KEY ITEMS.

1. **NCAA Division I Board of Directors strategic areas of emphasis for 2018-2023.** The NCAA Division I Committee on Academics received an update and provided feedback to the NCAA Division I Board of Directors on its potential future areas of emphasis for the next five years. The committee noted the board’s strategic agenda will be finalized in collaboration with the NCAA Division I Presidential Forum at the end of April. [Informational Item No. 1]

2. **NCAA Division I Council Transfer Working Group referrals.** The committee continued its discussion of the referrals from the NCAA Division I Council Transfer Working Group. Specifically, the committee enhanced and affirmed its feedback to the Transfer Working Group regarding the basis for an academic-based transfer eligibility rule. The committee also continued its exploration of whether the NCAA Division I Academic Progress Rate could be used to foster greater accountability in transfer decisions. [Action Item No. 2]

3. **Implementation of academic-based revenue distribution and related operational issues.** The committee received an update from the NCAA Division I Committee on Academics Subcommittee on Data regarding implementation of the academic-based revenue distribution (i.e., “NCAA Division I Academic Unit”). Specifically, the committee approved requested policy recommendations to address operational issues related to the Academic Unit and provided feedback on the mock Academic-Unit eligibility reports to be distributed to the membership in spring 2018. [Informational Item No. 2]

4. **Progress-toward-degree review.** The committee received an update from the NCAA Division I Committee on Academics Subcommittee on Student-Athlete Academics on the progress-toward-degree legislative review as a component of the broader NCAA Division I bylaw refresh and modernization efforts. The committee approved a recommendation to request the NCAA Division I Council to introduce a legislative proposal to modify the current application of the 18/27-hour rule into the 2018-19 legislative cycle. [Action Item No. 1 and Information Item No. 8]

5. **Definition of limited-resource institution within the NCAA Division I Academic Performance Program.** The committee approved an amendment to the calculation used to annually determine what Division I institutions are limited resource for purposes of the NCAA Division I Academic Performance Program. The new calculation will first be used to determine which Division I institutions are considered limited-resource institutions during the 2018-19 academic year. [Information Item No. 5]
ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items for the NCAA Division I Council.

   • Academic Eligibility – Progress-Toward-Degree Requirements – Eligibility for Competition – Fulfillment of Credit-Hour Requirements – Hours Earned or Accepted for Degree Credit – 18-Semester/27-Quarter Hour Requirement.

   (1) Recommendation. To allow a student-athlete to use credits acceptable toward any of the institution’s degree programs to satisfy the 18/27-hour requirement, including after the start of a student-athlete’s third year of enrollment. [Attachment A]

   (2) Effective date. August 1, 2019 (for fall 2019 certifications of the 18/27-hour requirement from the 2018-19 academic year).

   (3) Rationale. Currently, after the start of a student-athlete’s third year of enrollment, only credit that applies towards a student-athlete’s designated degree program (“degree-applicable” credit) may be used to satisfy all progress-toward-degree credit-hour requirements. While the “degree-applicability” application is intended to assess a student-athlete’s academic performance within their chosen degree program, the 18/27-hour rule application often places unintended advising burdens on student-athletes and administrators. Specifically, advisors often must spend significant amounts of time adjusting a student-athlete’s schedule and graduation plan to ensure 18/27 hours of degree applicable credit are allotted during a given academic year. Not only does the advising complexity pose an unnecessary burden on student-athletes and administrators, but it may also discourage a student-athlete from exploring academic opportunities outside of their degree program.

   Allowing any credit hours to be used to satisfy the annual 18/27-hour requirement will provide student-athletes with greater academic flexibility, without jeopardizing a student-athlete’s degree progress or baseline academic performance during the regular academic year. A student-athlete will still be required to earn degree-applicable credit after the start of the third academic year to meet the six- and nine-hour requirements, in accordance with existing legislation and permissible exceptions. The recommendation aligns with the Division I pillars of academics, well-being and fairness to student-athletes.

   (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
(5) **Student-athlete impact.** Student-athletes will have more flexibility to pursue academic opportunities outside their designated degree program during the regular academic year.

2. **Nonlegislative items.**

   a. **Referral feedback for the Transfer Working Group.** The committee provided the requested feedback to the Transfer Working Group regarding an academic-based four-year college transfer concept and APR implications. The feedback reinforces the committee’s previously identified recommendations and observations related to Division I four-year transfer student-athletes. [Attachment B]

(1) **Academic component of Transfer Working Group concept.** The committee affirmed that a student-athlete’s academic record, not his or her sport, should help determine whether a student-athlete qualifies for an exception to the year-in-residence requirement following transfer. The committee noted the academic data does not support requiring all academically prepared and capable students to sit out a year of competition simply because they transferred. Not only may the additional year-in-residence unnecessarily delay certain student-athletes’ academic and career progress, but it may also pose a financial burden on transfer student-athletes and institutions.

   The committee confirmed the data best supported an academic component that includes both a minimum grade-point average of at least 3.000 to 3.300 and holding student-athletes to current percentage-of-degree standards at the new institution. The committee highlighted the recommended academic standards are predicated on aggregate academic data from all Division I transfer student-athletes. As a result, much like other Division I eligibility rules (e.g., initial-eligibility, two-year college transfer rules, progress-toward-degree), the recommended academic standards take into account differences across degree programs, curriculums and institutions.

   The committee further noted the lack of academic data to support a broad transfer exception for enrolled student-athletes who experience a head coach departure. Specifically, no data exists to suggest that enrolled student-athletes who transfer following a head coach departure are more likely to maintain academic progress at the receiving institution.

(2) **APR policy.** The committee continued its discussion on how the APR may be used to increase accountability in transfer decisions, including several models generated from membership ideas and feedback. The committee noted that many of the potential models would impact the integrity of the...
APR as a rate. Specifically, using the APR to address transfer decisions would likely require a re-examination of the how the APR is calculated, the 930 standard for penalties and access to postseason competition and the benchmarks for the new academic-based revenue distribution.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Board of Directors strategic areas of emphasis for 2018-2023.** The committee discussed the items identified for potential inclusion in the Board of Directors strategic areas of emphasis for Division I for 2018-2023. The committee agreed the foundational goals identified by the board position the division to reaffirm the role of intercollegiate athletics in the educational experience and support the primacy of the student-athlete.

   The committee specifically noted the Association’s approach to issues of academic integrity relies on the good faith efforts of institutional leadership. Specifically, presidents and chancellors are ultimately responsible for being proper stewards of the deference afforded to institutions to identify and adjudicate academic integrity issues that arise on a campus. The committee noted a good faith commitment to institutional process and oversight is essential for the recently adopted legislative and policy package to properly function and achieve the NCAA’s collective role in reinforcing and upholding the Association’s core academic principles.

   As leaders of the recent academic integrity reform efforts, the committee is positioned to partner with other presidential-led committees in the governance structure, including the Presidential Forum, in affirming the division’s expectations related to academic integrity and misconduct. The committee noted the comprehensive and collaborative approach that informed the legislation adopted by the Division I membership in April 2016. The committee recommended this item be prioritized amongst the other areas identified by the board as strategic areas of emphasis.

2. **Review phase one implementation of academic-based revenue distribution and related operational issues.** In October 2016, the NCAA Division I Board of Directors and NCAA Board of Governors approved an initiative to distribute a portion of Division I revenue to conferences based on the academic achievement of student-athletes beginning with the 2019-20 academic year, using a portion of the annual growth in future years of the NCAA’s media rights agreement for distribution. The committee is responsible for overseeing activation of distribution and monitoring the metrics upon which distribution is based. Institutions earn academic-distribution units for their conferences by meeting one of three criteria:

   a. Institutional APR from the previous year equal to or greater than 985; or

   b. Institutional Graduation Success Rate from the most recently available year equal to or greater than 90 percent; or
c. Difference between student-athlete and student-body rates for the most recently published Federal Graduation Rate equal to or greater than 13 percentage points.

The committee received an update on the status of implementation of the distribution, including work completed by staff to educate and communicate with the membership in response to the direction provided by the committee. The committee was provided with a sample report and feedback was gathered. The committee also resolved multiple operational items related to implementation of distribution, including determining that:

a. Institutions in unusable data status be ineligible for the Academic Unit, which includes the time period spent in probationary status; and

b. The APP data used to determine an institution’s eligibility for the Academic Unit be locked simultaneous with when the data is locked for public releases.

The committee agreed that rendering institutions in unusable data status ineligible for the Academic Unit, aligns with existing APP policy implications for institutions in unusable data status. The committee noted the forthcoming recommendation regarding when an institution in unusable data status begins its ineligibility and when it regains eligibility for the Academic Unit.

Similarly, the committee agreed that locking an institution’s APP data used to determine eligibility for the Academic Unit at the same time data is locked for public releases creates finality to the data that will be used each year to assess an academic institution’s eligibility for the Academic Unit. The committee noted that any corrections of the data made after this time will not be considered in an institution’s eligibility calculation for the Academic Unit for that academic year.

The committee also reviewed and provided further feedback on the mock Academic-Unit eligibility reports to be distributed to the Division I membership and conferences in spring 2018. The successful implementation of the distribution is a priority for the committee. [See subcommittee discussion at Informational Item No. 7]

3. Academic summit. The committee received an update on the development of an academic summit focused on current and future issues facing higher education. The objective of the summit is to establish and foster a collaborative partnership with external organizations dedicated to higher education that may help the Committee on Academics and the NCAA identify and discuss trends and issues in higher education impacting the general student body and student-athletes, which may impact future strategic initiatives for the committee and the Association.

The committee provided feedback on the suggested format, timing and areas of focus for the summit. The committee has continued to engage former and current leaders in higher education to formulate the strategic focus of the summit.
The committee discussed how to approach some of the broad issues facing higher education through the lens of intercollegiate athletics. The committee agreed an early spring 2019 date would best accommodate schedules of institutional leadership. The committee also noted that hosting the summit in the greater Washington, D.C., metro area may best facilitate engagement and partnership with external organization. The committee will continue to refine its approach and development of a 2019 academic summit at its June in-person meeting.

4. **Presidential Forum.** The committee received an update from the Presidential Forum regarding the publication of its “Charting the Course” final report. The committee discussed the presidential principles related to early recruiting and well-rounded educational experiences. The identified principles should bolster student-athlete engagement in available high-impact educational experiences and be taken into consideration regarding future legislative action and policy change.

The committee noted its recent and ongoing action taken to modify existing academic eligibility rules to ensure legislation does not deter student-athletes from engaging in available educational experiences. For example, legislation pertaining to educational work experiences (e.g., internships, student teaching, etc.) and study abroad, optional minors and undergraduate certificate programs were all modified to ensure student-athletes could access such opportunities without a detrimental impact on their athletics eligibility. The committee noted the success of these legislative modifications remains largely dependent on institutions cultivating an environment where student-athletes are encouraged to pursue available academic opportunities.

The committee will continue its discussion of the identified principles and provide the Presidential Forum with regular updates pertaining to these areas of interest.

5. **Modification to definition of LRI within the APP.** The committee continued its review of the calculation used to annually determine what Division I institutions are considered limited resource for purposes of the APP and approved a modification to the calculation to better identify those institutions with the lowest resources in Division I. Institutions who meet the limited-resource definition for purposes of the APP have access to filters designed to support them in reaching the APR benchmark.

Recent data indicated that changes in institutional enrollment patterns impacted how certain institutions were identified as limited resource. The metric that has been used was a calculation that equally weighted an institution’s per-capita spending on all full-time undergraduate students, per-capita athletics spending on all student-athletes and the total amount of Pell Grant dollars received by the institution (including those awarded to part-time students) divided by the number of full-time undergraduates. The new metric changes the Pell calculation to the average grant awarded to first-time, full-time undergraduate students only. The new calculation will first be used to determine which Division I institutions are considered limited-resource institutions during the 2018-19 academic year.
6. **Review of elite/international competition waiver legislation.** The committee received an update from the Subcommittee on Student-Athlete Academics on the current legislation regarding full-time enrollment waivers for student-athletes competing in elite international competition (e.g., World Cup, Olympic Games, etc.). The current legislation allows waivers to be approved for student-athletes who are competing in the specified event during the term. The committee noted the current specificity of the legislation limits what student-athletes can use the exception, based on the type of elite and international competition associated with their sport. The committee approved the recommendation to consult with other Division I committees (e.g., NCAA Division I Student-Athlete Experience Committee, NCAA Division I Competition Oversight Committee, NCAA Olympic Sports Liaison Committee, NCAA Division I Student-Athlete Reinstatement Committee, etc.) to determine whether a legislation modification of full-time enrollment requirements, or any other legislative impacted by elite international competition, should be considered by the Division I membership. [See subcommittee discussion at Informational Item No. 8]

7. **Report from the Subcommittee on Data.** The committee reviewed the reports of the March 21 and April 4 teleconferences of the Subcommittee on Data.

   a. **Review of operational issues related to implementation of academic-based revenue distribution.** At its March 21 and April 4 teleconferences, the subcommittee addressed several operational issues related to activation of distribution. The subcommittee recommended committee action on two operational items, including determining that:

      (1) Institutions in unusable data status be ineligible to receive the Academic Unit, which includes the time period spent in probationary status; and

      (2) The APP data used to determine an institution’s eligibility for the Academic Unit be locked simultaneous with when the data is locked for public releases. [See committee discussion at Information Item No. 2]

   b. **APP process for institution transitioning from Division I to Division II.** At its April 4 teleconference, the subcommittee reviewed the application of APP data collection policies and procedures to a Division I institution as it begins its transition to Division II. The subcommittee recommended the institution continue to be subject to all APP process requirements during the 2018-19 academic year if the school intends to compete for Division I championships, or the institution fully transitions to Division II membership, whichever occurs first. The subcommittee will review the institution’s transition during the 2018-19 academic year to determine whether any APP processes should continue apply for the 2019-20 academic year.
8. **Report from the Subcommittee on Student-Athlete Academics.** The committee reviewed the reports of the March 2 and April 6 teleconferences of the Subcommittee on Student-Athlete Academics.

   a. **Review of progress-toward-degree requirements.** At its March 2 and April 6 teleconferences, the subcommittee continued its comprehensive review of existing progress-toward-degree requirements. Over the course of its discussions, the subcommittee narrowed its preference to a modification to the application of the 18/27-hour rule. The subcommittee recommended the committee ask the Council to introduce a legislative proposal to modify the application of the 18/27-hour rule into the 2018-19 legislative cycle. [See Action Item No. 1]

   b. **Division I bylaw modernization project.** At its March 2 teleconference, the subcommittee received an update on the progress of the NCAA Bylaw 14 modernization efforts. Specifically, the subcommittee received an update on the action taken by the NCAA Division I Legislative Committee at its February meeting to elevate interpretations identified for incorporation into the Bylaw 14 legislation. The subcommittee noted the interpretations identified for incorporation through the broader refresh and modernization efforts will better clarify application of Bylaw 14 legislation for the Division I membership.

   c. **Review of elite/international competition waiver legislation.** At its March 2 teleconference, the subcommittee began to review the current legislation regarding full-time enrollment waivers for student-athletes competing in elite international competition (e.g., World Cup, Olympic Games, etc.). The current legislation allows waivers to be approved for student-athletes who are competing in the specified event during the term. The subcommittee noted the current specificity of the legislation limits what student-athletes can use the exception, based on the type of elite and international competition associated with their sport. The subcommittee recommended consultation with other Division I committees (i.e., NCAA Division I Student-Athlete Experience Committee, NCAA Division I Competition Oversight Committee, NCAA Olympic Sports Liaison Committee, and the NCAA Division I Student-Athlete Reinstatement Committee) to determine whether a legislation modification of full-time enrollment requirements, or any other legislative impacted by elite international competition, should be considered by the Division I membership.

9. **Report from the NCAA Division I Committee on Academics Subcommittee on Penalties and Appeals.** The committee received a report from the Subcommittee on Penalties and Appeals.

10. **Update on educational programming and initiatives for LRIs.** The committee received an update on the educational programming and technology designed to assist institutions in academic certification efforts on campus. Specifically, the committee reviewed online
modules outlining Division I academic-eligibility rules and highlighting best practices for the certification of student-athletes that will be made available to the membership in summer 2018. The committee encouraged collaboration with partner organizations (e.g., National Association of Academic and Student-Athlete Development Professionals) to further promote the module availability to the Division I membership.

11. **Academic technology update.** The committee received an update on development of the Academic Portal, which will bring all APP processes under one umbrella and impact all three divisions. The first phase (APP and NCAA Division II Academic Tracking System data collection) was released to the membership in August 2016. The second phase (membership-wide graduation rates data collection) was released to the membership in March 2017. The final phase is highlighted by the electronic submission and processing of data reviews by two pilot institutions.

12. **Update on APR adjustment requests, verifications and penalties for 2017-18 academic year.** The committee received an update on the number and type of verification and APR adjustment requests completed during the 2017-18 academic year and a summary of institutions subject to APR penalties and/or loss of access to postseason competition.

13. **Reports of the Committee on Academics’ February 19-20 meeting.** The committee reviewed the reports from its February 19-20 meeting.

14. **Future meeting dates.**
   a. June 18-19 – Indianapolis;
   b. October 9-10 – Indianapolis; and
   c. February 5-6, 2019 – Indianapolis.

*Committee Chair:* John DeGioia, Georgetown University  
*Staff Liaisons:* Shauna Cobb, Academic and Membership Affairs  
Jennifer Henderson, Academic and Membership Affairs  
Charnele Kemper, Academic and Membership Affairs  
Binh T. Nguyen, Academic and Membership Affairs
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<td>Jeri Beggs, Illinois State University.</td>
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<td>Jacqueline Blackett, Columbia University –</td>
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<td>Barnard College.</td>
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<td>Frank Bonner, Gardner-Webb University.</td>
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<td>Jerry Bovee, Weber State University.</td>
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<td>Greg Burke, Northwestern State University.</td>
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<td>Carolyn Callahan, University of Virginia.</td>
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<td>Manoj Chopra, University of Central Florida.</td>
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<td>Beth DeBauche, Ohio Valley Conference.</td>
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<td>John DeGioia, Georgetown University.</td>
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<td>Ursula Gurney, University of Missouri-Kansas</td>
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<td>Rhonda Hatcher, Texas Christian University.</td>
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<td>Jennifer Heppel, Patriot League.</td>
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<td>Genese Lavalais, Jackson State University.</td>
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<td>Karen Paisley, University of Utah.</td>
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<td>Joe Scogin, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.</td>
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<td>Nicole Sherwin, Northern Arizona University.</td>
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<td>Lynn W. Thompson, Bethune-Cookman University.</td>
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<td>Kurt Zorn, Indiana University, Bloomington.</td>
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<td><strong>NCAA Staff Liaisons in Attendance:</strong></td>
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<td>Shauna Cobb, Jennifer Henderson, Charnele</td>
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<td>Kemper and Binh Nguyen.</td>
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<td><strong>Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:</strong></td>
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<td>Lydia Bell, Eric Brey, Marcus Brown, Emily</td>
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<td>Capehart, Greg Dana, Judy Delp, Jenn Fraser,</td>
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Academic Eligibility – Progress-Toward-Degree Requirements – Eligibility for Competition – Fulfillment of Credit-Hour Requirements – Hours Earned or Accepted for Degree Credit – 18-Semester/27-Quarter Hour Requirement

- At the start of the **third** year of enrollment, all credits used to satisfy the six- and nine-hour requirements must be degree-applicable.
- Credits used to satisfy the 18-hour requirement may count toward **ANY** degree program.
The NCAA Division I Committee on Academics discussed the referral from the NCAA Division I Council Transfer Working Group regarding possible academic standards for Division I four-year transfer student-athletes seeking immediate eligibility upon transfer.

The following are the committee’s recommendations and observations based on available academic data and research.

- **Academic Record.** A student-athlete’s academic record, not his or her sport, should help determine whether a student-athlete qualifies for an exception to the year-in-residence requirement following transfer. Data driven information related to the prediction of graduation of student-athletes upon transfer is not specific to any sport and, therefore, the approach to eligibility should be uniformly based in academics across all sports. At all other junctures during a student-athlete’s collegiate participation a student-athlete’s academic record informs his or her eligibility to compete (e.g., initial enrollment, transfer from a two-year college, progress toward degree by term). Furthermore, the academic standards that comprise these other eligibility rules acknowledge that differences exist across degree programs, curriculums and institutions. For example, all Division I student-athletes are held to the same minimum progress-toward-degree requirements regardless of their chosen degree program or institution. An academic-based four-year transfer eligibility standard predicated on aggregate academic data from all Division I transfer student-athletes would similarly account for differences across degree programs and institutions.

- **Transfer Standards and Four-Year Graduates.** Institutional policies continue to encourage a four-year undergraduate graduation track. Requiring all academically prepared and capable students to sit-out a year of competition simply because they transferred is not supported by available data. As a result, an academic exception should be available for those student-athletes with the demonstrated ability to remain on track to graduate following transfer. Not only may the additional year-in-residence unnecessarily delay certain student-athletes’ academic and career progress, but it may also pose a financial burden on those transfer student-athletes and institutions.

- **Academic Standards for Undergraduate Transfers.** While transferring on average impacts a student’s graduation timeline, students with an “above average” academic profile at their original four-year school are better positioned to remain academically on track following transfer to a new four-year institution. Specifically, the higher the student's cumulative grade-point average, the greater likelihood that more of the student's earned credit will transfer and be degree applicable at the receiving institution. Data analyses best support an academic standard that includes both a minimum grade-point average of at least 3.00 to 3.30 and holding student-athletes to current percentage-of-degree standards at the new institution. Predicating transfer eligibility on existing percentage-of-degree benchmarks (e.g., five-year progress) discourages the selection of an undesired degree
program upon transfer simply to meet an accelerated benchmark, a practice that poses its own graduation risk. Additionally, since data shows an enrollment gap is an additional graduation risk factor, continuous enrollment between four-year institutions should be a required academic element for immediate eligibility following transfer.

- **Academic Record Impacts Graduation Timeline Following Transfer.** Transferring to a Division I school presents challenges for all student-athletes, including acclimating to a new school, new team and new curriculum. Sometimes a new degree will be pursued at the new institution. These challenges are pronounced when the student-athlete’s academic record at the previous institution is such that fewer credits transfer to the new school and/or degree program, thus, placing the student-athlete behind in his or her degree program and often behind other student-athletes with the same seasons of eligibility remaining. Conversely, a strong academic foundation at the previous institution is shown to mitigate the impact of transfer on a student-athlete’s degree progression following transfer.

- **Impact of Academic-Based Standards.** Student-athletes in the sports of football, men’s and women’s basketball, baseball and men’s ice hockey are not permitted to compete immediately upon transfer, absent limited extenuating circumstances (e.g., the discontinuation of a sport), regardless of the student-athlete’s academic record. Academic-based requirements can inform which student-athletes are predicted to achieve academic success upon transfer. An academic-based transfer exception would establish a uniform opportunity for student-athletes who meet the academic standards that predict academic success following transfer to be eligible to compete immediately regardless of the sport they play. And, those student-athletes who do not achieve the academic standards to compete immediately can still practice and receive athletics aid during their academic year-in-residence at the new institution.

- **Head Coaching Departure.** There are currently no academic data to support a transfer exception for student-athletes who experience a head coach departure. Specifically, no data exists to suggest that student-athletes who transfer following a head coach departure are more likely to maintain academic progress at the receiving institution.

- **Legislative Effective Date of an Academic-Based Transfer Eligibility Standard.** The effective date for an academic-based transfer exception should consider how a new uniform transfer eligibility rule would impact all Division I student-athletes, including those student-athletes who participate in sports with access to the existing one-time transfer exception. The best approach would allow the new uniform rule to become available following adoption while maintaining the existing one-time transfer rule for an additional
two academic years. Allowing the two rules to co-exist for two academic years provides both appropriate access to any new transfer rule, while also ensuring adequate notice for current student-athletes operating under the existing one-time transfer rule. The recommended two-year phase out of the current one-time transfer rule aligns with the general period during which most undergraduate student-athletes make transfer decisions (e.g., prior to junior year) and is consistent with implementation models of previous eligibility rule changes.

- **Campus Application of New Standard.** There is recognition that any new transfer benchmarks for immediate eligibility should be relatively easy to evaluate and to apply by practitioners. A burdensome process – either on the leaving or the receiving institution – may cause unintended delays that may detrimentally impact the student-athlete’s academic progress. An academic graduation plan developed by the new institution may further assist student-athletes in making informed transfer decisions and demonstrate the new institution’s commitment to the student-athlete’s continued academic progress towards graduation.

*Note: The principles identified by the NCAA Division I Presidential Forum and the legislative concepts being considered related to early recruiting hold promise for improved decision-making of students and schools that may assist in the transfer environment after initial collegiate enrollment.*