REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION I COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
FEBRUARY 21, 2011, MEETING

***KEY ITEM*.**

- **Examination of the NCAA Division I Academic Performance Program (APP).** The NCAA Division I Committee on Academic Performance continued its comprehensive examination of the APP including review of the APP penalty benchmarks and filters and the penalty structure. This review is ongoing with possible recommendations for membership consideration provided to the NCAA Division I Board of Directors in August. The committee welcomes membership comment on these concepts.

***ACTION ITEMS*.**

1. Legislative Items.

- None.

2. Nonlegislative Items.

- None.

***INFORMATIONAL ITEMS*.**

1. APP Penalty Structure. The committee continued its review of the APP penalty structure and agreed in principle to a revised penalty structure. The new penalty structure will replace the current two-tiered penalty structure (i.e., contemporaneous and historical penalties). This new penalty structure will be cumulative and progressive and consist of five levels. The changes give the committee greater flexibility in customizing penalties for teams that appear before the committee.

Below is an overview of the new penalty structure:

a. Level One.

(1) Public notice.

(2) Financial aid penalty: Ten percent from total aid awarded (four-year average) (*five percent if the committee's defined improvement standard is met*).

b. Level Two.

(1) Public notice.

(2) Financial aid penalty: Ten percent from total aid awarded (four-year average) (*five percent if the committee's improvement standard is met*).

(3) Playing and practice seasons (four hour reduction per week to 16 hours, as well as loss of one day): Lost hours must be used for academic purposes. *(Day of practice reduction does not apply if improvement standard is met.*)

(4) (*Baseball only*): Ten percent reduction to the length of playing season and number of contests against outside competition (*five percent if improvement standard is met*).

c. Level Three.

(1) Public notice.

(2) Financial aid penalty: Ten percent from total aid awarded (four-year average) (*no automatic reductions for meeting improvement standard*).

(3) Playing and practice seasons (four hour reduction per week, as well as one day): Lost hours must be used for academic purposes (*no automatic reductions for meeting improvement standard*).

(4) Postseason restriction.

(5) (*Baseball only*): Ten percent reduction to the length of playing season and number of contests against outside competition (*no automatic reductions for meeting improvement standard*).

d. Level Four.

(1) All penalties from Levels One through Three.

(2) All sports: Reduction of four hours per week for athletics activities outside of the playing season. These four hours must be replaced with academically focused activities.

(3) Elimination of the nontraditional playing season/out-of-season practice for all sports that maintain a legislated nonchampionship segment. For example, this results in the following penalties:

(a) Baseball: no fall practice or competition.

(b) Football: no spring practice.

(c) Softball: no fall practice or competition.

(d) Men's and women's volleyball: No spring practice or competition.

(e) Men's and women's soccer: No spring practice or competition.

(f) Field hockey: No spring practice or competition.

(g) Women's lacrosse: No fall practice or competition.

OR;

(4) For sports without a legislatively declared nontraditional playing season, a 10 percent reduction in the length of the playing season and 10 percent reduction of allowable contests. For example, this results in the following penalties:

(a) Men's and women's basketball.

i. Reduction of 10 percent of playing and practice days between first allowable practice and end of playing season.

ii. Reduction from 29 to 26 contests.

(b) Ice hockey.

i. Reduction from 132 day season to 119 day season.

ii. Reduction from 34 to 31 contests.

(c) Wrestling.

i. Reduction from 144 day season to 130 day season.

ii. Reduction from 16 to 14 dates of competition.

(5) (*Baseball only*): Ten percent reduction to the length of playing season and number of contests against outside competition.

e. Level Five.

At Level Five, teams will proceed directly to an in-person hearing with the committee. Under this approach, the institution will not be aware of its entire penalty, except for those penalties associated with Levels One through Four, until after the hearing has been conducted. In total, the committee would have the following penalties to choose from:

(1) All penalties from Levels One through Four.

(2) In addition to the penalties from Levels One through Four, the committee would be able to impose the following from a menu of penalties.

(a) Additional financial aid penalties above the 20 percent of average aid awarded.

(b) Additional playing and practice season penalties above: (1) The four hour reduction and loss of one day of practice in-season; and (2) The four hours per week reduction outside of season.

(c) Restricted membership.

(d) Contest reductions, which could include:

i. Full-season competition restriction.

ii. Cancellation of nonconference contests.

iii. Any contest reductions as determined by the committee.

iv. No competition during institution's scheduled exam period and/or week(s) surrounding the exam period.

The committee has determined that the waiver and appeals process will remain the same as the current historical-penalty structure with an initial NCAA staff review at Levels One through Four. The NCAA staff will not have the authority to render a decision on a waiver request at Level Five.

The committee will finalize recommendations for a revised penalty structure during its April or July meetings. The committee anticipates making a final recommendation to the Board for its August meeting followed by membership consideration during the 2011-12 legislative cycle. The committee invites immediate membership comment through its NCAA staff liaisons.

2. APP Penalty Benchmarks and Filters. The committee continued its review of the current NCAA Division I Academic Progress Rate (APR) penalty benchmarks and filters and discussed potential changes. Based on changes to the APR metric calculation, the current historical-penalty benchmark does not project a 50 percent graduation rate as originally intended when the metric was adopted. At that time a 925 APR predicted a 50 percent Federal Graduation Rate and a 60 percent Graduation Success Rate (GSR), while a 900 predicted a 37 percent Federal Graduation Rate and a 50 percent GSR. Currently, a 925 predicts roughly a 36 percent Federal Graduation Rate and a 50 percent GSR while the 900 predicts a 25 percent Federal Graduation Rate and a 40 percent GSR.

Several APR adjustments designed to improve fairness of the rate have led to this change in the projected graduation rate for a given benchmark. The committee continued its discussion around increasing the penalty benchmark to ensure it predicts to a minimum 50 percent GSR. The Board has indicated its interest in ensuring the penalty benchmarks, at a minimum, identify teams with an anticipated GSR below 50 percent.

The committee discussed the academic outcomes of teams that should be considered subpar and therefore potentially subject to APP penalties. Discussion centered on three levels of academic performance:

a. Teams with a projected GSR below 50 percent;

b. Teams with a projected GSR above 50 percent, but within their campus student-body or among other athletics teams are significantly below the norm; and

c. Teams with a high APR, but low numbers of graduates within the current APR cohort.

In addition to the review of the penalty benchmarks, the committee continued its discussion of the appropriateness of each of the current filters and possible new filters.

The committee had preliminary discussions regarding several models that could be used in conjunction with the new single-penalty structure. These include:

a. Applying the current contemporaneous penalty APR benchmark of 925 while maintaining the current historical penalty filters;

b. Applying the current contemporaneous penalty APR benchmark of 925 while amending the current historical penalty filters. These revised filters could include elimination of the by-sport filter, expansion of a low-resourced filter that could include a higher percentage of schools, and an amended institutional

characteristics filter based on the number of graduates within the current APR cohort rather than the Federal Graduation Rate; and

c. A tiered approach to identifying academically underperforming teams, which would include several different APR benchmarks and incorporate a graduation filter that considers the actual graduation behavior of student-athletes on the team within the four-year cohort.

The committee came to no conclusions during the meeting and will revisit the discussion during its April and July meetings. The committee invites membership comment and feedback through its July meeting on all of these topics. The committee anticipates making a final recommendation to the Board for its August meeting followed by membership consideration during the 2011-12 legislative cycle.

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