

**REPORT OF THE
NCAA COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S ATHLETICS
SEPTEMBER 16-17, 2007**

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative Action Items.

- None.

2. Nonlegislative Items.

- None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. Welcome new Committee on Women's Athletics members. The Committee on Women's Athletics welcomed Bernard Muir, Director of Athletics, Georgetown University, Lynn Oberbillig, Director of Athletics, Smith College, and Megan Coyne, Florida Atlantic University, an NCAA Division I Student-Athlete Advisory Committee member.

2. Student-Athlete Pregnancy and Well-Being Issues—Financial Aid--Cancellation and Reduction of Athletically Related Financial Aid During the Term of the Award. The committee received an update of action taken by the NCAA Division I Academics/Eligibility/Compliance Cabinet at its September meeting regarding the application of NCAA financial aid legislation during the term of the athletics scholarship. The committee issued the following statement in conjunction with the Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee (MOIC):

“The Committee on Women's Athletics (CWA) and Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee (MOIC) strongly and unanimously support the emergency legislative proposal sponsored by the Division I Academics/Eligibility/Compliance Cabinet to amend the bylaws regarding the financial aid of student-athletes who suffer an injury, illness or medical condition. Specifically, the cabinet has forwarded emergency legislation to the Division I Management Council to amend NCAA Division I Bylaw 15.3.4.3-(b) to specify that institutional financial aid based in any degree on athletics ability may not be increased, decreased or canceled during the period of its award because of an injury, illness or medical condition. The CWA and MOIC request that the

Management Council supports the emergency proposal and forwards it to the NCAA Division I Board of Directors for adoption during its November meeting. In addition, the CWA and MOIC request that the Division II Management Council and Presidents Council consider the same action under the same timeframe.”

The committee also received an update regarding the development of educational resources and a toolkit that the membership can use to help student-athletes and staff make careful decisions about the student-athlete's immediate well-being and longer-term educational and athletic participation plans. It was noted that an association-wide session entitled Legal, Medical and Treatment Aspects of Student-Athlete Pregnancy will be offered at the NCAA Convention on this topic.

- 3. Emerging and Olympic Sports.** The committee is charged with managing the process for emerging sports for women. An update was provided relating to the implementation of the policy adopted at the committee's July meeting designed to respond to sponsorship data that does not show growth. Actions taken as a result of that policy included sending notice letters to several institutions, conferences and national governing bodies of the committee's policy.

The committee received a report about sport sponsorship trends in the NCAA, as well as the most recent National Federation of State High School Association report showing continued growth in girls' sports participation in high school. The committee also engaged in a discussion about equestrian and rugby which are on the emerging sport list but are still within the 10-year window by which visible sponsorship growth is expected to occur. Equestrian is on the emerging sport list for Divisions I and II but not Division III. It is offered as an Olympic sport and, in 2007, 24 Divisions I and II institutions sponsored varsity equestrian. At its January meeting, the committee will explore whether Division III should reconsider action taken in 1998 to not add equestrian to the emerging sport list. The committee noted that rugby is considered an emerging sport for all three divisions and has an underlying club system on many campuses. Therefore, institutions may simply need some encouragement or incentive to move the sport to varsity status. In 2007, five institutions sponsored varsity rugby.

- 4. Life and Work Balance Issues.** The committee received an update relating to the Life and Work Balance Working Group appointed by the NCAA Executive Committee. It was noted that each division is addressing the issues identified by the subcommittee independently. For example, at the Division II Strategic Positioning and Work Life

Balance summit being conducted this fall, life and work balance issues will be included as part of those discussions. In addition, a session will be conducted at the 2008 NCAA Convention entitled Balancing Act – Effectively Managing Your Life and Your Life's Work. It was also noted that a toolkit is being developed that will include educational resources and ways that departments and conferences may address and engage in conversations about life and work balance issues. Finally, the committee noted that this is not just a women's issue and that institution's need to have gender neutral policies to address the health and well-being of their employees.

5. **Diversity and Inclusion Update.** The committee received an update on the application timelines and processes for the NCAA internship program, Divisions II and III grant programs, the Diversity and Education programs and NCAA Post-Graduate Scholarship. It was noted that a concerted effort is being undertaken to increase the number of qualified applications for the NCAA internship program and emails relating to the program and application procedures are being sent to Divisions I, II and III athletics directors and faculty athletics representatives.

6. **NCAA Championship Opportunities for Women.** The committee received an update regarding the NCAA Championship opportunities for female student-athletes from Joni Comstock, Senior Vice President for Championships/SWA. It was noted that a broad examination of the student-athlete (male and female) experience at championships is being conducted which includes a look at the selection, bracketing and seeding processes. The examination also includes a look at providing equitable championship opportunities for male and female student-athletes. The championships provide an opportunities for enhancing and increasing the association's messaging about the student-athlete's that are participating while at the same time increasing the value of the championships to the NCAA's corporate and broadcast partners. The committee discussed how NCAA championships may provide a platform for the committee to provide information about emerging sports for women and other educational information about gender equity and Title IX.

7. **NCAA Woman of the Year.** The 2007 Woman of the Year event is scheduled for October 27 in Indianapolis. The committee was informed that based on its previous discussions regarding the events timing and location, the 2008 event will be conducted on October 19, which is the Sunday immediately prior to the scheduled divisional Management Council meetings.

8. **Gender Equity and Title IX Issues.** The committee was provided an update on issues and recent activities regarding Gender Equity and Title IX. These included plans to conduct a women in college sports forum in conjunction with the 2008 NCAA Women's Final Four and an update on plans for the 2008 Gender Equity and Issues Forum scheduled April 27-29 in Boston.

9. **Committee on Women's Athletics Strategic Planning Subcommittee.** The committee was provided an updated draft of the committee's strategic plan. Initial feedback was favorable and it was noted that the subcommittee was working with the budget subcommittee to ensure that any budget requests were supported by the committee's outlined goals and action steps. The subcommittee plans to provide another update at the committee's January meeting.

10. **Committee on Women's Athletics Budget Subcommittee.** The subcommittee presented its initial budget request recommendations relating to CWA and joint initiatives with the MOIC.

Committee Chair: Geri Knortz, Saint Michael's College, Northeast-10 Conference

Staff Liaison(s): Kimberly Ford, Diversity and Inclusion

Lynn Holzman, Membership Services

Karen Morrison, Education Services