BACKGROUND.

Question No. 1: Who created the new academic unit distribution?

The academic unit distribution was approved by the NCAA Division I Board of Directors and helps ensure that the Division I revenue distribution plan reflects and enhances the division's overarching values and commitment, including those related to sound academic standards and student-athlete academic achievement.

The Board also approved several simplifications to the distribution that provides transparency in the methodology. A working group comprised of 13 members, including presidents, faculty, directors of athletics, a conference member and a student-athlete made the recommendation to the Board. Additionally, the working group reflected the diversity of mission and resource level within the Division I membership.

Question No. 2: Why did the Values-Based Revenue Distribution Working Group propose the new academic unit distribution?

The current revenue distribution plan provides revenue for academic uses but allocates no money based on academic measures. The working group responded to the Board's charge by recommending the proposed academic unit which better aligns the division's distribution plan with core values.

Question No. 3: Does this new academic unit distribution take money away from existing allocations?

No. The new academic units are based only on a portion of the annual increases in future years of the NCAA's media rights agreement. Only the increases in the contract apply here, not the base allocations.

Question No. 4: What is the impact of the new academic unit on the overall Division I distributions?

The new academic unit will increase the percentage of the overall revenue distribution that is based on academic achievement from 8.3 percent of the overall distribution in the 2015-16 academic year to approximately 21.5 percent of the overall distribution in the 2031-32 academic year.

THE METRICS.

Question No. 1: How do institutions qualify for the academic unit distribution?
Institutions qualify by meeting one of the following criteria from the preceding academic year:

1. Institution's NCAA Division I Academic Progress Rate (APR) for the previous year is equal to or greater than 985;
2. Institution's Graduation Success Rate (GSR) for the most recently available year is equal to or greater than 90 percent; or
3. Difference between the institution's student-athlete and student-body rates for the most recently published Federal Graduation Rate (FGR) is greater than or equal to 13 percentage points.

**Question No. 2: Does the academic unit distribution use single-year metrics or multiyear rates for the APR and graduation rates?**

Single-year metrics are used which give institutions a clean slate every year in their effort to qualify for the funds and provide opportunities for more institutions to qualify for the distribution. Using a multiyear rate has the potential to anchor schools to one bad year throughout a four-year period, which minimizes opportunities and incentives to increase academic success.

**Question No. 3: Are all sports weighted equally in the metrics?**

Yes. The group studied an alternative model that weighs all student-athletes equally rather than teams. Thus, larger teams would count more heavily than smaller teams. However, the outcomes significantly decreased the number of qualifying institutions in almost every Division I membership category.

**Question No. 4: Is there a waiver process for an institution that does not earn an academic unit in a given year?**

No. There is no waiver process for an institution that does not meet one of the academic metrics. A school has a new opportunity the next year to earn the funds based on the criteria.

**Question No. 5: The new academic unit distribution appears to "reallocate wealth" to schools and conferences with fewer resources. In other words, this new academic fund in aggregate likely benefits nonautonomy schools at the expense of the autonomy schools. Is this correct?**

Yes, though that was not the intent of this change. In any given year, based on academic variables, the number of schools in a conference that earn an academic unit will vary. However, in aggregate it is anticipated that the five autonomy conferences will receive less money than
they would if these media rights increases were funneled into existing NCAA revenue distribution funds. The current large buckets of revenue distribution (i.e., men's basketball, grants-in-aid, sports sponsorship) result in significant funds going to the five autonomy conferences. It is anticipated that this new proposed academic distribution would result in a more balanced distribution among conferences. Thus, the overall impact is a positive in aggregate for the 27 nonautonomy conferences. It should be noted, however, that this assessment is based on current academic data and behaviors. If that behavior changes, the characteristics of the rewarded schools may change.

**Question No. 6: Won't the same schools earn academic units year after year?**

The working group tested the new distribution and its qualification standards by reviewing the last five years of academic outcomes and found that 90 percent of all Division I members qualified for the distribution in at least one of those years. As such, while the distribution as modeled resulted in about two-thirds of institutions qualifying annually, an even broader group will benefit over time as academic behavior changes.

**Question No. 7: Will the metrics change each year?**

No. The metrics were established by the Board and on the recommendation of the working group. The working group sought to capture the top quartile of institutions through each of its established metrics for qualification; however, additional institutions may qualify each year. The Board charged the NCAA Division I Committee on Academics with monitoring the metrics and benchmarks going forward and reporting to the Board.

**TIMING AND REPORTS.**

**Question No. 1: When will distributions begin?**

The first distributions will be made in spring 2020 and funds will be sent to conference offices by June 30 each year.

**Question No. 2: When will reports be available to inform institutions whether they qualify?**

Mock reports will be available annually beginning spring 2018 (using the metrics noted) to give member institutions a better understanding of the academic criteria and provide adequate time to plan to meet the standards.

**Question No. 3: Will there be a published report of all institutions that earn an academic unit?**
No. There will not be any NCAA aggregate publishing of which institutions earned an academic unit.

**Question No. 4: When will institutions know if they have met one of the three benchmarks to qualify for the distribution?**

Data regarding an institution's FGR and GSR will be made available in October of each year. Data regarding an institution's APR will be made available in May of each year. Therefore, if an institution qualifies for the distribution based on one of the metrics specific to the FGR or GSR, they will know if they have met the benchmark in October of each year. If an institution qualifies for the distribution based on the metric specific to the APR, the institution will know if they have met the benchmark in May of each year. However, institutions will not know the specific amount of each distribution until after May, given the distribution amount per institution depends on the total number of institutions that qualify for the distribution.

**DISTRIBUTION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.**

**Question No. 1: How much money will recipients of the academic unit receive?**

As previously indicated, the money to fund the new academic unit comes from a portion of the NCAA's annual increases to its media rights agreement. The total amount of money for the distribution is finite; however, the amount received by each institution that qualifies for the distribution will change depending on the total number of institutions that qualify. If more institutions qualify for the academic unit distribution, the amount per distribution unit will decrease. Likewise, if fewer institutions qualify for the academic unit distribution, the amount per distribution unit will increase.

Based on data from the 2015-16 academic year, approximately 66 percent of Division I institutions will meet one of the three criteria to qualify for the academic unit distribution. During the 2019-20 academic year, when the first distribution is made, if 66 percent of institutions qualify, each institution will receive approximately $55,000. By the 2024-25 academic year, if 66 percent of institutions qualify, each institution will receive approximately $460,000.

**Question No. 2: Are recipients of an academic unit required to use the funds specifically for academic initiatives?**

No. The academic units are "unrestricted funds," like the men's basketball units. Institutions/conferences may use funds from their academic distribution in the manner they deem most appropriate.
Question No. 3: Do institutions that qualify for an academic unit receive funds directly from the NCAA?

No. The academic units are distributed to conferences. Conferences are free to distribute the funds in accordance with their distribution policies. Some conferences may elect to flow these funds directly to the schools that earned the academic unit, while other conferences might revenue-share the revenue from all the academic units earned in a given year. Each conference can determine how to disburse these funds to its members.