

Executive Committee Working Group – Membership Growth
(Updated 7/19/06)

Talking Points

- With increased membership growth in Division III and in response to a proposal to cap the membership in that division, the Executive Committee Working Group, made up of presidents and chancellors of Divisions I, II and III, was created in late 2005 by the NCAA Executive Committee to examine issues facing the membership with regards to growth.
- The working group is exploring the Association-wide impact of divisional membership and reclassification policies and studying ways of controlling Division III's growth and addressing related membership issues within the Association without harming other divisions.
- One possible option is the creation of a Division IV. The working group is developing two models of a potential Division IV.

Backgrounder

- The Executive Committee Working Group supports encouraging institutions to re-evaluate current membership classification to study Division II as a viable option.
- The group believes any future efforts should include an Association-wide commitment to greater research, publicity and support regarding the membership issues facing Divisions II and III.
- The working group was formed largely in response to a proposal for the 2006 NCAA Convention in Division III by the North Coast Athletic Conference to impose a cap on the size of Division III.
- The NCAC proposal generated concern that its adoption would leave Division II as the only viable option for institutions seeking NCAA membership, and prompted a request from the Division II Presidents Council that the Executive Committee study the Association-wide impact of a cap and other membership issues, mainly the recent or pending reclassification of a number of Division II members to Division I.
- The working group at its Chicago meeting in July acknowledged that Division III – which is approaching a membership of more than 450 institutions counting active, provisional and reclassifying schools – has reached a practical limit in terms of its ability to provide membership services and championships access.

- Division III has added approximately 100 active members since 1989.
- The group also agreed that actions by other divisions – whether to control growth or govern continuing membership as well as reclassification – should “do no harm” to Division II.
- Since 1985, 49 Division II members have reclassified to Division I-AA or I-AAA. Since 1997, 21 schools have done so.
- The working group also agreed to approach the appropriate Division I leaders to discuss how current membership and reclassification criteria may be encouraging movement away from Division II and to explore ways of slowing reclassification.
- The working group supported extending the current moratorium on accepting new members in Division III beyond its current scheduled expiration in early 2007, if necessary, pending continuing efforts by the group.
- Composition of active membership as of Sept. 1, 2005: Division I – 326; Division II – 282; Division III – 419.
- The NCAA first divided its membership into three legislative and competitive divisions – I, II and III – in 1973.
- In 1978, Division I voted to subdivide, creating I-A and I-AA in the sport of football.

Creation of a Division IV

- One model will be based on “quantitative” membership criteria, such as sports-sponsorship limits, that could provide another option for current members of existing divisions.
- The other model will be based on “philosophical” criteria that might bind members together based on institutional objectives for athletics.
- Information will be gathered by NCAA research staff.
- Challenges in forming a Division IV would include, among other things, funding and staffing.
- The working group will examine the information at its next meeting this fall.

Members of the Executive Committee Working Group

- Chair Michael Adams, president, University of Georgia (DI)
- Eddie Moore, president, Virginia State University and vice chair of Division II Presidents Council
- Kathryn Martin, chancellor, University of Minnesota, Duluth (DII)
- James Netherton, president, Carson-Newman College (DII)
- John Fry, president, Franklin & Marshall College and vice chair of Division III Presidents Council
- Dale Knobel, president, Denison University (DIII)
- Richard Wells, chancellor, University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh (DIII)

Note: Contact Jennifer Kearns, Associate Director of Public and Media Relations, (317) 917-6731 or jkearns@ncaa.org with any questions, or for assistance with the media.

