of student-athletes that received athletically related financial aid, with a cap of 27, for those academic years prior to imposition of the counter limit of 27. Finally, this option provides consistency in the maximum number of counters included in the calculation of APP penalties and a more accurate number for those teams that provided a limited number of athletics scholarships in the sport of baseball.

4. **APR Calculation for Student-Athletes Who Graduate With Eligibility Remaining.** The committee reviewed data demonstrating the number of student-athletes who compete as postgraduates has increased, while the number of lost eligibility points has decreased significantly for this group over the same time period. The data also indicates an increase in the number of postgraduate student-athletes who are remaining in the cohort for two terms following graduation. Within all sports except for soccer, postgraduate student-athletes are helping the team's APR and are earning almost all possible points. In particular, men's basketball and football have shown strong improvement in the academic performance of postgraduates during the past three years. The committee noted if postgraduate student-athletes were removed from each team's cohort, 50 percent of the squads would experience an APR decrease, and 41 percent would experience no change. Further, the committee noted that removing postgraduates from the APR cohort may benefit some institutions; however, it would negatively affect many more institutions since most postgraduate student-athletes earn all of their APR points. In addition, the committee noted that, from a competitive-equity standpoint, all student-athletes representing institutions in athletics competition should be held to a minimum standard of academic performance. Eliminating postgraduate student-athletes from the cohort would greatly reduce the incentive for institutions to ensure their postgraduate student-athletes maintain academic progress in the final term. Student-athletes who have graduated still should be held accountable for minimal academic progress as they complete their competitive eligibility. The committee noted that although graduation is a primary goal of the APP, ensuring academic accountability of all student-athletes is an equally important goal of the program. Finally, the committee is considering a possible incentive that would involve the awarding of bonus APR points for student-athletes who graduate prior to exhausting eligibility. For example, for the fall term in which a student-athlete with eligibility remaining graduated, the student-athlete would receive an additional point for graduation and would be considered a "3/2." After completion of the spring term, if the student-athlete finished the term and earned the eligibility point, the

student-athlete would be considered a "2/2," resulting in a "5/4" for the academic year. If the student-athlete withdrew at the end of the playing season and, as a result, did not earn the eligibility point for the spring term, the student-athlete would be considered a "1/2," but would be a "4/4" for the academic year. The NCAA Division I Committee on Academic Performance Subcommittee on Data Collection and Reporting was charged with further examination of this incentive concept to reward early graduation and to encourage a student-athlete who continues to compete post-graduation to remain academically engaged throughout his/her final term.

5. **Criteria for Transfer Adjustment Requests for Student-Athletes with Grade-Point Averages Below 2.600.** The committee began initial discussions regarding the criteria for the staff's review of adjustment requests for student-athletes who transfer with a grade-point average below 2.600. The committee preliminarily agreed that, for such requests, all other transfer adjustment criteria must be met. In addition, the committee is considering a review of the total number of hours transferable to the new institution. Many legitimate reasons for transfer already are addressed in the APR Adjustment Directive, including medical issues, harassment, financial hardship and lack of academic major offered at the original institution and should be considered in that context. Thus, any mitigation considered for the transfer adjustment should be academically focused, as that will keep the student-athlete's academic performance and the institution's accountability at the forefront of the review. The committee will continue its work to develop criteria to review such adjustment requests during its July in-person meeting.

6. **NCAA Proposal No. 2007-73 – Financial Aid – Period of Institutional Financial Aid Award – One-Year Period – Exception – Exhausted Eligibility or Medical Noncounter.** Proposal No. 2007-73 was tabled at the January 2008 Board of Directors meeting after the NCAA Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) raised concerns with the original proposal. Since that meeting, SAAC has re-examined the proposal, along with the amended version, and now supports the proposal as amended. Proposal No. 2007-73 specifies that a student-athlete who has exhausted eligibility and is exempt from counting in the institution's financial aid limit, or a student-athlete who is exempt from counting due to an injury or illness, may receive athletically related financial aid for less than one academic year. The committee supports the intent of the proposal and, during its October meeting, requested the proposal be modified to require the financial aid agreement to include language stipulating the minimum requirements (e.g., academic) the student-athlete must meet in order to be awarded athletics aid in the following term. The committee also requested an additional stipulation that if the student-athlete is not awarded athletics aid for the subsequent term due to his or her failure to meeting the requirements of the financial aid agreement, he or she must be provided a hearing opportunity as outlined in NCAA Bylaw 15.3.2.4 for other nonrenewals. Both recommendations are contained in Proposal No. 2007-73-B and the committee supports the proposal as amended.

7. **Amendment to the APP Data Review Policies and Procedures.** The committee approved an amendment to its policies and procedures for the review of APP data to permit institutions selected for data review to make corrections to their data after receiving the staff's preliminary report, provided the institution agrees with the staff's findings. Currently, an institution going through the data review process receives the staff's preliminary report and is provided 14 days to respond to the findings. Once the institution's response is received, the case is prepared for review by the Subcommittee on Data Collection and Reporting. After the subcommittee reviews the case, the final report is prepared for the institution and the institution is instructed to make the changes indicated, most of which were previously seen in the preliminary report, within 14 calendar days. However, institutions generally agree with most of the findings in the staff's preliminary report. Allowing the institution to make the changes as part of their response to the preliminary report will facilitate faster institutional advancement through the process.

8. **APP Data Collection and Penalty Update.** The committee received a detailed presentation from the NCAA research staff regarding APR data reflecting student-athlete performance during the 2006-07 academic year, which represented the fourth year of APR data collection. The committee viewed the summary of four-year APR data and noted APR improvement among squads with low three-year APRs. The data also indicated positive APR trends for football and baseball, while men's basketball had a smaller overall increase driven by a sizable increase in eligibility rates with a corresponding drop in the retention rate. The data also indicated there were fewer teams falling below the penalty benchmarks and there was a substantial decrease in the overall number of student-athletes who left institutions academically ineligible and did not return in the subsequent term (i.e., "0/2"). Substantial decreases in the number of "0/2s" can be seen in baseball, men's basketball and football. In addition, the committee reviewed a report outlining the number of student-athlete transfers into Division I institutions, noting that the number of transfers into Division I has decreased slightly over the past four years and that the sports of men's basketball and baseball have the largest number of 2-4 transfers. Additionally, the committee received a summary of aggregate numbers of APR adjustment requests, data submission deadline extensions, delayed-graduation points, penalized teams and contemporaneous- and historical-penalty waivers submitted by institutions.

9. **Public Announcement of Penalties and Rewards.** The committee reviewed the timeline for the public release of member institutions' APP penalties and public recognition awards for data collected during the 2006-07 academic year. In mid-March, the NCAA staff communicated the public release dates for public-recognition awards, team APRs and penalty reports via electronic mail to all presidents/chancellors, conference commissioners, directors of athletics and the Collegiate Commissioners Association Compliance Administrators (CCACA). The public recognition list, which

includes the top 10 percent for each sport, will be posted on the NCAA Web site April 24. The APR and penalty reports will be announced during a press conference May 6 and will be available on the NCAA Web site.

10. **APR Improvement Plans.** The committee received an update regarding the review of APR Improvement Plans reported to the national office during the 2007-08 academic year. Institutions with a team with a multiyear APR below 900; requesting a waiver of penalty; or requesting NCAA Division I Academic Performance Program Supplemental Support Funds (SSF) were required to report a plan to the national office. One hundred fifty-seven institutions, representing over 350 teams, participated in the plan review process. All plans reported to the national office were reviewed by NCAA staff and feedback was provided to institutions. Additionally, the committee reviewed the results of a survey to gather feedback from institutions regarding the APR Improvement Plan development, submission and review process. The survey was distributed to all Division I institutions who participated in the plan review process. A total of 116 usable responses were received, which was a 74 percent response rate. Seventy-five percent of institutions indicated the development of an APR Improvement Plan will help improve their team's APR and 85 percent of institutions indicated the plan development process increased conversations about APR improvement across campus. Specific feedback related to the usability of the online submission system will be considered as the system is updated for the 2008-09 plan review season. Further, the staff is working on the development of an online searchable database to be available to institutions seeking successful APR strategies implemented at other institutions.

11. **APP Data Collection and Reporting Policy for Institutions that Reinstate Dropped Sports in Subsequent Years.** The committee continued development of a policy to address situations in which an institution discontinues a sport(s) and later reinstates the sport(s) in subsequent years at the Division I level, including how APR data and penalties from previous years should be factored. It is anticipated, for example, that some institutions will reinstate sports at the Division I level in light of recovery from Hurricane Katrina. The committee agreed that institutions should resume reporting APR data beginning with the academic year in which the sport(s) was reinstated and competition was resumed. However, the committee discussed how APR data submitted from prior years should be used in the calculation of a team's multiyear APR and considered providing the staff authority to review each situation on a case-by-case basis. Guiding principles for the use of the data and penalties from prior years would have to be established in order to direct the staff in its work. The Subcommittee on Data Collection and Reporting will continue to review this topic in July.

12. **Modification of Wording to the Definition of the APR Cohort.** The Subcommittee on Data Collection and Reporting reviewed a scenario involving a student-athlete who has exhausted his or her eligibility and signed an athletics scholarship contingent on the student-athlete satisfying prescribed academic standards. If that student-athlete satisfied the prescribed academic requirements, the athletics aid would be awarded at the conclusion of the academic term. If the student-athlete failed to meet the requirement, no aid would be awarded and the student-athlete would be responsible for his or her financial obligation to the institution. The subcommittee noted that the current definition of the APR cohort does not specifically address this scenario. The subcommittee requested the staff draft an interpretation for review by the full committee at its next meeting that would clarify the definition of the APR cohort to include any student-athlete who signs an athletically related financial aid agreement for a term and is enrolled full time as of the census date or the fifth week of classes, whichever is earlier, even if the student-athlete does not receive a benefit because he or she does not satisfy some contingency within the financial aid agreement.

13. **Review of Meaningful APR Improvement within the APP Penalty Structure.** The Subcommittee on Data Collection and Reporting began initial discussions regarding determination of meaningful improvement within the APP penalty structure. The subcommittee will further examine the current improvement definition including review of data during its July meeting.

14. **APP Data Reviews.** The Subcommittee on Data Collection and Reporting received a progress report on the 20 institutions selected to have their APP data reviewed in the 2007-08 academic year. The data review includes institutionally submitted APP data from the 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 academic years, which are being reviewed for accuracy of eligibility, graduation and retention data entered into the APP Data Collection Program. The subcommittee also was informed that the staff is completing the data reviews of four institutions for which part or all of the 2006-07 review was suspended and noted that one of the four institutions will have its data review rescheduled for 2008-09 due to enforcement issues.

15. **2008-09 APR and Penalty Reporting Forms.** The Subcommittee on Data Collection and Reporting approved the final versions of the institutional and public APR and Penalty Reports to be used in the 2008-09 academic year. The reports are intended to provide institutions with their respective teams' APR, summaries of the teams subject to contemporaneous and/or historical penalties, and detailed worksheets explaining how the penalties were calculated.

16. Consideration of a Request from a Member Institution Related to the Retroactive Application of the Adjustment for Student-Athletes Who Transfer. The Subcommittee on Data Collection and Reporting reviewed correspondence from a member institution requesting the retention point be adjusted for five men's basketball student-athletes who transferred while eligible from the institution since the 2003-04 academic year. Each student-athlete presented a cumulative grade-point average of 2.600 or higher and the adjustment of the lost retention points would raise the team's multiyear APR above the 925 penalty benchmark. However, the team currently is not subject to any penalties, even without the adjustment. The subcommittee did not support the request and affirmed that the adjustment for student-athletes who transfer and meet the criteria approved by the Board of Directors does not apply retroactively and is effective with the collection of the 2007-08 APR data. In addition, the subcommittee noted that the institution may release to the public the team's APR data with the information referenced, at its discretion.

17. NCAA Division I Committee on Academic Performance Policies and Procedures, Penalties Guide and Data Collection Guide. The committee approved the updated Committee on Academic Performance Policies and Procedures, Penalties Guide and Data Collection Guide. The guides will be posted online to assist institutions in the 2008-09 data collection process and penalty applications. This posting also will meet annual reporting requirements.

18. Supplemental Support Fund. The committee received a report regarding the SSF, which is available for new or enhanced programs developed to support academic reform and for professional development opportunities for individuals providing academic support services to student-athletes. Thirty-six limited-resource institutions are eligible for funding support and applications are currently being reviewed. It is anticipated that funds will be awarded to institutions beginning this summer.

19. Summary of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Ad Hoc Advisory Group. The committee received an update regarding the work of the HBCU Ad Hoc Advisory Committee, which was established to develop strategies to enhance academic support at HBCUs and to serve as a conduit to communicate issues and concerns with the NCAA that may impact HBCUs collectively. The group has convened quarterly via teleconference to discuss progress related to the APP and the review criteria for the SSF applications.

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