



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION I COMMITTEE ON ACADEMICS
FEBRUARY 18, 2021, VIDEOCONFERENCE**

KEY ITEMS.

- 1. Referrals from the NCAA Division I Presidential Forum Sustainability Review.** The NCAA Division I Committee on Academics reviewed two referrals from the Presidential Forum and provided feedback through the formal referral process. [Informational Item No. 1]
- 2. Update on the NCAA Division I Academic Progress Rate Task Force on rate calculations.** The committee received an update on the formation and initial work of a task force, comprised of current committee members, charged with reviewing how the APR is calculated and making any recommendations on any adjustments to the rate. [Informational Item No. 2]

ACTION ITEMS.

- **None.**

INFORMATIONAL 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. Revisions to NCAA Division I Progress-Toward-Degree Waiver Directive.

The committee approved amendments to the Progress-Toward-Degree Waiver Directive to include specific direction on waivers for two-year college transfer student-athletes who do not meet the 60% requirement after three years of full-time enrollment. This revision to the directive will be in place for the 2021-22 academic year and for certifications for the 2022 fall term. The following section will be added to the 2021-22 directive:

“Transfers from two-year colleges who are accountable for 60% of their degree at the certifying institution (applicable only for transfers enrolling at a Division I institution in 2021-22 or fall 2022).

Staff may approve waivers that meet all of the following criteria:

- Student-athlete has earned an associate or equivalent degree in an academic or technical, rather than a vocational, curriculum;
- Student-athlete meets all other two-year college transfer and progress-toward-degree legislation;
- Student-athlete has a transferrable GPA of 3.00 or greater;
- Student-athlete has completed 50% of their degree at the certifying institution;
- Certifying institution and student-athlete have a signed academic recovery plan that has the student-athlete meeting 80% of his or her degree before the start of the ninth semester; and
- The deficiency is not due to the academic performance of the student-athlete (e.g., failed or withdrawn classes, grades below the transfer threshold at the certifying institution).

Staff also has the authority to approve waivers of the percentage-of-degree requirements for two-year college transfers on a case-by-case basis when the academic record clearly indicates the student-athlete has been academically successful at the two-year college and significant mitigation outside the control of the student-athlete has prevented him or her from meeting the percentage-of-degree requirement.”

6. **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.
7. **Request from a member institution on the application of its NCAA Division I Academic Performance Program penalty.** The committee approved a request from an institution to allow it to restore the application of the loss of access to postseason competition for one of its teams to the 2020-21 academic year instead of the 2021-22 academic year. The institution had originally requested to delay the application of the loss of access to postseason competition to the 2021-22 academic year because of the absence of postseason opportunity in 2019-20 due to COVID-19. In addition, the committee directed the staff to draft policy language to implement parameters on the timeline an institution may ask to restore a delayed request (i.e., two weeks from the original delay approval).

8. Report from the NCAA Division I Committee on Academics Subcommittee on Data. The committee reviewed the reports of the Subcommittee on Data teleconferences that occurred between November 23, 2020, and February 12, 2021.

- a. APR adjustments for spring 2020 eligibility points with COVID-19 as mitigation and using the progress-toward-degree analysis. The subcommittee provided guidance regarding staff processing of adjustment requests involving the use of the progress-toward-degree waiver analysis for student-athletes who could not otherwise have a progress-toward-degree waiver submitted on their behalf. The subcommittee determined that:
 - (1) Staff's analysis of adjustment requests with a progress-toward-degree deficiency should be consistent and should generally follow existing guidelines; and
 - (2) Additional flexibility should be provided when the "but for" analysis indicates the student-athlete could have met applicable progress-toward-degree requirements and earned the eligibility point if not for the impact of the pandemic on the 2020 spring term.
- b. APR adjustments for spring 2020 eligibility points with COVID-19 as mitigation and a GPA deficiency. The subcommittee provided guidance regarding staff processing of adjustment requests involving a GPA deficiency and COVID-19 as mitigation. The subcommittee noted the need to analyze the overall academic record when determining the impact of COVID-19 on the student-athlete's GPA.
- c. 2021 data review season. The subcommittee received an update on the 2021 APP data review season and the 30 institutions that will participate this year.

9. Report from the NCAA Division I Committee on Academics Subcommittee on Student-Athlete Academics. The committee reviewed the reports of the Subcommittee on Student-Athlete Academics teleconferences that occurred between November 18, 2020, to February 17, 2021.

- a. Full-time enrollment issues. The subcommittee discussed several issues related to full-time enrollment for the 2020-21 academic year. These issues included:
 - (1) Clarifying the blanket waiver for those student-athletes who graduated at the end of the 2020 fall term also applied to those who completed graduate degrees at the end of the 2020 fall term.
 - (2) Confirming that the blanket waiver did not apply to student-athletes who graduated after the 2020 spring or summer terms.

- (3) Clarifying that the blanket waiver of full-time enrollment for purposes of athletically related financial aid and nonphysical virtual team activities applies to winter/spring terms.
 - (4) Providing direction to staff that full-time enrollment waiver requests that span two academic years (e.g., spring 2021 and fall 2021) should generally be denied.
- b. Request from the two-year community college related to progress-toward-degree requirements for two-year college transfers with three years of collegiate enrollment. The subcommittee reviewed a request from the executive directors of the three two-year college athletic associations in the United States related to the number of student-athletes they anticipate will remain at their institutions for six semesters due to COVID-19 season-of-competition waivers and extensions of eligibility, both within NCAA Division I and at the two-year college level.

The subcommittee reviewed two specific requests:

- (1) To allow for the catastrophic event provision in the NCAA Division I Progress-Toward-Degree Waiver Directive to apply to two-year college transfers; and
- (2) To revise the 1987 Official Interpretation related to participation during a part-time term to exclude its application to two-year college transfers.

Based on a review of previously submitted progress-toward-degree waivers and with a desire for rules consistency between two-year college transfers and four-year college transfers, the subcommittee did not support either request. The subcommittee did encourage the NCAA staff to continue to educate the two-year college community about the application of COVID-19 as mitigation in the waiver process.

Additionally, the subcommittee reviewed a potential revision to the NCAA Division I Progress-Toward-Degree Waiver Directive and forwarded that recommendation to the Committee on Academics for additional discussion. The revision to the directive would be effective for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 academic years for those student-athletes who have completed three academic years of full-time enrollment at the time of transfer to a Division I institution. [See committee discussion at Information Item No. 5]

10. Report from the NCAA Division I Committee on Academics Subcommittee on Penalties and Appeals. The committee reviewed the January 22 report of the Subcommittee on Penalties and Appeals.

- APR penalty - loss of access to postseason competition request. The subcommittee received a request from an institution to restore the application of the loss of access to postseason competition during the 2020-21 academic year. The institution had originally requested to delay the application of the loss of access to postseason competition to the 2021-22 academic year because of the absence of postseason opportunity in 2019-20 due to COVID-19. The subcommittee recommended an

approval of the request and the committee agreed to restore the application of the loss of access to postseason competition to the 2020-21 academic year. Additionally, the subcommittee recommended the NCAA staff draft policy language to implement parameters on the timeline an institution may request to restore a delayed request (i.e., two weeks from the original delay approval). [See committee discussion at Information Item No. 7]

11. **NCAA research update.** The committee received an update from the NCAA research staff on the Student-Athlete Well-Being Study that was recently conducted. The study focused specifically on student-athlete well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic.
12. **Update on the universal one-time transfer exception proposal.** The committee received an update on the universal one-time transfer exception legislative proposal. The proposal was not voted on during the January 2021 Council meeting due to consideration of information and questions from the United States Department of Justice.
13. **Review of the NCAA Accelerating Academic Success Program.** The committee received an update on the AASP, including a funding status update. While the funding was suspended for one year due to the financial implications of COVID-19, the funding will resume this spring. Eligible institutions may apply for single year grants during the 2021 spring term for use during the 2021-22 academic year.
14. **Update on NCAA Two-Year College Relations Panel discussions.** The committee received an update on the ongoing work of the Two-Year College Relations Panel.
15. **NCAA Division I Board of Directors reports.** The committee received reports from the board's September 22 and October 28, 2020, and January 14, 2021, videoconferences.
16. **NCAA Division I Presidential Forum report.** The committee received a report from the Presidential Forum's January 12 videoconference.
17. **NCAA Division I Council reports.** The committee received a report from the Council's October 29, November 18 and December 16, 2020, and January 11, 2021, videoconferences.
18. **NCAA Division I Student-Athlete Advisory Committee reports.** The committee received a report from SAAC's October 22, 2020, and January 12, 2021, videoconferences.
19. **Reports of the Committee on Academics' October 21, 2020, and the Committee on Academics Administrative Committee December 2, 2020, videoconferences.** The committee reviewed the report from its October 21, 2020, videoconference as well as the Administrative Committee December 2, 2020, videoconference.
20. **Future meeting dates.**
 - a. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern, Wednesday, May 12 – videoconference; and

- b. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern, Wednesday, July 28 – videoconference.

Committee Chair: John DeGioia, Georgetown University

Staff Liaisons: Shauna Cobb, Academic and Membership Affairs

Jennifer Henderson, Academic and Membership Affairs

Binh T. Nguyen, Academic and Membership Affairs

NCAA Division I Committee on Academics February 18, 2021, Videoconference	
Attendees:	
Jacqueline Blackett, Columbia University – Barnard College.	
Brynn Carlson, Kansas State University.	
Manoj Chopra, University of Central Florida.	
Eileen Daley, San Jose State University.	
John E. Davidson, The Ohio State University.	
John DeGioia, Georgetown University.	
Pat Elliott, Binghamton University.	
K. Renia Edwards, Mississippi Valley State University.	
Ursula Gurney, University of Missouri-Kansas City.	
Eric Hall, Elon University.	
Dianne Harrison, California State University, Northridge.	
Jennifer Heppel, Patriot League.	
Jessica Kumke, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.	
Marion McClary, Fairleigh Dickinson University.	
Karen Paisley, University of Utah.	
Kim Record, University of North Carolina at Greensboro.	
Joe Scogin, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.	
Lynn W. Thompson, Bethune-Cookman University.	
Ted White, University of Virginia.	
Pamela Whitten, Kennesaw State University.	
Absentees:	
None.	
Guests in Attendance:	
None.	
NCAA Staff Liaisons in Attendance:	
Shauna Cobb, Jennifer Henderson and Binh Nguyen.	
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:	
Lydia Bell, Eric Brey, Marcus Brown, Emily Capehart, Greg Dana, Judy Delp, Jenn Fraser, Kelsey Gurganus, Brandy Hataway, Doug Healey, Michelle Hosick, Leilani Hubbard, Jess Kerr, Andy Louthain, Felicia Martin, Mike Massa, Tom Paskus, Dave Schnase, Jennifer Smith, Kathy Sulentic, Lori Thomas, Carrie Leger White, DeAnna Wiley, Quintin Wright and Katy Yurk.	