

Frontier Conference Strategic Plan

2012-2016

Approved October 16, 2012



"CLASS-COURTESY-RESPECT"

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Vision

The Frontier Conference (FC) strives to be a premier National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Conference as demonstrated by high athletic and academic achievement, integrity in all athletic programs, and sportsmanship demonstrated by student-athletes, coaches, officials, administrators and fans, and nationally competitive athletic programs.

Mission

The mission of the Frontier Conference shall be to promote excellence in intercollegiate athletics as demonstrated by student-athletes that succeed on the field and in the classroom and to ensure consideration of the challenges and needs of its member institutions in all sports. The FC embraces the five core values of the NAIA Champions of Character program: Integrity, Respect, Responsibility, Sportsmanship and Servant Leadership.

Guiding Principles

1. The FC will always have the student-athlete's best interest in mind,
2. we will conduct ourselves in a cohesive manner in support of the FC,
3. will respect the confidentiality of the each other, our institutions,
4. and strive to maintain the integrity and reputation of the FC.

Goals and Strategies

1. Academic Excellence and Student-Athlete Experience

The FC strives to ensure an appropriate balance between academics and athletics with an emphasis on improving aspects of health, safety and well-being for all student athletes. We recognize and are committed to the role the NAIA plays in promoting a true amateur athletic experience for both the students and the institutions.

1.1 Recruitment and Retention

- a. Strengthen the commitment to the recruitment and retention of academically successful student-athletes. *Set and adhere to NAIA minimum academic standards for new and transfer recruits (Coaches, ADs)*
- b. Stress the importance of academic achievement, the pursuit of and desire for knowledge and progress toward graduation
Regularly discuss FC and institutional goals for progress and degree completion (ADs, Commissioner, COP)

1.2 Student-Athlete Academic Success

- a. Prioritize the minimizing of missed class time for student-athletes
Provide schedules that minimize the number of travel days on an annual and semester basis (FC, coaches, ADs) Set standards for number of preseason games for basketball/volleyball (ADs, Commissioner, COP)
FC schedules will be established well in advance for planning and budgeting purposes (ADs, Commissioner)
- b. Support the NAIA Champions of Character program and encourage participation in servant leadership development, career enhancement, and life skills programming for student-athletes
The FC will actively participate in the Champions of Character and address financial impacts for the staffing and oversight of these activities (Commissioner, ADs)

1.3 Student-Athlete Recognition

- a. Develop and enhance student-athlete academic recognition programs
Continue current student academic and athletic recognition awards (ADs, Commissioner)

2. Membership and Conference Integrity

The FC commits to making decisions that ensure equality, success, strength and stability amongst its membership within the NAIA. Member institutions are committed to upholding the standards and expectations of the FC and the NAIA.

2.1 Retention of Conference Members

- a. Obtain commitment from all current member institutions with the emphasis on the importance of retaining current FC members that support the philosophy of NAIA athletics

Enforce and regularly review financial penalties for a member institution that leaves prior to the length commitment as provided in FC bylaws (Commissioner, COP)

2.2 Conference Organization and Member Expansion

- a. Create an expansion model for new membership according to criteria determined by current FC members

In the context of expansion, policies will be developed that address travel time, cost, possible increased national tournament bids, and sports sponsored amongst the membership by April 2013 (Commissioner, COP) Identify markets for future expansion of other FCs or regional areas including an analysis on the optional number of member institutions by April 2013 (Commissioner, COP)

Identify specific sports and number of sports required for new FC full and associate membership by April 2013 (Commissioner, COP) Identify future options for FC divisions (East/West) by April 2013 (Commissioner, ADs)

.3 Gender Equity and Minority Issues

- a. Monitor and promote fair and equitable treatment of student-athletes
Every member is committed to gender equity and Title IX compliance as mandated by Federal Law and the Office of Civil Rights

3. Conference Governance

Ensure intercollegiate athletics take place in a well-rounded athletic program with integrity, ethical behavior, sportsmanship, student-athlete safety and cooperative effort among member institutions.

3.1 Commitment of Member Institutions

- a. Ensure appropriate institutional involvement from the President, Athletic Director, Faculty Athletic Representative, Coaches and Sport Information Directors in FC matters

*Conduct four FC calls, meet in person twice yearly
(Commissioner, ADs)*

- b. Promote appropriate institutional involvement from the President, Athletic Director, Faculty Athletic Representative, Coaches and Sport Information Directors with the five core values of the NAIA Champions of Character Program: Integrity, Respect, Responsibility, Sportsmanship and Servant Leadership

The FC will consider staff and financial considerations required to full COC implementation (Commissioner)

3.2 Structure, Role and Responsibilities of Commissioner's Office

- a. Ensure involvement in expansion discussions occurs amongst all Presidents and Athletic Directors

*Conduct yearly reviews of Policies and Sport Procedures Manuals
(Commissioner, ADs, SIDs)*

- b. Establish appropriate FC office personnel to support the regular review of the Strategic Plan

Regular review (COP, Commissioner)

- c. The COP will review performance and expectations of the Commissioner on a yearly basis including the setting of goals for the coming year (COP, ADs)

4. Competition and Game Experience

Frontier Conference member institutions are committed to a positive game atmosphere and competitive game environments operating under the highest standards of safety, sportsmanship, ethics and personal behavior while embracing the NAIA Champions of Character initiatives.

.1 Athletic Achievement

- a. Each member of the Frontier Conference is committed to athletic excellence, and to working towards Conference Championships and representation at the national level *Measurements that will be considered include: Final regular season standings, National ratings in polls, FC championships, National Championship qualifications, All Conference/All American Recognition with data will be supplied by FC office (Commissioner)*
- b. Strive for a strong representation of student-athletes in the FC who are identified as NAIA All-Americans
We will evaluate the process/procedure for effectively nominating student athletes for All-American status at the national level by September 2013 (ADs, Commissioner)

.2 Student Support and Facilities

- a. The FC commits to following NAIA maximum scholarship levels
Review compliance of NAIA mandated rules and guidelines yearly (Commissioner, COP, ADs)

4.3 Game/Event Management

- a. Ensure a safe quality collegiate experience for all sponsored sports enhanced by on-site designated game management
Each institution commits to following alcohol policies set in NAIA guidelines
[The FC commits to developing FC-wide fan banner and apparel wording policy by April 2013 with the goal to reduce or eliminate inappropriate logos and/or pictures during athletic events (ADs, SIDs)]
- b. Ensure that FC teams have competitive schedules that take into account attendance, financial implications, and class time missed
A football schedule will be developed that groups FC members that ensures regional home and away rivalries are kept intact by April 2013 (Commissioner, ADs, SIDs)

5. Marketing and Communication

Utilize strategies, tools and personnel to maximize exposure and visibility of the FC and its member institutions on a regional and national platform.

5.1 Marketing and Media Relations

- a. Create and implement a comprehensive public relations and marketing plan that promotes championships and the academic and athletic success of member institutions

Enhance the FC website to ensure effective communication with a new website by September 2012 (Commissioner, SIDs)

Regularly review FC logo and “tag line” that encompasses the FC Vision, Mission and intent of the Strategic Plan (Commissioner, SIDs)

- b. Review yearly the effectiveness of marketing and media relations strategies that support “Brand Awareness” of the FC and the NAIA within our region

*Increase Corporate Sponsorship at the FC Level (Commissioner),
Have readily available institutional merchandise available on the website (Commissioner, SIDs)*

5.2 Fundraising and Financial Support

- a. Increase corporate sponsorship and advertising revenue to the FC
- b. Establish the FC as a regular host of NAIA National Tournament events to elevate the national presence of the FC

Host one NAIA National Tournament by 2016 (Commissioner)

Annually review and evaluate possible NAIA Championships and member host sites to determine if and when a championship bid should be submitted for consideration (Commissioner)

Signature Page for COP and ADs