

REPORT OF THE NCAA DIVISION I COUNCIL JUNE 25, 2020, VIDEOCONFERENCE

In an effort to connect Council items to the NCAA pillars of academics, fairness and well-being, items included in this report have an identifying pillar. There is an additional pillar, operational, that is used to denote items that relate to maintaining a stable and efficient Division I.

<u>KEY ITEMS</u>.

- Temporary Recruiting Dead Period. (Fairness/Well-Being/Operational) The NCAA Division I Council <u>adopted</u> emergency legislation (NCAA Division I Proposal No. R-2020-9) to extend the temporary recruiting dead period (as defined in NCAA Bylaw 13.02.5.5) in all sports through August 31, 2020. See Attachment A for voting results.
- 2. First Practice for Fall Sports Other Than Football Based on the Date of First Permissible Contest. (Fairness/Well-Being/Operational) The Council <u>approved</u> a waiver request to allow the start date for preseason practice to be calculated from the date when the first permissible contest may occur rather than the date of the first scheduled contest. This waiver provides flexibility and certainty despite the possibility of schedules being modified due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **3.** Flexibility for Health and Safety Measures. (Academics/Well-Being/Operational) The NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports Prevention and Performance Subcommittee provided feedback in response to a request soliciting input specific to health and safety factors that should be considered as part of the broader conversation around potential adjustments to the preseason schedule and workouts. In its feedback, the subcommittee supports flexibility in facilitating the safe return of student-athletes to campus. When possible, the feedback provided is framed to address the needs of all returning fall sports. [See Attachment B]

ACTION ITEMS.

• None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. Waiver Request for Reclassification from Division III to Division I. (Fairness/Operational) The Council discussed a waiver request that would permit a Division III institution to enter the Division I membership reclassification process. Such a waiver would allow the institution to begin the pre-application period during the 2020-21 academic year and to enter year one of the reclassification process in the 2021-22 academic year. Although a legislative proposal has been introduced that would establish a process for a Division III institution to reclassify directly to Division I, a waiver would provide certainty and allow for planning schedules for the 2021-22 academic year. The Council will consider this request during its July meeting.

- 2. Waiver Request to Allow Coach Participation in Individual Workout Sessions for Fall Sports Other Than Football. (Fairness/Well-Being/Operational) The Council <u>defeated</u> a waiver request for fall team sports other than football that would have allowed a coach to participate in individual workout sessions with student-athletes from the coach's team, provided the request for such assistance was initiated by the student-athlete.
- **3. Student-Athlete Racial and Social Justice Initiative.** (Fairness/Well-Being) The Council was informed of a student-athlete initiative to create a national symbol representing racial and social justice. The initiative is being organized by the NCAA Division I Student-Athlete Advisory Committee and student-athletes from various Division I institutions.

Council Chair: Grace Calhoun, University of Pennsylvania; The Ivy League Council Liaisons: Amanda Conklin, Law, Policy and Governance Jennifer Fraser, Law, Policy and Governance Kevin Lennon, Law, Policy and Governance Leeland Zeller, Law, Policy and Governance

NCAA Division I Council Videoconference June 25, 2020

Attendees:

Gary Barta, University of Iowa; Big Ten Conference.

Renee Baumgartner, Santa Clara University; West Coast Conference.

Jamie Boggs; Grand Canyon University; Western Athletic Conference.

Grace Calhoun, University of Pennsylvania; The Ivy League.

Lisa Campos, University of Texas at San Antonio; Conference USA.

Kim Capriotti, Faculty Athletics Representatives Association representative.

Charles Cobb, Georgia State University; Sun Belt Conference.

Jean Gee, University of Montana; Big Sky Conference.

Rick George, University of Colorado, Boulder; Pac-12 Conference.

Ted Gumbart, ASUN Conference (Division I conference commissioner).

David Harris, University of Northern Iowa; Missouri Valley Conference.

Shawn Heilbron, Stony Brook University; America East Conference.

Jennifer Heppel, Patriot League.

Samantha Huge, College of William and Mary; Colonial Athletic Association.

Mark Jackson, Villanova University; Big East Conference.

Doug Knuth, University of Nevada, Reno; Mountain West Conference.

Kyle Kallander, Big South Conference (alternate).

Maisha Kelly, Bucknell University, Patriot League.

Caroline Lee, Southeastern Louisiana University, Division I Student-Athlete Advisory Committee.

Justice Littrell, University of Northern Colorado, Division I Student-Athlete Advisory Committee.

Heather Lyke, University of Pittsburgh; Atlantic Coast Conference.

Shane Lyons, West Virginia University; Big 12 Conference.

Judy MacLeod, Conference USA (FBS nonautonomy conference commissioner).

Maggie McKinley, University of Cincinnati; American Athletic Conference.

Noreen Morris, Northeast Conference.

Martin Newton, Samford University; Southern Conference.

Jill Redmond, Atlantic 10 Conference (alternate).

Alex Ricker-Gilbert, Jacksonville University; ASUN Conference.

Greg Sankey, Southeastern Conference (FBS autonomy conference commissioner).

Paul Schlickmann, Fairfield University; Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference.

Justin Sell, South Dakota State University; The Summit League.

Paula Smith, University of California, Irvine; Big West Conference.

Jon Steinbrecher, Mid-American Conference.

Sonja Stills, Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (alternate).

Lynda Tealer, University of Florida; Southeastern Conference.

NCAA Division I Council Videoconference June 25, 2020

Attendees:

Rich Tiner, Belmont University; Ohio Valley Conference.

Patty Viverito, Missouri Valley Football Conference (FCS conference commissioner).

Jaunelle White, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, Horizon League.

Jennifer Williams, Alabama State University; Southwestern Athletic Conference.

John Williams, Southland Conference.

Kurt Zorn, 1A Faculty Athletics Representative.

Absentee:

Ken Halpin, Winthrop University; Big South Conference.

Chris May, Saint Louis University; Atlantic 10 Conference.

Ingrid Wicker McCree, North Carolina Central University; Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference.

Guests in Attendance:

None.

NCAA Staff Liaisons in Attendance:

Amanda Conklin, Jenn Fraser, Kevin Lennon and Leeland Zeller.

Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance for Portions of the Meeting:

Troy Arthur, Scott Bearby, DJ Brown, Shauna Cobb, Dan Gavitt, Ty Halpin, Brandy Hataway, Jennifer Henderson, Mark Hicks, Lynn Holzman, Michelle Hosick, PJ Hubert, Charnele Kemper, Felicia Martin, Marnae Mawdsley, Courtney Moore, Binh Nguyen, Sarah Otey, Kris Richardson, Anne Rohlman, Dave Schnase, Naima Stevenson, Angela Tressel, Jerry Vaughn and Quintin Wright.

NCAA Division I Council Voting Results June 25, 2020

Conference Voting Delegate	Conference Type	Voting Weight	R-2020-9	Voluntary Workouts Waiver	Preseason Waiver Sports Other Than Football
America East Conference S. Heilbron	DI	> 1	n n n n n n n n n n n n n n n n n n n	> >	P. S.
American Athletic Conference M. McKinley	NA	2	N		
Atlantic 10 Conference J. Redmond (alternate)	DI	1	Y		
Atlantic Coast Conference H. Lyke	A	4	Y		
Asun Conference A. Ricker-Gilbert	DI	1	Y		
Big 12 Conference S. Lyons	A	4	Y		
Big East Conference M. Jackson	DI	1	Y		
			Y		
Big Sky Conference J. Gee	FCS	1		D	А
Big South Conference K. Kallander	FCS	1	Y	e f	р
Big Ten Conference G. Barta	A	4	Y	e	p r
Big West Conference P. Smith	DI	1	Y	a	0
Colonial Athletic Association S. Huge	FCS	1	Y	t e	v e
Conference USA L. Campos	NA	2	N	d	d
Horizon League J. White	DI	1	Y		
Ivy League G. Calhoun	FCS	1	Y		
Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference P. Schlickmann	DI	1	N		
Mid-American Conference J. Steinbrecher	NA	2	Y		
Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference S. Stills (alternate)	FCS	1	Y		
Missouri Valley Conference D. Harris	DI	1	Y		
Mountain West Conference D. Lewis	NA	2	Y		
Northeast Conference N. Morris	FCS	1	Ν		
Ohio Valley Conference R. Tiner	FCS	1	Y		
Pac-12 Conference R. George	А	4	Y		
Patriot League M. Kelly	FCS	1	Y		
Southeastern Conference L. Tealer	А	4	Y		
Southern Conference M. Newton	FCS	1	N		
Southland Conference J. Williams	FCS	1	Y		
Southwestern Athletic Conference J. Williams	FCS	1	Ν		
Summit League J. Sell (MVFC for FCS)	DI	1	Y		
Sun Belt Conference C. Cobb	NA	2	Y		
West Coast Conference R. Baumgartner	DI	1	Y		
Western Athletic Conference J. Boggs	DI	1	N		
IA FAR K. Zorn		1	Y		
Division I Conference Commissioner T. Gumbart		1	Ŷ		
FARA K. Capriotti		1	N		
FBS Autonomy Commissioner G. Sankey		4	Y		
FBS Nonautonomy Commissioner J. MacLeod		2	Ŷ		·
FCS Conference Commissioner P. Viverito (Pioneer for FCS)		1	Ŷ		
SAAC C. Lee		1	Y Y		
SAAC J. Littrell		1	Ŷ		
Yes/Adopt (Y)					
No/Defeat (N) Abstain (A) No Vote Cast (Blank)					
Tota					
	VP		64		
A = Autonomy; NA = FBS Nonautonomy	Y Pe	rcent	82.8%		



CSMAS PREVENTION & PERFORMANCE SUBCOMMITTEE 2020 Summer Access / Fall Preseason Transition Considerations

Areas of Inquiry / Requests for Input						
A.	Can other student-athlete safety and well-being considerations be adequately addressed via existing legislation and					
	policy requirements or are there COVID-specific factors (e.g., cancellation of spring practice) that may warrant					
	changes:					
	1. To existing preseason transition requirements (e.g., preseason practice structure/timelines)?					
	2. To existing acclimatization period requirements?					
	3. To other required health and safety practices for returning student-athletes (e.g., freshmen/transfers)?					
В.	When taking into consideration potential COVID-19-specific impacts (e.g., delayed return to campus) is it possible					
	that the safety and well-being of football student-athletes could be adequately addressed:					
	1. Via transition period requirements (e.g., preseason practice structure/timelines) that are more flexible than those					
	that are currently permitted?					
	2. Via a football acclimatization period that is more flexible than that which is currently required?					
C.	Please describe any specific data or industry best practices that may be applicable to your responses above.					
D.	If implementation of one or more of the changes discussed above would require interim or permanent legislative or					
	policy waiver or change, would you support that?					

Issue Description/Assumptions

Some higher resourced schools believe a more flexible approach to preseason practice structures and timelines is warranted because of practice time lost during the spring season. Other schools are concerned that delayed campus reopening may result in a truncated amount of time between the start of team activities and the first competition, especially where schools have elected to follow the resocialization principles and implement a phased return to athletics activities. In light of these concerns, the Division I Football Oversight Committee is soliciting input specific to potential health and safety factors that should be considered as part of the broader conversation around potential preseason schedule and workout adjustments. When possible, the feedback provided below is framed to address the needs of all returning fall sports.

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Summary of Subcommittee Feedback

The subcommittee agreed that there are numerous COVID-specific factors that will necessitate careful consideration by institutional leadership, athletics and medical staff before and as part of student-athlete return to campus. These considerations will undoubtedly warrant changes to the traditional schedules of activities. Each student-athlete is physically and mentally unique and schools should assume that each has encountered distinct COVID-specific challenges since leaving campus. This means each student-athlete will adjust to re-entry differently. Because of COVID-related factors, planning for pre-workout screening, transition and acclimatization period activities will require increased and intentional focus. In most instances, school staff will be evaluating mental, physical and performance readiness for all student-athletes as they typically would for students who are new to the program (e.g., incoming freshman and transfers).

COVID Impact on Physical Condition of Student-Athletes

While traditional spring and summer activities may vary by division and school, the majority of student-athletes would typically be involved in a consistent cadence and mix of voluntary workouts, required workouts and team practices from the start of spring season until the start of preseason in the fall. These traditional routines create the opportunity for frequent and consistent touchpoints between staff and student-athletes, which allow staff to understand the status of a student-athlete's mental and physical condition throughout the spring and summer, and to predict with some certainty any challenges to transition periods ahead of fall sport activities. A shortened or cancelled spring season and any loss of access to on-campus VARA activities that typically follow spring season before the summer period would contribute to increased variability in the physical condition of student-athletes as they entered the summer months.

Subsequently, where COVID interrupts and/or disrupts traditional campus and home schedules and routines during the summer months, student-athletes can be expected to experience vast differences in their ability to access proper nutrition, sleep, work out structures and facilities. These factors will only further expand the variability in physical condition from athlete to athlete and the speed with which they are able to safely resume physical workouts when they return in the summer and fall. For reference, examples of traditional spring/summer activities, and the potential COVID-related shift in those activities, are reflected in <u>Attachment 1</u>.

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COVID Impact on Mental Health of Student-Athletes

Many mental health experts refer to COVID-19 as a "disaster of uncertainty" in that it creates a unique combination of sustained ambiguity and uncertainty that can result in lasting psychological trauma and burnout for those living through it. While students may eventually return to some normalcy on campus and attempt to recover from the first wave of COVID impact, they will simultaneously be dealing with many continuing future unknowns. In a recent <u>NCAA Survey</u> of more than 37,000 student-athletes, many reported experiencing high rates of mental distress since the discontinuation of formal college athletics activities, with over a third describing sleep difficulties, a quarter reporting feeling sadness and a sense of loss, and 1 in 10 reporting feeling so depressed it has been difficult to function "constantly" or "most every day." In most instances, the rates of reported mental health concerns were 150% to 250% higher than that historically reported by NCAA student-athletes in the American College Health Association's National College Health Assessment. In particular, mental health concerns were highest among student-athletes of color, those whose families are facing economic hardship, and those living alone. Not all of these challenges will be fully addressed via the return to campus. Accordingly, it will be critical for medical personnel to focus as much on the student-athletes' psychological readiness to return as they do their physical state and for all athletics personnel to closely monitor and support the mental well-being of student-athletes, not just as they return but throughout the summer and subsequent preseason and fall season.

Anticipated Changes to Medical Clearance Process

In addition to considering the incorporation of mental health readiness as part of the mandatory medical clearance process, staff should also consider other expanded screening practices designed to account for certain COVID-specific health impacts. For example, data is showing that previously undiagnosed and silent cardiac symptoms can be "unmasked" by COVID infection and, in some, the virus can create oxygen challenges or heart muscle inflammation that can lead to heart rhythm disturbances, cardiac muscle damage and compromised ability of the heart to pump blood optimally. These are issues beyond the expected pulmonary and respiratory challenges associated with the virus and they can manifest in individuals who are otherwise asymptomatic and previously healthy. In addition to these COVID-related medical complexities which may require additional screening steps, basic COVID-specific distancing and sanitation recommendations will require more space for exam activities and more time between visits. The culmination of all these changes will undoubtedly translate into longer and more complex medical clearance periods, especially for those institutions that have historically managed these activities entirely on campus. While there is great flexibility in how

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schools design the return to play clearance process, and at least some of the screening activities can occur prior to return to campus, the subcommittee agreed that it is imperative that a thorough medical screening and clearance protocol be completed before preseason physical activities begin, as is currently legislated, and that schools proactively plan and account for these health and safety resource and scheduling adjustments.

COVID-Specific Transition and Acclimatization Period Considerations

In addition to the expected changes in the medical clearance process, schools should anticipate that the COVID-related considerations described above will impact traditional transition and acclimatization period considerations. The loss of structured physical workouts in the spring and summer and resulting changes to training loads will, for many student-athletes, impact various aspects of physiology (e.g., cardiovascular conditioning, musculoskeletal, soft tissue). Traditional transition and acclimatization considerations (e.g., cardiovascular conditioning, heat, altitude) are still very relevant and, when coupled with the loss of spring and summer activities and other physical and non-physical COVID-related impacts, they can create complex re-entry challenges for student-athletes. While athletes traditionally experience stress and fatigue on a regular basis, stress-coping ability is unique to each student-athlete and these COVID-specific considerations are not typical. It will be important for staff to carefully assess and evaluate, closely monitor and understand the impact of COVID-specific stressors in order to successfully manage overall physiological and psychological stress loads in order to avoid stress overload, during the transition and acclimatization periods.

Initial Transition Period Before Other Required Physical Athletically Related Activities

Data has demonstrated that student-athletes are generally more susceptible to injury during transition period training, and during assessments and evaluations of physical conditioning levels that are conducted during these same periods. Recommendation 3 of the NCAA's *Interassociation Recommendations: Preventing Catastrophic Injury and Death in Collegiate Athletes* (Catastrophic Materials) speaks to the vulnerability of student-athletes during the first week of activity of a transition period in training and the importance of establishing a 7-10 day initial transition period during which student-athletes are afforded the time to properly progress through the physiologic and environmental stresses placed upon them as they return to required activities. This initial transition opportunity becomes an increasingly imperative health and safety

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consideration when the COVID-specific impacts described above are piled on to the traditional challenges of returning to formal physical activities following an extended break.

Given the significant variability in the physical and mental conditions of student-athletes as they begin to resume physical activities on campus this summer and fall, it will be critical for athletic departments to design proper assessments, evaluations and physiologic progressions that are based in exercise science and are sport and athlete-specific with respect to, among other things, the volume, intensity, mode and duration of conditioning and the incorporation of game-like movements. The subcommittee believes that this initial transition period, starting whenever student-athletes return to required and organized activities, should be 7-10 days in duration and otherwise consistent with the Catastrophic Materials and should be completed before the start of any other required physical activities. The subcommittee contemplated that the training and conditioning sessions conducted during this initial transition period will occur on campus, so that student-athletes participate in a material break from training (e.g., \geq one week) between the end of required summer physical activities and the start of preseason activities, institutions should again consider and incorporate as necessary the same types of transition period considerations. For reference, examples of four different return to campus schedules, including applicable transition periods, are reflected in <u>Attachment 2</u>.

As part of its discussion and analysis of these issues, the subcommittee mentioned various evidence-based resources that have been published by relevant professional organizations, including but limited to, the National Strength and Conditioning Association, the Collegiate Strength and Conditioning Coaches Association, the National Athletic Trainers' Association, the College Athletic Trainers Society, and the Kori Stringer Institute, that may be helpful to the membership as it strategizes and navigates the design and implementation of appropriate assessment and evaluation activities and physical conditioning sessions during these COVID-impacted transitions periods.

Football Acclimatization Period

Separate from the transition period considerations described above, legislation in all three divisions contemplates a fiveday acclimatization period in football that is intended to address the specific environmental and other physiological stressors related to the return to full gear and full team practices and playing environment. This acclimatization period

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should remain at least five days in duration and otherwise adhere to legislative health and safety requirements. It should precede the start of any other preseason full practice (e.g., full speed/full pads) activities and should place particular focus on the impact of heat, altitude and other environmental stressors when combined with the introduction of full playing gear and other game-like factors. Where programs are participating in required summer athletic activities, the 5-day acclimatization period would happen after summer access activities and precede the start of full team preseason practices. Where programs are not participating in required summer athletic activities, the 5-day acclimatization can happen as part of the 7-10 transition period. For reference, examples of three different return to campus schedules, including recommended acclimatization periods, are reflected in Attachment 2.

Necessary Adjustments to Summer/Fall Calendars and Limitations on Hours

The subcommittee reviewed various preseason models shared by different athletic conferences, and it discussed the theory that leniency in weekly CARA hour restrictions and/or additional weeks may be needed within a traditional summer or preseason schedule to more fully address the health and safety needs of returning student-athletes.

The subcommittee agreed that the relevant transition period considerations can be properly accommodated within the traditional eight hours of required summer athletic activities; but, it acknowledged the potential value of providing some flexibility in hourly restrictions as teams move closer to full team practices, specifically where the additional hours are not used for full contact activities but are otherwise used to properly address transition and acclimatization considerations.

Because of the variations in state and local guidance and institutional application of the resocialization guidance, and in light of the unique nature of institutional risks, it is anticipated that the timing and details related to student-athlete return to campus will vary greatly from school to school. While some schools might return to campus in the very near future and incorporate many of the traditional voluntary and countable athletically related summer activities before returning for fall preseason, other schools may forego summer activities on campus altogether. Due to these variations and the unique and individualized nature of the institutional return to campus risks and requirements, the subcommittee believes that athletic departments, in consultation with institutional medical personnel and risk management and other school and conference leadership, are in the best position to design and implement appropriate preseason timelines.

Application to Other Fall Sports and Required Activities

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The subcommittee considered and discussed whether and to what extent the initial transition period considerations would apply to other sports that will resume required activities in the fall (e.g., teams with traditional fall seasons and those participating in required workouts as part of a non-traditional season). The subcommittee agreed that the same risks and considerations would apply and, since other sports do not participate in summer access, the 7-10-day transition period would occur on the front end of preseason before other required team practice activities commence. For reference, see the last of the sample return to campus schedules reflected in <u>Attachment 2</u>. Similarly, scheduling flexibility should also be contemplated for these other sports if and to the extent adjustments to traditional fall schedules are determined to be necessary to address COVID-related health and safety considerations that may apply uniquely to a particular sport.

Conclusion

Regardless of variation in return to campus and return to athletics schedules, the subcommittee believes that the completion of appropriate pre-workout screening activities to assess mental and physical well-being and the proper design and incorporation of one or more transition periods, and for football, a final acclimatization period, before the start of fall preseason physical activities is critical to student-athlete health and safety. COVID-19 has undoubtedly increased the complexities, and will continue to impact health and safety considerations, related to return to athletics and preseason activities. Schools should be afforded appropriate flexibility with respect to their efforts to adequately account for and address these new challenges, and more specifically as they relate to the scheduling and completion of necessary medical clearance activities and transition and acclimatization periods. The subcommittee stressed that, above all, student-athlete health and safety must be prioritized over the start of team practice activities and fall scheduling challenges wherever those issues may be in conflict.



ATTACHMENT 1

Sample Fall Sport Athletic Activities

Spring through Preseason

Spring			Summer	
S&C	Spring Season		Voluntary	Preseason
 Required strength and conditioning. 8 hrs/week. 	 Practice. Competition.	 Required strength and conditioning. 8 hrs/week. 	Supervised S&C.	• Practice.

Sample Division I Football Athletic Activities

Spring through Preseason

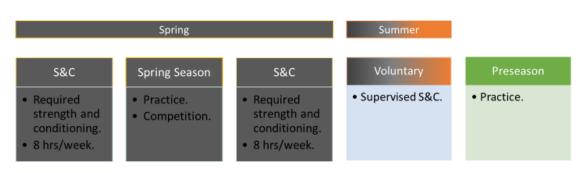
Spring		Sur		
S&C	Spring Practice	Voluntary	Required	Preseason
 Required strength and conditioning. 8 hrs/week. 	 34 days. 15 practices. 1 scrimmage.	Supervised S&C.	 8 weeks. 8 hrs/week. Conducted S&C, film review. 	 Five-day acclimatization. 29 days. 25 practices.

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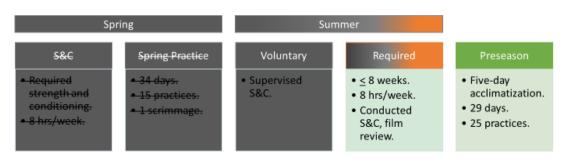
Sample Fall Sport Athletic Activities

Spring through Preseason



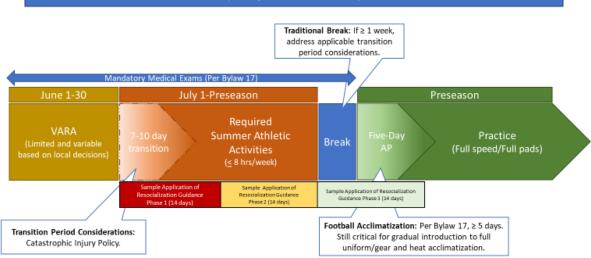
2019-20 Division I Football Athletic Activities

Spring through Preseason Due to COVID-19



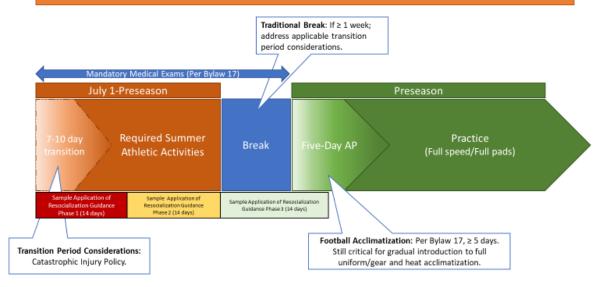


ATTACHMENT 2



VARA and Required Summer Athletic Activities Prior to Preseason (Sample Schedule #1)





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