REPORT OF THE NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

DIVISION I COMMUNICATIONS AND COORDINATION COMMITTEE

The NCAA Division I Communications and Coordination Committee submits the following report from its January 16, 2009, meeting:

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Convention Debrief.** The committee members reported they found value in attending the 2009 NCAA Convention. Specifically, they reported finding value in sharing information with one another, attending various governance meetings and functions and in hearing from those in the governance structure. Further, the members noted they received positive feedback from those in attendance at the 2009 NCAA Convention that the cabinet chairs' participation in the Convention programming helped bring more clarity and significance to the cabinets' work and priorities. While no final determination was made, the committee members indicated a level of interest in being involved in future Convention activities.

2. **Feedback from the Legislative Council meeting.** The chair of the Legislative Council shared information regarding that council's discussions in an effort to help the cabinet chairs prepare for their February meetings. Specifically, the Legislative Council chair shared the tone of the council's considerations regarding Proposal No. 2008-32-A Eligibility – General Eligibility Requirements – Full Time Enrollment – Requirement for Competition – Nontraditional Courses, Proposal No. 2008–32-B Eligibility – General Eligibility Requirements – Full Time Enrollment – Requirement for Competition – Nontraditional Courses – Up to 50 Percent of Minimum Requirement, Proposal No. 2008-35-A Eligibility – Progress Toward Degree Requirements – Regulations for Administration of Progress Toward Degree Nontraditional Courses and Proposal No. 2008-35-B Eligibility – Progress Toward Degree Requirements – Regulations for Administration of Progress Toward Degree – Up to 50 Percent of Minimum Requirements, and noted the membership appears to have strong and conflicting views on these proposals. There are many in the membership that believe institutions need to have autonomy in this area and that student-athletes must be treated the same as all other students and there are others in the membership concerned about the potential for abuse and compliance related issues. The Legislative Council chair noted that despite the fact 3 of the proposals were defeated, it is an issue of keen interest to the membership. He also mentioned that any information the Academic Cabinet can add to the overall dialogue on this issue would be helpful.

   The Legislative Council chair also discussed Proposal No. 2008-75 Eligibility – Freshman Academic Requirements – Eligibility For Financial Aid, Practice And Competition – Qualifier – Exception – Early Academic Certification – Submission of Transcript and Proposal No. 2008-77 Eligibility – Transfer Regulations – Two-Year College Transfers – Submission of Information Necessary to Determine Academic Initial-Eligibility Status noting that while it is clear the data these proposals are designed to collect is essential to the development of additional academic policy, there is concern by some regarding the

additional work that could be required to comply with the legislation. The Academic Cabinet was encouraged to provide additional comments at its February meeting to assist the Legislative Council's examination of these proposals in April. Additionally, all cabinet chairs were reminded that comments offered at the February meetings regarding legislation may be helpful to the Legislative Council's ultimate consideration of the proposals remaining in the 2008-09 cycle.

3. **Enhancing Communication**. The members discussed the importance of seeking to maintain a high level of communication and coordination in the governance structure, noting both areas where there appears to be progress and areas where there appears to be challenges.

   a. Communication between governance bodies. The group generally concurred that the level of coordination between governance bodies seems to be fairly good under the new structure, due in large part to the efforts of this committee. The group mentioned that depending on the issues being discussed, it may be helpful for the chairs to periodically attend the governance meetings of another cabinet or council.

   b. Communication with the conference offices and the membership. The group shared concerns about the effectiveness of communication efforts with the conferences, especially those conferences that are not represented on each cabinet. The chairs noted that enhancing the level of communication with the conferences is a priority for many cabinets, and as such, they wanted to ensure their communication efforts meet the needs of the conferences. The staff liaison reported she was scheduled to discuss this issue with the FCS/Division I commissioners during their next meeting and would report to the cabinets at their February meetings regarding the suggestions of the cabinets.

   c. Best practices regarding communication within conferences. During the course of the Convention, the chairs noted that they had an opportunity to share information regarding conference practices for disseminating governance information. The chairs reported they found the information to be helpful and thought it would be beneficial to receive additional information regarding successful conference practices.

   d. Best practices regarding governance materials. The chairs discussed the importance of ensuring there is a level of uniformity in cabinet reports to ensure governance information is easy for the membership to find and understand. The chairs discussed whether an executive summary would be helpful to the membership, yet they noted concerns that if the membership relies solely on summaries, information can be missed. The chairs agreed to work with staff to focus on writing clear reports focused on action items and key agenda topics. The chairs also agreed to work with staff to seek to identify "key take aways" from the meetings in an effort to help the membership focus on the

priority items being discussed. They suggested maybe symbols could be used to help annotate the reports.

4. **Strategies for managing a successful meeting**. The chairs discussed the fact that, under the new Division I governance structure, the tone of the council and cabinet meetings has changed from that of the former structure. Meetings now must be more focused on the substructure looking to provide advice and recommendations to contribute to the Division I agenda rather than receipt of information. As such, there must be focus during meetings on group discussions and members must engage in preparatory work in advance of meetings. It was noted that agendas may include fewer items than was typical under the old structure to ensure focus is on key agenda items. Expectations must be set that cabinet and council members will come to meetings prepared to discuss issues and participate. The chairs noted they may have to push members to contribute, and while subcommittees are not a feature of this new structure, the chairs must think creatively to get all members involved. Suggestions offered to enhance the level of engagement included assigning members to take the lead in exploring topics and allowing for group round table discussions.

5. **Task Force on Commercial Activity in Intercollegiate Athletics - Statement of Principles.** The staff explained that the Task Force on Commercial Activity in Intercollegiate Athletics has concluded its report. This guiding report includes a preamble, a historical perspective, the task force charge outlining the group's anticipated work product and a set of recommended principles. It was explained that the report encompasses a broad range of concepts that comprise commercial activity in intercollegiate athletics, ranging from taste issues to amateurism. The chairs were informed that the Board will charge the Leadership Council with managing consideration of this issue through the governance structure. Further, the Leadership Council and the substructure will be asked to develop applicable legislation in those areas where clear parameters are apparent and best practices where informed judgment and flexibility are favored. The Amateurism Cabinet, given its unique knowledge and background in issues pertaining to amateurism, should become familiar with the Statement of Principles and should anticipate being called upon to make recommendations regarding the necessary implementation details relative to that portion of the principles pertaining to amateurism.

Staff liaison: Beth DeBauche