



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA BOARD OF GOVERNORS COMMITTEE TO
PROMOTE CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND EQUITY
DECEMBER 7, 2023, VIDEOCONFERENCE**

ACTION ITEMS.

- None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Welcome and announcements.** The newly appointed chair of the NCAA Board of Governors Committee to Promote Cultural Diversity and Equity, President Paulette Dillard, welcomed the committee and noted that Kristy Bayer has been appointed as the new vice chair of the committee. President Dillard also asked the two new committee members, Michara Delaney-Fields and Ron Darbeau, to introduce themselves.
2. **Review of previous committee reports.** The committee approved the report from its May 18 videoconference, as presented.
3. **NCAA Student-Athlete Advisory Committee reports.** The committee received the following updates from the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee members who were present. The committee emphasized the importance of the student-athlete voice in NCAA deliberations and praised the divisional SAACs for their dedication to diversity and inclusion.
 - a. **Division I.** The Division I SAAC representative updated the committee on recent actions impacting Division I student-athletes, particularly the Division I SAAC's efforts regarding congressional engagement to spread awareness regarding student-athletes' experiences and the purpose of intercollegiate athletics. In June, SAAC members sent letters to congressional leaders supporting legislation to guide the future of college sports. It was also noted that the Division I SAAC will begin diving deeper into membership diversity, equity and inclusion expectations during its next meeting in January 2024 at the NCAA Convention.

These updates prompted the committee to engage in a preliminary discussion regarding a memo from NCAA President Charlie Baker to Division I stakeholders regarding modernizing the division and providing a forward-looking framework to better serve NCAA institutions and student-athletes. NCAA staff noted that the committee will be apprised of developments during its next meeting.

- b. **Division II.** The Division II SAAC representative echoed the overall SAAC efforts regarding congressional engagement, noting the importance especially for student-athletes in Divisions II and III to share their unique experiences with congressional leaders and refute the notion of being considered as institutional employees. In November, the Division II SAAC conducted its sixth Super Region Convention in Atlanta that convened more than 150 student-athletes and administrators from the Southeast and South regions to develop plans to better support mental health and

the student-athlete voice on their campuses and in their conferences. The Division II SAAC developed the super-region model as an additional outreach effort to involve more student-athletes in Division II governance. The Division II SAAC also formalized its focus areas moving forward and will emphasize what the group is calling “the three Es”: “empower” student-athletes with resources; “empathize” with their concerns; and “enhance” their voice and experience. The national SAAC is encouraging all campus and conference SAACs to adopt a similar focus in the coming months.

- c. **Division III.** A report regarding Division III SAAC was not provided as the Division III SAAC representative was unable to attend the meeting.
4. **NCAA Transgender Student-Athlete Participation Policy update.** The committee member, who represents CPCDE in discussions with the NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports (CSMAS) about the [NCAA Transgender Student-Athlete Participation Policy](#), updated the group on a potential recommendation the CSMAS is discussing for the NCAA Board of Governors to consider at its January 2024 meeting. It is anticipated that the CSMAS will recommend that the Board of Governors extend Phase Two of the policy through the 2024-25 academic year. Extending Phase Two implementation through the 2024-25 academic year allows: (1) Better understanding of how the proposed Title IX recommendations and broader legal landscape impact implementation or evolution of the policy; (2) Sufficient time to consider the evolving landscape of sport-governing bodies’ policies for transgender athletes and how those trends may impact implementation of Phase Three of the policy or shape additional considerations for policy change; (3) Sufficient time and resources to address administrative considerations associated with implementing additional requirements; and (4) Sufficient notice to the membership regarding competition requirements for the 2024-25 academic year. The committee emphasized that if Phase Three is implemented in the future, it will be imperative to provide the membership with an appropriate timeline to acclimate and prepare to support student-athletes.
5. **Discuss actions to support 2023-24 committee goals.** The committee reviewed its goals for 2023-24, which focus on diverse hiring practices, and discussed potential approaches to gathering data from the membership to inform recommendations for the development of resources focused on strengthening diverse hiring practices on campus. The committee noted some concern about survey fatigue for the membership and inquired about other ways staff could gather information about diverse hiring practices. Staff noted that the committee may be able to gather data from the [NCAA Demographics Database](#), which provides users with high-level gender and race/ethnicity breakdowns for athletics administrators and student-athletes in all three divisions. Staff also updated the group about the [NCAA Leadership Collective](#), which is an interactive and user-friendly online platform that highlights the professional accomplishments of ethnic minorities within college sports through customizable, in-depth personal profiles. Additionally, staff noted that the Division III governance team will be updating its own diverse hiring resource called [The Diverse Workforce](#) and has asked the committee for its input in the revision process. The committee

noted its appreciation for the opportunity to explore a collaborative effort to create an Association-wide resource.

6. **Discussion regarding the definition of “equity.”** Staff updated the committee on efforts to address the referral from the Board of Governors regarding its recommendation that there be an equity analysis before the adoption of NCAA policy and legislation, which emerged from Phase One of the external gender equity review (recommendation 1.8). The four NCAA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) committees, including this committee, the Committee on Women’s Athletics, the Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee, and the Gender Equity Task Force, are in the process of establishing a definition of “equity” that will be foundational to any processes for equity analyses. The committee reviewed and provided feedback on the draft statement to date, suggesting that the statement not only define what equity means but also define how best to pursue and achieve equity. Staff noted that the Committee on Women’s Athletics and the Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee provided feedback during their fall meetings, and the Gender Equity Task Force will review the draft statement during its January 2024 meeting.

7. **Updates on DEI initiatives and legislation.**

- a. **BOG directed review of Association-wide committees.** Following the adoption of the new NCAA Constitution in January 2022, the NCAA Board of Governors began a review of Association-wide committees to determine their relevance, assess whether potential changes would better align their work with the requirements outlined in the new constitution and determine how to streamline the Association-wide governance structure. Staff noted that a working group consisting of at least the chairs and vice chairs of the four DEI committees will begin meeting in January 2024 to conduct this review. The working group is expected to develop recommendations to be considered at a special meeting of the four committees in March 2024. It is anticipated that recommendation(s) will be submitted for consideration by the Board of Governors during its April 2024 meeting.

- b. **Division I DEI legislation updates.**

- (1) **New Division I legislation impacting the [Athletics Diversity and Inclusion Designee](#).** NCAA staff noted that in October, the NCAA Division I Council adopted emergency legislation specifying that an active member institution shall designate a senior level administrator with appropriate training as an athletics diversity and inclusion designee, whose primary responsibilities shall include initiatives related to the institution’s obligation to create environments and an atmosphere of respect for and sensitivity to the dignity of every person as required by the NCAA Constitution (the title of the actual position would be left to the institution’s discretion) [see Division I Proposal No. 2023-43 (division membership – active membership – conditions and obligations of membership – athletics diversity and

inclusion designee)]. The legislation is effective August 1, 2025. The proposal emerged in response to recommendations from the Division I Transformation Committee and the Division I Board of Directors directing the development of legislation to enhance membership expectations in support of the Association's constitutional commitment to promoting environments and an atmosphere of respect and sensitivity to the dignity of every person.

Staff also updated the committee on the office of inclusion's efforts to provide engagement and education opportunities for ADIDs, including the second annual ADID Summit at the 2024 NCAA Inclusion Forum, which is expanding from 100 to 150 ADIDs. It was also noted that the national office established the ADID Community Connection, which is an online network for ADIDs to share best practices and exchange feedback on concerns.

(2) Division I DEI Review attestation for schools (2023) and conference offices (2024). In 2019, Division I adopted a requirement for schools to attest to a DEI review every five years [see Division I Proposal No. 2019-103 (NCAA membership – conditions and obligations of membership – equity, diversity and inclusion review – penalty for failure to complete)]. In 2020, the legislation was amended to require the review every four years and conference offices were added to the requirement [see Division I Proposal No. 2020-5 (NCAA membership – conditions and obligations of members – equity, diversity and inclusion review – every four years)]. The first review for Division I schools was due November 3, 2023, and the first review for Division I conferences is due November 1, 2024. The NCAA's office of inclusion provided [resources](#) to support the reviews, including a session about the institutional DEI reviews at the 2023 NCAA Inclusion Forum.

- c. Planning for the 2024 NCAA Inclusion Forum.** The NCAA Inclusion Forum will be in Indianapolis on Wednesday through Friday, April 24-26, 2024. New this year will be programming specific for student-athletes who already are leading or are interested in leading DEI initiatives. Committee members were advised that they may attend at a reduced rate. Staff welcomed feedback from the committee about additional content that will be featured at the Inclusion Forum.
- d. NCAA Business Review initiatives impacting women's sports participation.** Staff updated the committee on the NCAA Business Review commissioned by President Baker and its emphasis on growing women's sports participation. Staff noted the status of six current emerging sports, specifically noting that women's wrestling has met the requirement of at least 40 institutions sponsoring the sport to be considered for a national collegiate championship. Staff noted that the Committee on Women's Athletics anticipates recommending at their February 2024 meeting that all three divisions adopt legislation accordingly. Staff also noted the increased interest nationally in other sports like women's flag football that they continue to

monitor. Flag football was officially added as one of five new sports to the Olympic program for the 2028 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles.

- e. **New Division III initiative: Inclusive Leaders Facilitator Program.** The committee was informed of a new Division III initiative to create an inclusive learning path for athletics professionals to improve the recruitment and retention of student-athletes that identify as Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) while leveraging the power of athletics for positive growth. It was noted that training sessions for facilitators will begin during the 2024 NCAA Convention in January.
- f. **NCAA Board of Governors Antidiscrimination Policy.** NCAA staff noted that a Board of Governors policy adopted in 2016 requires an inclusive environment at all NCAA-sponsored events. It is anticipated that continued discussion on this topic will occur in 2024.
- g. **USOPC/NCAA Para-College Inclusion Project.** Time did not permit staff to provide an update on the USOPC/NCAA Para-College Inclusion Project. However, staff noted several positive steps have been taken and will include these updates on the committee's next meeting agenda.

8. Future meetings/videoconferences.

- The committee will meet virtually in spring 2024 on a date to be determined.

9. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m. Eastern time.

Committee Chair: Paulette Dillard, Shaw University

Staff Liaisons: Felicia Martin, Inclusion, Education and Community Engagement

DeeDee Merritt, Leadership Development

Amy Wilson, Office of Inclusion

NCAA Board of Governors Committee to Promote Cultural Diversity and Equity December 7, 2023, Videoconference	
Attendees:	
Kristy Bayer, Rockhurst University.	
Michael Benson, Coastal Carolina University.	
Ron Darbeau, Penn State University, Altoona.	
Michara Delaney-Fields, Stephen F. Austin State University.	
Paulette Dillard, Shaw University.	
Crystal Gibson, St. Mary's College of Maryland.	
Kaiya Johnson, San Jose State University.	

Report of the Committee to Promote Cultural Diversity and Equity

December 7, 2023, Videoconference

Page No. 6

David Mayser, University of Hawaii at Hilo.
Fayneese Miller, Hamline University.
Carlos Vargas-Aburto, Southeast Missouri State University.
Absentees:
Julia Hathaway, Virginia Wesleyan University.
Guests in Attendance:
None.
NCAA Staff Liaisons in Attendance:
Felicia Martin, DeeDee Merritt and Amy Wilson.
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance for Portions of the Meeting:
Gary Brown, Kina Davis, Gail Dent, Niya Blair Hackworth, Ashlesha Lokhande, Jean Merrill, Leilyn Miles, Gretchen Miron, Stephanie Quigg and Donovan Wilson.