



**REPORT OF THE  
NCAA DIVISION I COMMITTEE ON ACADEMICS  
OCTOBER 8-9, 2019, MEETING**

**KEY ITEMS.**

1. **Holistic review of the NCAA Division I Academic Performance Program.** The NCAA Division I Committee on Academics continued its holistic review of the NCAA Division I Academic Performance Program and Graduation Success Rate structure and related policies. The committee approved educational materials that will be presented for membership feedback in fall 2019 and spring 2020. [Informational Item No. 1]
2. **Academic enrollment options for postgraduate student-athletes.** The committee continued its review of the academic enrollment requirements for postgraduate student-athletes who have eligibility remaining. The committee reviewed survey feedback on identified concepts that align with its guiding principles and provide postgraduate student-athletes with access to a broader array of academic options upon enrollment at the next institution. [Informational Item No. 2]
3. **College Basketball Reform – implementation of the Division I men’s and women’s basketball student-athlete degree completion assistance.** The committee received an update on the implementation of the Division I men’s and women’s basketball student-athlete degree completion assistance for former basketball scholarship student-athletes who left their Division I institution having completed at least two years of enrollment. [Informational Item No. 3]
4. **Academic-Athletics Summit.** The committee received an update on planning efforts for an academic summit focused on current and future issues facing higher education. The committee discussed potential panelists, including former student-athletes. [Informational Item No. 4]

**ACTION ITEMS.**

1. **Legislative items for the NCAA Division I Council.**
  - a. **Academic Eligibility – Graduate Student/Post-Baccalaureate Participation – One-Time Transfer Exception – Expanded Graduate Level Options.**
    - (1) **Recommendation.** To permit a student-athlete who is enrolled in an institution other than the institution from which he or she previously received a baccalaureate degree and is enrolled as a full-time student while taking general graduate work (e.g., nondegree-seeking, certificate program), may participate in intercollegiate athletics if he or she fulfills the conditions of the one-time transfer exception, as specified.
    - (2) **Effective date.** August 1, 2020.
    - (3) **Rationale.** Currently, a student-athlete who completes an undergraduate degree with eligibility remaining and wants to continue athletics participation at the same institution has several academic options. He or she may: (1) continue as

a full-time student while taking course work that would lead to the equivalent of another undergraduate major or degree; (2) seek a second baccalaureate or equivalent degree; or (3) enroll in a graduate or professional school (e.g., traditional master's degree or graduate certificate program). In contrast, a student-athlete who completes an undergraduate degree with eligibility remaining and seeks to transfer has only one academic option – enroll in a graduate or professional school at the new institution. Expanding the graduate academic options available at the next institution will increase the options available to student-athletes and updates the legislation with the postgraduate academic offerings that now exist on many Division I campuses, like graduate certificate programs. Further, this will allow student-athletes to explore various areas of graduate level work and accumulate graduate academic credit in case the student-athlete departs and desires to return at a later date. Lastly, the completion rates are higher for postgraduate student-athletes who enroll in graduate work as opposed to a second undergraduate degree or major (62% vs. 17%). Exploring broader academic options for all postgraduate student-athletes, including those who enroll at a different Division I institution, may have a greater likelihood of improving the academic experiences and outcomes for student-athletes in certain sports.

- (4) Estimated budget impact. Potential cost savings if enrolled in a graduate certificate program.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. Student-athletes will have more graduate academic paths available once they graduate with an undergraduate degree and enroll at the next four-year institution.

**b. Academic Eligibility – Graduate Student/Post-Baccalaureate Participation – One-Time Transfer Exception – Uniform Academic Enrollment Requirements.**

- (1) Recommendation. To permit a student-athlete who is enrolled in an institution other than the institution from which he or she previously received a baccalaureate degree and is seeking a second baccalaureate or equivalent degree, or is enrolled as a full-time student while taking course work that would lead to the equivalent of a major or degree may participate in intercollegiate athletics if he or she fulfills the conditions of the one-time transfer exception, as specified.
- (2) Effective date. August 1, 2020.
- (3) Rationale. Currently, a student-athlete who completes an undergraduate degree with eligibility remaining and wants to continue athletics participation at the same institution has several academic options. He or she may: (1) continue as a full-time student while taking course work that would lead to the equivalent of another major or degree; (2) seek a second baccalaureate or equivalent degree (e.g., graduate certificate program); or (3) enroll in a graduate or

professional school. In contrast, a student-athlete who completes an undergraduate degree with eligibility remaining and seeks to transfer has only one academic option – enroll in a graduate or professional school at the other institution. Graduate school may not be in the academic best interests of all student-athletes who have just completed a baccalaureate degree. For example, a student-athlete who is required to complete prerequisite undergraduate courses before enrolling in a graduate program would not be eligible at another institution, regardless of whether a postgraduate opportunity exists at his or her undergraduate institution. Not only may some student-athletes lack the practical experience to be admitted into many graduate programs, not all student-athletes are interested in a two- or three-year graduate degree. As a result, there is a perception that many student-athletes enroll in graduate programs they have no intention to complete, while they finish their athletics eligibility. These perceptions create unnecessary tensions on campus between athletics and various academic departments. This proposal would alleviate some of those tensions by making the postgraduate academic opportunities available to student-athletes consistent, regardless of transfer status. Further, the proposed approach could help student-athletes and academic advisors identify the academic option that best aligns with the student-athlete’s interests, qualifications and future career aspirations.

- (4) Estimated budget impact. Varies based on the cost of undergraduate tuition and fees.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. Student-athletes will have more academic paths available once they graduate with the undergraduate degree.

**2. Nonlegislative items.**

- **None.**

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

- 1. Holistic review of the NCAA Division I Academic Performance Program.** [Academics] [Fairness] The committee continued its holistic review of the APP, informed by the guiding principles of the program. This review was endorsed by the NCAA Division I Board of Directors in August 2018, with the acknowledgement that the APP involves a multitude of elements that illustrates student-athlete academic success, especially the NCAA Division I Academic Progress Rate. The board expressed interest in ensuring that any recommended modifications maintain the validity of the APR as a valid predictor of graduation.

In October 2018, the committee received an overview of data and policy that informs the current APP and identified the following areas of focus:

- a. APR and GSR cohort composition.

- b. Inclusion of postgraduate student-athletes in the APR cohort.
- c. Adjustment for APR retention points lost to professional sports departures.
- d. Delayed graduation points.
- e. Components and calculation of the APR.
- f. Accounting for transfers (and the 2.600 adjustment).
- g. APP penalty structure and filters.
- h. APP public recognition.
- i. Head coaches' APR.

The committee determined that the NCAA Division I Committee on Academics Subcommittee on Data would vet and prepare each policy area for full committee discussion. During its February and May meetings the committee reviewed policies and data from each area noted above. In each case, the NCAA research staff provided and reviewed relevant data to aid the subcommittee's assessment of each policy.

The committee reviewed a comprehensive presentation with relevant data that will be used to solicit feedback from the membership. The committee provided feedback to staff related to content of the presentation to enhance understanding of the causal connection between each area and to highlight impact of any potential changes to the metric. The committee approved three membership webinars along with various outreach efforts to stakeholders. In addition, the committee approved the opportunity to solicit feedback from various standing committees in the Division I governance structure. The committee will receive an update at its February meeting, and it is anticipated the committee will make final decisions on any policy changes during its May meeting. [See subcommittee discussion at Information Item No. 11.]

- 2. Academic enrollment requirements for postgraduate student-athletes.** [Academics] [Well-Being] [Fairness] The committee continued its review of the academic enrollment requirements for student-athletes who earn their undergraduate degree with athletics eligibility remaining. The current legislation draws a distinction between student-athletes who enroll at a different institution after completing a baccalaureate degree (e.g., master's degree, professional degree ) compared to those available to student-athletes who remain at their undergraduate institution (e.g., second baccalaureate/major, minor, graduate certificate program). As a result, a student-athlete's postgraduate academic pursuit is largely determined by whether the student-athlete earned a baccalaureate degree from the institution versus what necessarily best aligns with the student-athlete's academic interests or qualifications. Furthermore, the legislative distinction may not have evolved with the postgraduate academic offerings that now exist on many Division I campuses, like graduate certificate programs. The committee noted that while some student-athletes are prepared for and interested in immediately pursuing graduate school, many others may benefit more from other educational opportunities.

The following guiding principles were approved by the NCAA Division I Board of Directors Administrative Committee for this review:

- a. There should continue to be academic expectations for all postgraduate student-athletes (e.g., pass six hours per term of degree-applicable credit and remain in good academic standing);
- b. All student-athletes should have access to academic educational options that best align with their interests, qualifications and future career, in addition to better preparing student-athletes for transitioning into life after college; and
- c. There should be flexibility in academic paths for all postgraduate student-athletes to pursue after successfully completing an undergraduate degree.

Based on these guiding principles, the committee confirmed that there should continue to be academic expectations for all postgraduate student-athletes and access to additional educational opportunities should be explored. While graduate school may continue to be the best fit for some students, all student-athletes should have access to educational options that best align with their interests, qualifications and future career aspirations.

At this meeting, the committee reviewed updated data on the academic trends and outcomes of the growing number of postgraduate student-athletes on Division I campuses and considered the feedback from other governance entities. The committee noted that while other concepts have been proposed to address the postgraduate environment, it continued to support an academic-based approach that offers all postgraduate student-athletes the flexibility to pursue academic opportunities that best align with their interests, qualifications and future career goals. Specifically, the committee suggested that exploring broader academic options for all postgraduate student-athletes, including those who enroll at a different Division I institution, may have a greater likelihood of improving the academic experiences and outcomes for student-athletes in certain sports. The committee acknowledged that while competitive equity concerns exist in the postgraduate environment, limiting academic options for postgraduate student-athletes likely will not change postgraduate transfer decisions.

The committee reviewed feedback from a membership survey on three postgraduate academic enrollment concepts. Member conferences and academic stakeholders provided feedback on the following concepts:

Concept No. 1 – Maintain the current legislation.

Concept No. 2 – Expanded access to graduate-level options at the new institution.

Concept No. 3 – Uniform academic options for graduate and undergraduate student-athletes.

The feedback collected supports the committee's efforts to create access to a broader array of academic options for all postgraduate student-athletes and aligns with the guiding principles identified by the committee. The committee will request the Council introduce Concepts

Nos. 2 and 3 noted above into the 2019-20 legislative cycle, which will allow for broader membership feedback.

- 3. College Basketball Reform – implementation of the Division I men’s and women’s basketball student-athlete degree completion assistance.** [Academics] [Well-Being] [Fairness] The committee received an update on implementation of the men’s and women’s basketball student-athlete degree completion assistance legislation. The committee noted the low number of applications received to date and discussed continued efforts to educate the membership on the availability of the degree completion program. An application was developed for limited-resource institutions to request financial assistance in meeting the new obligation of Division I membership. Additionally, the committee received an update on the comprehensive toolkit developed to assist the entire division with program creation and implementation available on [ncaa.org](http://ncaa.org).

In April 2018, the Commission on College Basketball recommended the NCAA establish a fund to pay for the degree completion of student-athletes with athletics scholarships who leave member institutions after at least two years of enrollment. The commission stated that colleges and universities must fulfill their commitment to student-athletes to provide not only the opportunity for athletics competition, but also an education. In August 2018, the Board of Directors approved a student support and degree completion fund as a condition of Division I membership. Following its adoption, the committee was charged with operationalizing and implementing the new legislation, which became effective August 1, 2019.

- 4. Academic-Athletics Summit.** [Academics] [Well-Being] The committee received an update from the working group on its progress in planning an academic summit focused on issues facing higher education. The inaugural Academic-Athletics Summit will be held in conjunction with the 2020 NCAA Convention in Anaheim, California. The summit will provide an opportunity for the academics and athletics leadership triad of president or chancellor, provost and athletics director to engage in a discussion on topics that are impacting both branches of higher education, including the opportunity to:
- a. Engage in a conversation about identifying predictive retention metrics and measures of academic success in higher education that impact both the general student body and student-athletes;
  - b. Explore modes of general student and student-athlete engagement and deep learning beyond the classroom walls through high-impact practices and discuss how to assess such value-added college experiences;
  - c. Further expose higher education leaders to the dynamics of athletics and the NCAA as an education partner; and
  - d. Foster collaboration across the higher education community to establish practical goals.

- 5. Review of academic integrity legislation and policies.** [Academics] [Fairness] The committee received a final report on the actions taken by the Board of Directors on the recommendations from the NCAA Division I Presidential Forum on its review of academic integrity and misconduct legislation, policy and interpretations. The Board of Directors supported the standards of review and suggested approaches as recommended by the Committee on Academics that an institution may consider as part of its efforts to help prevent and identify potential academic misconduct. The standards of review and the complementary National Association of Academic and Student-Athlete Development Professionals supplement will be distributed to the membership via NCAA.org, mass email to academic stakeholders and incorporation into the committee's policies and procedures.
- 6. NCAA Division I four-year college transfer landscape.** [Academics] [Fairness] The committee discussed the current four-year college transfer environment in relation to waivers for immediate eligibility and the possibility of conference-introduced legislative proposals for the 2019-20 cycle. Specifically, the committee noted two conference-submitted legislative concepts related to immediate eligibility at the next four-year institution: one to eliminate the one-time transfer exception for undergraduate and graduate students and one to specify that the one-time transfer exception shall apply to all sports. The committee supported a moratorium on transfer legislative concepts, noting the additional time would permit analysis of additional data points and the development of a concept that may include an academic model for immediate eligibility. Such a model may be similar to the concept the committee forwarded to the most recent NCAA Division I Transfer Working Group, which was based upon academic benchmarks, such as having a certain grade-point average and minimum number of credits transferring to next institution. The committee was advised that, in October, the Board of Directors will address the concepts as well as broader issues related to the four-year college transfer waiver environment.
- 7. NCAA Accelerating Academic Success Program update.** [Academics] [Well-Being] The committee received its annual update on the academic outcomes for grant recipients of the AASP program. NCAA staff reviewed the types of grants awarded through the program and data pertaining to the class of grant recipients with complete academic information. Specifically, several institutions were featured as success stories, with highlights of their uses for the grant money, such as updates to academic buildings and computer labs and the addition of academic advisors to staffs. The committee received updates on the educational and outreach opportunities. Specifically, staff emphasized the success of the annual conference, which included an academic-eligibility certification workshop for institutional staff members and a student component with the Leadership Enhancement and Academic Development (L.E.A.D.) Academy.
- 8. Request from the National Wrestling Coaches Association.** [Academics] [Well-Being] [Fairness] The committee received an update on the working group established at the request of the National Wrestling Coaches Association. The working group will consist of members from the committee and be tasked with examination of the academic performance issues associated with Division I wrestling programs. The coaches' association requested the committee's academic leadership and expertise in examining the issues impacting the long-term viability of the sport of wrestling at the Division I intercollegiate level. The committee

agreed to establish a working group to assist the coaches' association with its request and develop recommendations to address the academic outcomes and culture in the sport of wrestling.

- 9. Update on initial-eligibility standards.** [Academics] [Well-Being] [Fairness] The committee received an overview of the data for academic certifications associated with the initial-eligibility standards that went into effect for the first time on August 1, 2016. Specifically, the committee received an updated and comparative overview of the academic certifications associated with the first three classes of student-athletes certified under the new initial-eligibility standards. The committee reviewed data outcomes that demonstrated prospective student-athletes are meeting initial-eligibility requirements at a rate above 90 percent. The committee also received an update on the test score validity study that will be conducted as a result of the restructured SAT. It is anticipated that the review will take place in spring 2020.
- 10. Research update.** [Academics] [Organizational] The committee received an update from the NCAA research staff on a recently released report regarding the GSR calculation and data.
- 11. Report from the Subcommittee on Data.** The committee reviewed the reports of the July 1, July 29, August 12, September 16 and September 30 teleconferences of the Subcommittee on Data.

  - a. Holistic review of the APP. [Academics] [Fairness] On its September 16 and September 30 teleconferences, the subcommittee reviewed one policy area and the educational packet that will be used to gather membership feedback for its holistic review of the APP.
  - b. Automatic 2.6 GPA transfer adjustment. [Academics] [Fairness] The subcommittee reviewed the history of the automatic transfer adjustment, including its inception in 2008 and most recent modifications made in 2016 and 2017. The NCAA research staff reviewed the data provided in 2016 when modifications to the criteria were made. These modifications included expanding its application to two-year institutions. The discussion focused on the 2.6 and 3.3 GPA requirements and their predictive probability of graduating from a four-year institution within five years. The subcommittee will continue its review of the automatic transfer-adjustment criteria to ensure the GPA supports the goal of the APP, which is graduation within five years of enrollment.
  - c. Data reviews. [Organizational] On its July 1, July 29 and August 12 teleconferences, the subcommittee reviewed data reviews.
- 12. Report from the NCAA Division I Committee on Academics Subcommittee on Student-Athlete Academics.** The committee reviewed the reports of the August 28 and October 2 teleconferences of the Subcommittee on Student-Athlete Academics.

  - a. Review of a nontraditional calendar request. [Academics] [Organizational] On its August 28 teleconference, the subcommittee reviewed a request from a member



institution to allow student-athletes to compete while not enrolled in the equivalent of 12 semester hours due to a unique academic calendar. The subcommittee approved the request with conditions.

b. Review of staff interpretations. [Academics] [Organizational] On its October 2 teleconference, the subcommittee conducted new committee member orientation. The subcommittee also reviewed two staff interpretations in order to provide feedback to the NCAA Division I Interpretations Committee. The subcommittee provided the following feedback:

(1) Six-hour requirements. The subcommittee agreed with the staff position. The purpose of the six-hour requirement is to ensure that student-athletes are making progress toward their degree during full-time terms during the academic year. Allowing for the requirement to be “made up” while only enrolled part time at a different institution after withdrawing from the certifying institution would be circumventing the original intent of the legislation.

(2) Repeated courses. The subcommittee agreed with the staff position. No course should be used on multiple occasions to meet the progress-toward-degree credit-hour requirements. This staff interpretation should be the only acceptable way to be able to use a repeated course the second time it is taken. The subcommittee stated that if a student-athlete can graduate without repeating the course in question than the student-athlete should not be able to use the course to meet credit-hour requirements if it is repeated.

**13. Report from the NCAA Division I Committee on Academics Subcommittee on Penalties and Appeals.** The committee received a report from the Subcommittee on Penalties and Appeals.

**14. Update on educational programming and initiatives for member institutions.** [Academics] [Fairness] The committee received an update on the educational programming and technology designed to assist institutions in academic certification efforts on campus. Specifically, online modules outlining Division I academic-eligibility rules and highlighting best practices for the certification of student-athletes were made available to the membership in late fall 2019.

**15. Update on NCAA Division I Committee for Legislative Relief waiver requests.** [Organizational] The committee received an annual update on the number of legislative relief requests submitted seeking to waive the transfer year-in-residence requirement for student-athletes who transferred due to loss of access to postseason competition pursuant to the APP.

**16. Update on the NCAA Division I Interpretive Process Review Working Group.** [Fairness] [Organizational] The committee received an update on the working group assigned with review of the processes used to resolve interpretive issues that arise during enforcement investigations and the infractions process.

17. **Board of Directors report.** The committee received a report from the Board of Directors' August 2019 meeting.
18. **Council report.** The committee received a report from the Council's June 2019 meeting.
19. **NCAA Division I Student-Athlete Advisory Committee report.** The committee received a report from the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee's July 2019 meeting.
20. **Reports of the Committee on Academics' June and August teleconferences.** The committee reviewed the reports from its June and August 2019 teleconferences.
21. **Future meeting dates.**
  - a. February 11-12, 2020 – Indianapolis;
  - b. May 11-12 – Indianapolis; and
  - c. September 29-30 – Indianapolis.

\*Note: The associated NCAA core values are noted with each agenda item (academics, fairness, well-being, organizational).

*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*

<b>NCAA Division I Committee on Academics October 8-9, 2019, Meeting</b>	
<b>Attendees:</b>	
Jeri Beggs, Illinois State University.	
Jacqueline Blackett, Columbia University – Barnard College.	
Hannah Buck, Santa Clara University.	
Manoj Chopra, University of Central Florida.	
John DeGioia, Georgetown 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, via teleconference.	
Jessica Kumke, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.	
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.	
<b>Absentees:</b>	
None.	
<b>Guests in Attendance:</b>	
None.	
<b>NCAA Staff Liaisons in Attendance:</b>	
Shauna Cobb, Jennifer Henderson and Binh T. Nguyen.	
<b>Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:</b>	
Katrice Albert, Scott Bearby, Lydia Bell, Eric Brey, Marcus Brown, Emily Capehart, Greg Dana, Judy Delp, Jenn Fraser, Kelsey Gurganus, Doug Healey, Michelle Hosick, Leilani Hubbard, Jessica Kerr, Kevin Lennon, Andy Louthain, Tom Paskus, Darryl Peal, Todd Petr, Fran Rodriguez, Tiese Roxbury, Dave Schnase, Geoff Silver, Naima Stevenson, Jerry Vaughn, Carrie Leger White, Stan Wilcox, DeAnna Wiley, Quintin Wright, Katy Yurk and Leeland Zeller.	