



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION I PRESIDENTIAL FORUM
JANUARY 19, 2022, MEETING**

ACTION ITEMS.

- None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Association-Wide and Division I Business Sessions at the 2022 NCAA Convention.** The NCAA Division I Presidential Forum received updates on the final draft of the new NCAA constitution and the associated legislative proposal (NCAA Proposal No. BOG-2022-1) sponsored by the NCAA Board of Governors that will be voted on during the January 20 Association-Wide Business Session at the 2022 NCAA Convention. In addition, the Forum received updates on the Division I-specific legislation (Division I Proposal No. 2021-39) sponsored by the NCAA Division I Board of Directors to move division dominant provisions out of the constitution, which will be voted on during the January 20 Division I Business Session. Lastly, the Forum received an update on the NCAA Division I Council's action earlier in the day to approve a proposal (Proposal No. 2021-37) that would move Division I-specific federated legislation (other than division dominant provisions) out of the constitution and into the appropriate bylaws.

2. **Discussion with NCAA Division I Transformation Committee Co-Chairs.** The Presidential Forum engaged with Division I Transformation Committee co-chairs Greg Sankey, commissioner of the Southeastern Conference, and Julie Cromer, director of athletics at Ohio University, regarding the process and priorities the committee will consider as it begins its work. The co-chairs emphasized that the constitutional review this past fall and subsequent formation of a committee to transform the Division I collegiate model is not a result of any one segment of the membership pushing an agenda but because of external forces repeatedly calling for change and questioning the NCAA's ability to self-govern. The environment surrounding college sports has undergone radical change in recent years, and to continue serving student-athletes, college sports must change, as well.

In the subsequent discussion of the issues at hand, Presidential Forum members stressed the importance of sufficient conference representation across the division in structural and governance models to ensure that the full diversity among member institutions is represented, that all student-athletes have a voice through their conference, and to enhance the collective creativity of the division's approach to governance. The co-chairs assured the Forum that all Division I stakeholders will have a voice in the process with ample chances for input on concepts and recommendations. In the end, the division must agree on what binds the membership together, what it means to be Division I, and what level of support is expected from each member to provide the best possible experience – not only for the student-athletes who compete in front of national audiences but also for those who do not.

The Presidential Forum also expressed concern about the aggressive timeline for the Transformation Committee's work. The Forum does not believe that the process should be

rushed for the sake of meeting the deadline. This review will be complex, and the appropriate time should be devoted to ensuring the best outcomes.

3. Breakout Group Discussions. To help inform the Transformation Committee's work, the Presidential Forum broke into small groups to discuss the overall role of presidents in the Division I collegiate model, as well as the role of the Presidential Forum in future governance models that may be considered. The following is a high-level summary of comments on both topics.

a. Role of Chancellors and Presidents in the NCAA Structure.

- 1) It is imperative that chancellors and presidents maintain leadership and ultimate accountability in any new governance structure. However, practitioner involvement is also critical. It will be important to find the right balance of leadership and division of labor between those two groups at the national level.
- 2) Presidential oversight/leadership is essential in key areas such as the infractions process, revenue distribution, championships access, health and safety, and equity and inclusion.
- 3) It will be important to educate and engage presidents to ensure that a broader pool of presidents is informed and prepared to lead in the governance structure.

b. Future Role of the Presidential Forum.

- 1) If the Presidential Forum is maintained, there needs to be more meaningful engagement and cross communication between the Forum and the Board of Directors. For instance, the Presidential Forum should have more latitude to make recommendations to the Board of Directors and the Board should be held accountable for responding to concerns raised by the Forum. Under the current structure, the Forum simply receives direction from the Board, but there is no direct mechanism for the Forum to receive feedback from the Board on the concerns that are raised.
- 2) Serving in a role that is purely advisory with no authority is not the most effective use of presidents' time and expertise.
- 3) If a fully representative Division I governance body is developed, then the Presidential Forum may well have outlived its utility, as presidents could also be asked to serve on committees or single-issue task forces.

- 4) Having a governance body in which all 32 conferences are represented can be beneficial, but perhaps it should not be composed solely of presidents – conference commissioners, athletics directors, and student-athletes should have some representation among the representatives.
- 5) Consider whether an empowered executive committee of a larger board or subdivisional boards may be effective and efficient.

4. Report of the October 26 Presidential Forum Videoconference. The Forum approved the report of its October 26 videoconference. (*Unanimous voice vote.*)

Presidential Forum chair: Adela de la Torre, San Diego State University, Mountain West Conference

*Staff Liaisons: Amanda Conklin, Law, Policy and Governance
Jenn Fraser, Law, Policy and Governance
Kevin Lennon, Law, Policy and Governance
Leeland Zeller, Law, Policy and Governance*

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Attendees:	
Johnson Akinleye, North Carolina Central University; Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference.	
Laurence Alexander, University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff; Southwestern Athletic Conference.	
Connie Book, Elon University; Colonial Athletic Association.	
Sean Buck, United States Naval Academy; American Athletic Conference.	
Brian Casey, Colgate University; Patriot League.	
Ana Mari Cauce, University of Washington; Pac-12 Conference.	
Kimberly Cline, Long Island University; Northeast Conference.	
Jane Conoley, Long Beach State University; Big West Conference.	
Brad Creed, Campbell University; Big South Conference.	
Deb Curtis, Indiana State University; Missouri Valley Conference.	
Bob Davies, Central Michigan University; Mid-American Conference.	
Houston Davis, University of Central Arkansas; ASUN Conference.	
Adela de la Torre, San Diego State University; Mountain West Conference.	
Gabriel Esteban, DePaul University; Big East Conference.	
Ronnie Green, University of Nebraska, Lincoln; Big Ten Conference.	
Robert Nelsen, California State University; Big Sky Conference.	
Mark Nemec, Fairfield University; Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference.	
John Nicklow, University of New Orleans; Southland Conference.	
Brian Noland, East Tennessee State University; Southern Conference.	
Ora Pescovitz, Oakland University; Horizon League.	
Donde Plowman, University Tennessee, Knoxville; Southeastern Conference.	
Havidan Rodriguez, University of Albany, America East Conference.	
Jim Ryan, University of Virginia; Atlantic Coast Conference.	
Eric Spina, University of Dayton; Atlantic 10 Conference.	
Carlos Vargas, Southeast Missouri State University; Ohio Valley Conference.	
Alisa White, Sam Houston State University; Western Athletic Conference.	
Absentees:	
Victor Boschini, Texas Christian University; Big 12 Conference.	
Barry Dunn, South Dakota State University; The Summit League.	
Sheri Everts, Appalachian State University; Sun Belt Conference.	
Phil Hanlon, Dartmouth College; The Ivy League.	
Thayne McCulloh, Gonzaga University; West Coast Conference.	
Guests in Attendance:	
Jeremy Calsyn, Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP.	
Javaune Adams-Gaston, Division I Transformation Committee.	
Julie Cromer, Ohio University, Division I Transformation Committee.	
Greg Sankey, Southeastern Conference, Division I Transformation Committee.	
NCAA Staff Liaisons in Attendance:	
Amanda Conklin, Kevin Lennon and Leeland Zeller.	
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:	
Lydia Bell, Gary Brown, Bridget Rigney, Dave Schnase, Jeremy Villanueva.	