



STRATEGIC POSITIONING INITIATIVE

Welcome & Greetings

Greetings from the NCAA Division II Presidents Council. My name is Charles Ambrose, and I am president of Pfeiffer University and chair of the Division II Presidents Council. I am happy to share this first Division II strategic positioning update with you. Division II presidents and chancellors will receive a monthly update on this important topic through December 2006. This edition of the update will summarize the great response the Presidents Council received to the Division II image survey and will highlight the timeline the Presidents Council is following to implement the Division II strategic positioning initiative. The overall objective of the initiative is to develop a strategic positioning for Division II that clearly articulates the core strengths of the division around a central theme, and to create programs within local communities that support this new theme and communication strategy. I encourage you to contact a representative of the Division II Presidents Council if you have questions, suggestions or concerns; and I hope you will also make plans now to attend the 2007 NCAA Convention in Orlando Saturday, January 6, through Monday, January 8.

Background

Following the Division II Chancellors and Presidents Summit in Orlando last June, the Division II Presidents Council agreed to implement a comprehensive study related to the division's defining characteristics and key attributes. Rather than referring to this as a "branding" project, the Presidents Council has more accurately described this as a strategic positioning of Division II. This is more than a slick ad campaign; instead, we hope to 'illuminate' Division II in a way that will call attention to our core values and guiding principles.

To be successful, the Presidents Council has approached this initiative as a data-driven research project. In the fall, various membership and public focus groups were conducted throughout the country to gain an understanding of Division II perceptions. In March, an online quantitative research survey was launched to test existing themes and ideas about Division II membership (e.g., balance) and to explore many new concepts about the attributes for Division II.

The Presidents Council surveyed three groups: (1) Division II campus and conference office personnel; (2) Division II student-athletes; and (3) the general public, identified as college sports fans. The survey announcements were delivered to

various campus leaders in March, and survey announcement recipients were encouraged to share the online survey site with others on campus and with persons in the community who might be interested in these important issues.

Jeff Jacobs, an independent marketing and branding consultant, and Rich Luker, faculty member at the University of Michigan and founder of The Luker Company (a research consulting firm that specializes in analyzing trends in sports and leisure) are assisting the Presidents Council with this initiative. Both have worked with the NCAA in the past and bring extensive knowledge and experience with sports-related surveying and brand/strategic positioning initiatives.

The ultimate objective for this project is to clarify the division's strategic position and, thus, provide Division II institutions with an opportunity to celebrate who we are, what we believe in, and the potential that we can reach together. This refined Division II identity will be communicated to the public at large (e.g., our communities), our own Association-wide membership (e.g., Divisions I, II and III), and on our individual campuses.

We are defining more clearly who we are as a division; we are explaining why schools choose to be Division II members; we are developing a proactive set of campus-based and Association-wide initiatives that underlines this identity; and we are celebrating how Division II student-athletes prepare for life after sports. The Presidents Council believes that this project will not be successful unless Division II presidents and chancellors participate and take a leadership role.

Survey

Preliminary online survey results showed that approximately 4,100 surveys were completed. Of this total, the Division II membership completed approximately 1,250 surveys, including the following totals by key campus positions:

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| Associate Athletics Directors | 70 |
| Athletics Directors | 153 |
| Coaches | 521 |
| Faculty Athletics Representatives | 94 |
| Presidents/Chancellors | 59 |
| Vice Presidents (with oversight for athletics) | 29 |
| Senior Woman Administrators | 48 |

Additionally, nearly 1,900 student-athletes completed the survey—1,300 were recruited student-athletes and almost 600

were nonrecruited student-athletes. One thousand completed surveys were also received from the general public. The Presidents Council has learned the following from the preliminary quantitative research findings that have been released:

From the Division II Student-Athlete:

- Division II student-athletes, especially females, are strong supporters/advocates of Division II. Nearly eight out of 10 rate their Division II student-athlete experience as excellent or very good.
- An overwhelming majority (91 percent) of Division II student-athletes would recommend a Division II institution to a prospective student-athlete.

From the General Public:

- The general public appears to be unfamiliar with the NCAA divisional structure in general and Division II, specifically. Females tend to be least familiar.
- Even though they are unfamiliar with the structure, they do believe that Division II does a better job of balancing the academic and athletic priorities of the student-athlete experience.

From the Division II Membership:

- The membership believes that a priority for the division should be to increase support in the local community.
- The coaches' response to the survey may signal a healthy, active engagement in the process and deliverables.
- Ninety percent of the membership agrees that Division II is fulfilling the overall NCAA mission.

Next Steps

Analysis continues on the numerous responses and comments received in the online survey. The Division II strategic positioning initiative consists of three basic phases: Discovery and Analysis; Positioning and Program Development; and Implementation.

The timeline for this initiative will continue, as follows:

Phase I—Discovery and Analysis

May/June 2006

- Quantitative survey final report due (June 1).
- Administrative Committee discussions regarding Division II strategic positioning initiative (June 2).
- Presidents Council teleconference to review final survey findings and preliminary strategic positioning recommendations (June 19).

Phase II—Strategic Positioning and Program Development

July 2006

- Division II Management Council meeting to review the strategic positioning initiatives and discuss the next steps (July 17-Dallas).

August 2006

- Final strategic positioning recommendations presented to the Division II Presidents Council (August 2-Indianapolis).

Phase III—Implementation

Fall 2006

- Rich Luker will begin implementation of strategy for a Division II community tool kit to help schools enhance community-based programs.
- The “New Look” (theme, key attributes, etc.) for Division II will be unveiled at the 2006 Fall Sports Festival (November 14 to 20-Pensacola).

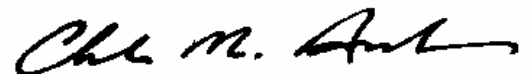
January 2007

- Rich Luker will demonstrate Division II tool kit to the membership at the 2007 NCAA Convention (January 7-Orlando).
- Division II chancellors and presidents meeting and luncheon at 2007 Convention to help launch the Division II strategic position (January 7-Orlando).

Spring 2007

- Division II Community Initiative Workshop to prepare and tutor Division II administrators to implement new community-based programs and to possibly certify Division II schools as “Community Focused Institutions.”

I hope this update is informative. Again, feel free to contact me or any Presidents Council representative listed below if you have questions about this initiative.



Division II Presidents Council Representatives

Charles M. Ambrose, *chair*, Pfeiffer University

Daniel Bradley, Fairmont State University

Robert Charles Brown, Arkansas Tech University

David C. Danahar, Southwest Minnesota State University

Margaret Mary Fitzpatrick, St. Thomas Aquinas College

Antoine M. Garibaldi, Gannon University

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Eddie N. Moore Jr., Virginia State University

James S. Netherton, Carson-Newman College

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