

11-6-2006 NCAA Executive Committee

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2 JOSH CENTOR: The NCAA Executive Committee has
3 authorized further efforts to study ways to deal with
4 divisional growth and interdivision migration within the
5 association, as well as to consider the possibility of
6 permitting universities outside the United States to become
7 NCAA members.

8 Meeting October 26 in Indianapolis, the Executive
9 Committee agreed to form an association-wide committee with
10 broader representation from all three divisions to pick up the
11 work of the Executive Committee's Working Group on Membership
12 Issues, and specifically to study the possibility of
13 establishing either a fourth membership division or a
14 Division III subdivision.

15 The Executive Committee also agreed to permit its
16 Working Group on Membership Eligibility For International
17 Institutions to study the possibility of accepting
18 universities outside the United States for membership on a
19 case-by-case basis, as part of a pilot program. The Working
20 Group on Membership Issues, chaired by University of Georgia
21 president Michael Adams, and consisting primarily of
22 presidents of Divisions II and III institutions, asked the
23 Executive Committee to appoint a larger committee with broader
24 representation from all three divisions to study membership
25 models suggested during the working group's discussions.

1 Executive Committee chair, Walter Harrison, president
2 of the University of Hartford, will appoint the committee
3 which will be instructed to prepare concepts for discussion at
4 the 2008 convention. Any resulting legislative proposals
5 probably would be submitted for voting in 2009.

6 The working group, formed late last year largely in
7 response to a proposal in Division III by the North Coast
8 Athletic Conference to impose a cap on the size of the
9 division, focused its meetings in June and October 25th on the
10 possibility of creating a fourth membership division.

11 The group suggested two types of criteria that might
12 be considered either for creating a new division, Division IV
13 or for subdividing Division III, currently the association's
14 largest membership division with 443 active, provisional, and
15 reclassifying members, as well as eight institutions that
16 formally began exploring membership before the Division III
17 President's Council imposed a moratorium through January 2008
18 on accepting new members.

19 One of the models might be based on what the group
20 termed quantitative membership criteria, such as number of
21 sports sponsored by an institution or financial commitment to
22 athletics.

23 The other model might be based on philosophical
24 criteria, based on institutional objectives for athletics,
25 such as a desire to limit or expand playing and practice

1 seasons, permit redshirting, offer a broad range of sports to
2 encourage participation, or focus resources on a small number
3 of teams for competitive purposes.

4 Working group members suggested that a new Division IV
5 would not permit the awarding of athletic scholarships, thus
6 distinguishing it in one important aspect from Divisions I and
7 II, while imposing fewer legislative restrictions than
8 currently exist in Division III.

9 Additional working group discussions focused on ways
10 to fund a new division. Possibilities included allocating a
11 percentage of current association funding to the division,
12 increasing membership dues to fund programming and
13 championships, or establishing a self-funded division in which
14 members paid for their own championships and services.

15 A fourth option would be to adjust an existing
16 division chair of current funding on a per capita basis as an
17 institution chooses to migrate from one division to another.
18 In other words, that division-shared funding in one division
19 could be transferred to the other division.

20 In making its recommendations, the working group noted
21 that Divisions II and III independently are taking steps to
22 manage membership issues.

23 In addition to recent efforts to promote the benefits
24 of membership and improve Division II's visibility in
25 intercollegiate athletics and higher education, the

1 Division II President's Council is sponsoring legislation at
2 the 2007 convention that seeks to establish a uniform process
3 by which new and reclassifying members seek active membership.
4 The proposal would require any institutions seeking membership
5 to be sponsored by an active Division II member or conference
6 and establish a two-part membership process consisting of an
7 exploratory period and a divisional period.

8 Division III, in addition to its current moratorium on
9 accepting members, will consider two proposals sponsored by
10 the Division III President's Council that seek to further
11 limit acceptance of new members annually, while also holding
12 current members more accountable for compliance with
13 Division III standards.

14 The Council is asking the Division III membership to
15 choose its approach over the membership cap, which again is
16 being proposed by the North Coast Athletic Conference at the
17 2007 convention.

18 The Working Group on Membership Eligibility For
19 International Institutions, chaired by Belmont University
20 president Robert Fisher, informed Executive Committee members
21 that it has been discussing the possibility of establishing a
22 pilot program for evaluating universities outside the United
23 States and its territories for NCAA membership.

24 The Executive Committee authorized the working group
25 to continue its deliberations and to formally propose criteria

1 for evaluating international institutions at the committee's
2 January meeting. The working group is suggesting that
3 institutions expressing interest in NCAA membership be
4 evaluated on a case-by-case basis, not only under current
5 standards for membership eligibility, but also under criteria
6 for evaluating the impact acceptance would have on current
7 NCAA student athletes and membership institutions.

8 Among criteria relating to student athletes are
9 cultural impact, educational impact, and student athlete well
10 being. As for impact on current NCAA member institutions,
11 criteria might include the ability of an international
12 institution to develop a conference alliance and strengthen
13 competition within a conference.

14 The working group believes that most current interest
15 in exploring NCAA membership involves Canadian institutions,
16 but the group also believes that criteria must account for
17 potential interest by institutions in other countries.

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