

2-27-2006 Mondays with Myles-NCCA Governance Structure

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2 JOSH: Dr. Myles Brand will be joining us
3 today to discuss the decisionmaking process of the NCAA.

4 Dr. Brand, thanks for being here.

5 DR. MYLES BRAND: Pleasure, Josh.

6 JOSH: Can you explain a little bit about
7 the NCAA governing structure and how decisions are made?

8 DR. MYLES BRAND: Yeah. First of all, let
9 me say, the words NCAA are systemically ambiguous. They
10 can mean one of three things. They can mean the national
11 office, which consists of about 350 people, which has
12 oversight for the infrastructure of the National
13 Collegiate Athletic Association.

14 It could mean the members themselves, the
15 over a thousand universities and colleges that constitute
16 the NCAA, and sometimes the home office gets confused with
17 its members in the press.

18 But third, it could mean what I'll call the
19 corporate entity -- the group of members and staff members
20 that help make all the rules and oversee the direction.

21 Within that third group, we have one area
22 we call governance. What governance does is it really is
23 responsible for the playing rules for the rules of safety,
24 the academic requirements, and so on. We divide ourselves
25 into three divisions, basically on the basis of

1 scholarship offers. So Division III offers no
2 scholarships, and Division I the maximum number of
3 scholarships, and Division II, the happy medium in
4 between. And each group makes its own rules -- playing
5 rules, academic rules. There are some great similarity
6 between them, but they're not all the same.

7 It's the members, not the staff in
8 Indianapolis that make the rules. And they do so in order
9 to retain a competitive fairness and equity, so that the
10 games can be conducted in a way that the best team wins.

11 JOSH: What are some of the challenges that
12 face a membership-driven organization?

13 DR. MYLES BRAND: Well, because we consist
14 of a thousand members and each member is represented not
15 only by the university or the president or the chancellor,
16 but an athletic director, coaches, administrators within
17 the athletic department, as well as conferences that
18 various schools come together to form, there are a
19 diversity of opinion. And not everyone agrees. Sometimes
20 it's for self-interest; sometimes it's just to have a
21 different perspective.

22 And so like any democracy, we have to try
23 and bring consensus in order to make our rules -- for
24 example, rules about academic performance. It's a
25 somewhat sloppy system, but frankly, I can't think of a

1 better one than a democratic system.

2 JOSH: You were formerly the president of a
3 couple of institutions. How has the experience of being
4 NCAA president been similar and different from that
5 experience?

6 DR. MYLES BRAND: I was president of
7 Indiana University, as well as the University of Oregon,
8 and spent my life as a philosophy professor on other
9 campuses, as well.

10 There is a very important similarity, and
11 the similarity is that it's all about students. And right
12 now I have a national role to play for student athletes,
13 360,000 student athletes, but it's all about the student
14 athletes.

15 When you're on a college campus, it's all
16 about the students. There wouldn't be any universities or
17 colleges, if it weren't for the students. And similarly,
18 there wouldn't be an NCAA if it wasn't for the students
19 participating.

20 So the student success is a constant
21 between the two of them. But, of course, it's different
22 too when you're a university president, and you're looking
23 after a wider range of issues than just athletics. You're
24 looking after the research and academic performance.
25 You're working, as I was, in public universities, with

1 state legislators and federal groups and donors.

2 So the range of people I meet is less, but
3 the breadth, being national as opposed to regional or
4 statewide, is much larger.

5 JOSH: When you wake up in the morning, why
6 do you like coming to work? Why do you like working with
7 the NCAA, leading the NCAA?

8 DR. MYLES BRAND: I like both the people I
9 work with -- people in college sports are terrific,
10 whether they're the student athletes or the
11 administrators. They have an upbeat, positive, can-do
12 attitude, and that makes it worthwhile all by itself.

13 But most importantly, I think I'm doing
14 important work. I think college sports is part of our
15 culture, deeply ingrained in our culture. And I think
16 college sports also provides opportunities academically,
17 as well as athletically for students on each of our
18 campuses.

19 JOSH: Okay. Well, Dr. Brand, thank you
20 for filling us in on how the NCAA works.

21 DR. MYLES BRAND: My pleasure.
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