



**STRATEGIC REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION I COMMITTEE ON ACADEMICS
FEBRUARY 18, 2021, MEETING
PREPARED FOR THE NCAA DIVISION I BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

KEY ITEMS.

1. **Referrals from the NCAA Division I Presidential Forum sustainability review.** At its most recent meeting, the Presidential Forum referred several issues to the NCAA Division I Council and other governance groups in relation to possible legislative changes that may affect the sustainability of Division I athletics. Specifically, the Presidential Forum asked for recommendations on whether short-term solutions (e.g., three-to-six months) in these areas exist. Two items were referred to the Committee on Academics:
 - a. Review full-time enrollment requirements for student-athletes who have received a baccalaureate degree; and
 - b. Review summer school enrollment for summer access in football and men's and women's basketball.

After reviewing the issues, the committee provided the following feedback:

- a. The committee noted the topic of full-time enrollment requirements for student-athletes who have received a baccalaureate degree should be studied further. However, this should be considered a long-term review item. The short-term timeframe does not provide adequate opportunity to review this issue. A longer-term review will allow for more research and development of an issue this complex and will also allow a broader review of possible consequences of a change in this legislation.
 - b. The committee noted that absent meeting current exceptions, student-athletes should be enrolled in summer school while engaging in summer access. The committee noted that the additional coursework taken in the summer has placed student-athletes in a position to graduate with a four-year degree in a timely manner. The committee also acknowledged that current legislative exceptions exist for institutions that do not conduct summer school sessions. Finally, the committee was not opposed to the concept of waiving the requirement in the short term or adjusting or eliminating the requirement but noted academic policies should be tied to sound academic decisions and not to financial savings.
2. **Update on the NCAA Division I Academic Progress Rate Task Force on rate calculations.** The committee received an update on the work of the task force charged with reviewing the way in which the APR is calculated. The task force was formed, in part, as a result of the holistic review of the APR that was completed during 2020. The charge of the group is to determine if it is appropriate to adjust the way in which the APR is calculated. A review of this nature has not been done since the APR was created in 2003. The committee anticipates that this review will take between six-to-nine months. Regular updates will be provided as the task force continues its work and any recommendations will be considered by the full committee.

3. **Update on the Division I men's and women's basketball student-athlete degree completion assistance.** The committee received an update on the continued implementation of the men's and women's basketball student-athlete degree completion assistance legislation. Based on data reported from institutions in the NCAA Academic Portal, institutions provided funding for 51 former basketball student-athletes to return to complete their undergraduate degree. There are five former basketball student-athletes from limited-resource institutions that are taking advantage of the degree completion funding from the NCAA for the 2020-21 academic year.

4. **Update on the NCAA Division I academic-based revenue distribution.** The committee received an update on the state of the Division I Academic Unit. The next distribution will be allocated in spring 2021. It is estimated that approximately 87% of Division I institutions will meet at least one of the three criteria to qualify for the distribution. This estimate is approximately 20% higher than the original projections made when the distribution was first approved by the NCAA Division I Board of Directors and NCAA Board of Governors in 2016.

The committee discussed the increase in the number of institutions qualifying for the distribution as well as the outcomes for different types of institutions. The committee will continue to discuss the way the Academic Unit is being distributed among these different types of institutions. The committee will be reviewing the qualifying criteria next year once five years of data are available.

5. **Review of initial-eligibility standards.** The committee received an update on the creation of a task force that will study the use of standardized test scores as part of initial-eligibility standards. It is appropriate to review this issue as many institutions are re-examining the use of these tests within their admissions processes. The task force will consist of members of this Committee on Academics and the NCAA Division II Academic Requirements Committee as well as other subject-matter experts from Division I and Division II institutions. It is expected that the work of the task force will take approximately six-to-eight months. The committee also received an update regarding the NCAA Eligibility Center's continued response to initial-eligibility standards due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

For additional detail, the committee's full report may be accessed on ncaa.org by clicking [here](#).