ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.


   (1) **Recommendation.** Sponsor legislation for the 2017 NCAA Convention to amend NCAA Bylaw 17.19.2 to specify that in soccer an institution shall not begin practice in the championship segment before 21 days prior to the first permissible contest as specified; further, to specify that during the preseason practice period before the institution’s first day of classes or the first scheduled contest that a soccer student-athlete’s participation in countable athletically related activities shall be limited to a maximum of four hours per day and 20 hours per week and that all countable athletically related activities shall be prohibited during one calendar day per week.

   (2) **Effective date.** August 1, 2017.

   (3) **Rationale.** Data presented at the February 2015 NCAA Soccer Summit indicate that student-athletes need sufficient time to physically prepare before starting regular-season competition. This change would increase the number of practice days from 17 days to 21 days before competition. In addition, findings from the soccer summit state that soccer athletes could benefit from a standardized approach to preseason training to decrease injuries. This change would require institutions to adhere to the current regular-season restrictions during practice time (e.g., 20 hours per week of countable athletically related activity, one day off per seven-day period, and no more than four hours of countable athletically related activity per day).

   (4) **Estimated budget impact.** Will vary based on institutional start dates.

   (5) **Student-athlete impact.** Data from the NCAA Sport Science Institute indicate that fewer injuries may occur during the regular season when athletes have a longer timeframe to condition their bodies to full playing capacity.

b. Noncontroversial Legislation – Bylaw 31.3.4.2 – Administrative Regulations – Automatic Qualification – Requirements-Division Championship – Conference
Champion Ineligible, Declines to or Cannot Compete – Conference Champion.

(1) **Recommendation.** Adopt noncontroversial legislation to amend Bylaw 31.3.4.2-(h) (automatic qualification – conference champion ineligible, declines to or cannot compete) to specify that if a conference’s automatic qualifier is ineligible to compete, declines to compete or cannot compete for any reason, automatic qualification shall be withdrawn for that year in the sport, as specified; further, to clarify that conference policy shall determine how a conference’s automatic qualifier is determined for championship selection.

(2) **Effective date.** Immediate.

(3) **Rationale.** This change is consistent with current practices and the application of the automatic qualification legislation in that each conference determines how its automatic qualifier in a sport is identified for championship selections. For example, not all conferences identify the conference champion as its automatic qualifier. In addition, this change gives conferences flexibility in determining its policy to identify its conference automatic qualifier (e.g., regular season champion, conference champion).

(4) **Estimated budget impact.** None

(5) **Estimated student-athlete impact.** None.

2. **Nonlegislative items.**

   a. **Automatic qualification for the Division II Men’s Soccer Championship.**

   (1) **Recommendation.** That the Division II Management Council approve conference automatic qualification for the Division II Men’s Soccer Championship.

   (2) **Effective date.** August 1, 2017, for selections of the 2017 men’s soccer championship and thereafter.

   (3) **Rationale.** Providing this opportunity is in the best interest of the sport as it gives more meaning to the conference tournament. Currently, 18 conferences that sponsor men’s soccer would meet automatic-qualification requirements if they applied.

   (4) **Estimated budget impact.** None.
(5) **Student-athlete impact.** The recommendation provides more incentive and meaning for student-athletes in conferences who previously would not have had a chance to automatically qualify for the championship.

b. **Committee appointments.** The Division II Championships Committee asks that the Management Council ratify the following sport committee and playing rules committee appointments, effective September 1, 2016, unless otherwise specified.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

1. **Opening remarks and review of schedule.** Championships Committee Chair Lisa Sweany welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda. She also introduced and welcomed two new members, Barbara Dearing, director of athletics at Western Oregon University, and Ty Dennis, the new Division II Student-Athlete Advisory Committee representative from Minnesota State University, Mankato.

2. **Approval of previous reports.** The committee approved the November 5, 2015, teleconference report and the November 13, 2015, electronic vote report as submitted.

3. **Championships Committee liaison governing sport committee assignments and NCAA staff assignments.** Committee members reviewed an updated document indicating assignments, noting that Kim Duyst is now serving on the Championships Committee in her capacity as Management Council liaison. Members were reminded to collaborate with their championship managers to remain apprised of hot topics.

4. **Division II Nominating Committee report.** The Championships Committee approved recommendations to fill vacancies on a number of sport committees and asked the Division II Management Council to ratify those appointments, most of which are effective September 1, 2016 (see Nonlegislative Action Item 2-b). The Championships Committee also noted that the Nominating Committee made the following reappointments to selected governance committees:

   a. **Ethnic Minority and Women’s Internship Grant Selection Committee.** Jody Russell, faculty athletics representative, Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania; and Darnell Smith, compliance coordinator, University of Central Oklahoma, were reappointed to an additional four-year term, effective September 1, 2016. Both individuals were originally appointed to one-year terms to allow for staggered terms on the committee.

   b. **Division II Strategic Alliance Matching Grant Selection Committee.** Haley Ross-Treadway, assistant director of athletics/senior woman administrator, University of Illinois at Springfield; and William Sullivan, senior associate director of athletics, Mercy College, effective September 1, 2016.
5. **Budget and travel review.** NCAA staff provided information on the financials for fall sports championships in 2015, and the new charter policy that charges institutions a flat fee ($350 each way per person) for all personnel beyond the official traveling party. However, the effects of that policy won’t be fully evaluated until after the academic year.

6. **Governance updates.** Maritza Jones, NCAA director of Division II, updated the committee on governance meetings that took place at the 2016 NCAA Convention and reviewed three legislative proposals already being drafted for consideration at the 2017 Convention. She also referenced a policy the Championship Committee recently adopted to allocate dollars in years during which the division realizes a championships budget surplus of more than $1.2 million toward local ground transportation expenses for championship participants in team sports for the previous year. While the championships budget did not meet that surplus standard in 2014-15, the Presidents Council during its 2016 Convention meeting did agree to allocate $525,000 from the 2014-15 Division II budget surplus toward ground transportation for teams that participated in the 2014-15 championships.

7. **Fall championship recaps.** The committee reviewed feedback from the 2015 fall championships, noting that student-athlete participants especially appreciated the Make It Yours brand enhancement package (stickers, portfolios and caps). Some of those items will change for future championships depending on the time of year the event is conducted.

8. **Selection criteria transparency.** Committee members discussed the process of publicizing data that regional advisory committees use for rankings and selections that was conducted for the first time this past fall. The idea was to provide the membership with more transparency regarding the selection process. While feedback was generally positive, the Championships Committee agreed to also publish the data used during the final week of the selection process, effective with the 2016 winter and spring championships (these data were not made available in the fall championships).

9. **Foundation for the Future recommendations.** The Championships Committee reviewed more than a dozen submissions from sport committees and other affiliated groups that pertain to Championships Committee oversight areas. The Foundation for the Future initiative, which ties directly to the 2015-2021 Division II Strategic Plan, allocates $5.7 million through the life of the plan to fund proposals that benefit the division overall. A 13-member task force, chaired by Armstrong State University President Linda Bleicken, has been charged with reviewing and recommending proposals to the Presidents Council for final selection. Proposals are due March 1. Championships Committee members appreciated the thoughtful proposals from sport committees but agreed to forward the four listed below as priorities that have the greatest impact on student-athletes and also benefit the division collectively rather than a single sport. However, the Championships Committee noted that if the task force were to issue a subsequent call for proposals, those already received from sport committees would be considered.
a. A proposal to allocate funds to conferences (beyond the conference grant program) to
enhance academic support for student-athletes, broadcast opportunities, officiating and
branding efforts. (Proposal sponsors: Division II Conference Commissioners
Association; Division II Athletics Directors Association; Division II Student-Athlete
Advisory Committee)

b. A proposal to expand the existing Coaches Connection program to all sports. (Proposal
sponsors: Division II Championships Committee)

c. A comprehensive online education program for coaches that emphasizes legislative and
health and safety issues (Proposal sponsors: NCAA Committee on Competitive
Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports; Division II Academic Requirements
Committee; Division II Championships Committee; Division II Committee for
Legislative Relief; Division II Membership Committee; Division II Student-Athlete
Reinstatement Committee)

d. Funds to provide bus transportation to the championships for community members who
participate in community engagement initiatives. (Proposal sponsors: Division II
Championships Committee)

10. Sport sponsorship data. Championships Committee members during their September
2015 meeting asked staff to provide a summary of sponsorship data for all sports in order
to ensure that the requirements (both for sponsorship and selections) align with those in
Divisions I and III. The document stems from a committee request to research what it
believed was an unusually low number of minimum contests required for sponsorship in
women’s volleyball (nine in Division II compared with 19 in Division I and 17 in Division
III). Championships Committee members agreed to send the document to all sport
committees to review the numbers provided (including the distinction between dates of
competition and number of contests, where appropriate) and to recommend changes, if
desired. The Championships Committee will review that feedback at a future meeting and
determine whether further action is necessary.

11. Timeline for reseeding. The committee reviewed an existing timeline for sport committees
to follow when requesting changes in major areas (for example, bracket expansion, budget
requests, changes to selection criteria, etc.) that would require time for adequate
implementation. Committee members added “re-seeding” at the finals site of competition
(an idea that had emerged from the men’s basketball committee last fall) as a category to be
included in the timeline. Sport committees would be required to submit a request for re-
seeding at the Championships Committee’s June meeting to allow time for adequate
implementation the following academic year.

12. Sport committee reports.
a. **Football.** The Championships Committee noted that the Division II Football Committee at its February 8-10 annual meeting considered the merits of legislation adopted at the 2016 NCAA Convention to allow sport committees that administer championships with brackets of fewer than 48 teams to apply for automatic qualification. While football qualifies for such a request, the football committee decided to delay recommending AQ until further study has been completed. In particular, the committee wants to evaluate how AQ would affect selections once the new alignment takes effect in 2017. The Championships Committee acknowledged the football committee’s concern but in the spirit of timeliness asked that the group render a decision in advance of the 2019 season.

b. **Men’s golf.** The Championships Committee approved the Mountain East Conference as the host conference for the 2017 and 2018 East/Atlantic Regional competitions at the Resort at Glade Springs in Daniels, West Virginia.

c. **Women’s golf.** The Championships Committee approved that the host course for the 2016 South Regional be changed from Stonebrook Golf Club in Pace, Florida, to Marcus Pointe Golf Club in Pensacola, Florida. The University of West Florida will remain the host institution for the regional.

d. **Women’s lacrosse.** The women’s lacrosse committee asked the Championships Committee at its September 2015 meeting to consider changing the sport’s current two-region model to a four-region model. The Championships Committee recommended a membership survey to determine support. The women’s lacrosse committee is currently reviewing those survey results and will submit a recommendation to the Championships Committee for consideration during a future teleconference or meeting.

e. **Men’s soccer.** The Championships Committee supported the Division II Men’s Soccer Committee’s request to provide automatic qualification for the Division II Men’s Soccer Championship, taking advantage of legislation adopted at the 2016 NCAA Convention that provides AQ for championships with brackets of fewer than 48 teams (see Nonlegislative Action Item 2-a).

f. **Men’s and women’s soccer joint committee report.** The Championships Committee discussed proposals that would modify the championship date formula for the Division II Men’s and Women’s Soccer Championships in festival and non-festival years and asked that the soccer committees obtain input from the membership on these ideas before making a formal recommendation. (The Championships Committee also asked that the survey solicit feedback on the potential change to the preseason start date referenced in the legislative action item at the beginning of this report in order to better inform the governance structure and membership in advance of the 2017 Convention.)

g. **Track and field and cross country.**
(1) At its September 2015 meeting, the Championships Committee discussed a recommendation from the track and field and cross country committee to change current cross country selection procedures in ways that eliminate historical data as a criterion for regional allocations. A subsequent membership survey garnered feedback on various options, and the track and field and cross country committee will review these survey results at the group’s in-person meeting at the indoor track and field championships in March. The Championships Committee also reviewed the survey results, and while members did not endorse a particular model, they did indicate support for an alternative to the current process. The Championships Committee will receive input from the sport committee and revisit the matter during a future teleconference.

(2) The Championships Committee also approved the following regional sites for the 2016 and 2017 Division II Men’s and Women’s Cross Country Championships:

- 2016 Atlantic region – Cooper’s Lake Campground, Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania; Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania, host
- 2016 East region – Hopkinton Fairgrounds, Hopkinton, New Hampshire; Franklin Pierce University, host
- 2017 East region – Delaware Park, Buffalo, New York; Daemon College, host
- 2017 Midwest region – Elvin R. King Cross Country Course, Cedarville, Ohio; Cedarville University, host

h. Countable competition in the fall for softball and baseball. The Championships Committee at its September 2015 meeting discussed ongoing concerns from teams in northern climates about the challenge of scheduling games in the spring segment and asked the Division II Softball Committee and the Division II Baseball Committee to provide feedback on whether permissive legislation to allow countable contests in the fall would be a viable solution. The softball and baseball committees have discussed the matter and are intrigued with the idea but have too many unanswered questions to make a formal recommendation. The Championships Committee discussed the merits of the concept as well and sent the matter back to the softball and baseball committees for further review, urging formation of a small membership task force or working group to seek whether the governance structure or member conferences would be willing to draft a legislative proposal to bring closure to the issue.

13. Results from the most recent GOALS study. NCAA research staff presented findings from the 2015 GOALS study (experiences of current student-athletes) that relate specifically to Division II.
14. **Joint women’s basketball championships update.** Kelsey Cermak from the championships and alliances staff provided an update on the Divisions II and III championship games, which will be held April 4 in conjunction with the 2016 Women’s Final Four in Indianapolis.

15. **2016 Spring Sports National Championships Festival update.** John Baldwin from the championships and alliances staff provided an update on the Division II National Championships Festival to be held May 16-21 in Denver.

16. **NCAA.com video streaming report.** Committee members reviewed data from the 2015 fall championships.

17. **Legislative update.** Katie Willet from the academic and membership affairs staff updated the committee on Division II legislative actions from the 2016 NCAA Convention.

18. **Membership Committee update.** Ms. Willet also updated the group on the Membership Committee’s February 8-9 meeting, noting that three institutions have applied to begin the membership process and will be evaluated at the committee’s July meeting. The Membership Committee also is reviewing regulations regarding aspects of reclassification in which an entire conference may want to apply for Division II membership.

19. **Division I oversight committee updates.** Jenn Fraser, NCAA director of Division I governance, reviewed concepts under consideration in Division I regarding playing rules administration in football and men’s and women’s basketball. The issue emanates from governance restructuring in Division I that established standing oversight committees for football and men’s and women’s basketball. Because those committees have adopted a more holistic approach to administering their sports, the question has been raised whether playing rules administration for those sports belongs under the purview of the oversight committees rather than within the existing structure in which playing rules committees comprised of representatives from all three divisions report to the Association-wide Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP). Ms. Fraser noted that the oversight committees are interested in structural models that give Division I members more influence over playing rules administration in those sports. Division II Championships Committee members, however, expressed serious concern over any model that would reduce Division II’s representation in playing rules administration. Staff noted that the issue is being vetted within the governance structure and with other stakeholders, and that the Division II Management and Presidents Councils would be asked to comment at their April meetings as well. Staff also noted that because playing rules administration is an Association-wide structure, any proposal to modify that structure would be a common provision and thus require an Association-wide vote at the NCAA Convention.

20. **Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP) update.** Championships Committee members reviewed a report from PROP’s most recent meeting in January.
21. **Automatic qualification legislation for ineligible institutions.** The committee discussed current policy regarding provisional members who are ineligible to compete in Division II championships but who compete in conference championships, and how that affects the conference’s automatic qualifier. Staff noted that many conferences have written policies regarding which team the AQ would default to if the provisional member were to win the conference tournament. Staff also cited existing legislation (Bylaw 31.3.4.2) that addresses instances when a conference champion is ineligible for NCAA championships participation (because of a rules violation, for example) and noted some confusion among the membership between the policy for provisional members and the legislation for ineligible members. The committee approved a noncontroversial proposal to clarify the existing legislation so that it more clearly distinguishes the effect on automatic qualification rather than only on the conference champion.

22. **Regionalization and contiguous state policy.** Championships Committee members reviewed the division’s regionalization policy implemented in 2008-09 and the subsequent contiguous state policy designed to provide more flexibility and opportunity for institutions to conduct in-region competition. Committee members noted that since regionalization was adopted, the division has experienced more than 90 membership changes (whether from reclassification or conference realignment), and questions continue to arise about what is considered in-region for certain conferences and institutions. The membership census conducted in 2013 indicated that the membership is generally pleased with the division’s regionalization model and philosophy, but the Championships Committee wanted to revisit the matter to determine whether regionalization was (a) accomplishing its intended outcome and (b) could be improved. For the most part, committee members believe the current regionalization model works well for the regular season but that it presents challenges in the postseason, particularly when conference opponents who have faced each other multiple times are paired again in the early rounds. In that vein, the committee agreed to ask sport committees and the Division II SAAC for feedback on how to mitigate those circumstances. Staff also agreed to analyze several brackets from the 2015 championships to weigh the cost effects of adjusting regional pairings. In addition, the committee agreed to revisit the contiguous state model to determine whether additional flexibility for some regions in some sports could be provided, and whether the model could be simplified in others.

23. **Future discussion items.** The committee reviewed topics worthy of future discussion that were compiled from census results, membership feedback and staff recommendations. Among priorities were the regionalization review referenced in Informational Item No. 22 above, and a comprehensive review of ways to improve officiating in Division II (both in the selection and performance of officials).

24. **Membership Fund Selection Committee report.** Staff reviewed a report from the selection committee’s most recent teleconference in December.
25. **Championships and alliances update.** Joni Comstock, NCAA vice president for championships and alliances, provided an update of the championships program as it relates to Division II, including an overview of the next championships bid cycle for 2018-2022.

26. **Legal update.** Naima Stevenson, NCAA managing director of legal affairs, updated the committee on current litigation that may affect Division II.

27. **2016 meeting and teleconference schedule.**
   
a. **In-person meetings:** June 28-29 and September 13-14.

b. **Teleconferences (all at 2 p.m. Eastern):** March 3, April 7, May 5, July 7, August 4, October 6, November 3 and December 1.

28. **Other business.**
   
a. **Live animal mascots at championships.** Championships Committee members agreed that institutions should not be allowed to bring live animal mascots to championships venues and asked staff to add that as policy in the championship manuals.

b. **Lubbock Christian appeal.** The Championships Committee noted that its appeals subcommittee recently supported Lubbock Christian University’s appeal of the Division II Women’s Basketball Committee’s decision to not consider a scheduling alternative if Lubbock Christian is in position to host a women’s basketball regional in 2016. Lubbock Christian based its appeal on incorrect information displayed on NCAA.org that caused a scheduling conflict. The decision means that if Lubbock Christian is selected to host the 2016 South Central Regional, competition could be conducted March 10-13.

29. **Adjournment.** Ms. Sweany adjourned the meeting at noon on Wednesday, February 17.

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**Committee Chair:** Lisa Sweany, Armstrong State University, Peach Belt Conference  
**Staff Liaison(s):** Roberta Page, Championships and Alliances  
Molly Simons, Championships and Alliances  
Katie Willett, Academic and Membership Affairs

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**Division II Championships Committee**  
**February 16-17, 2016, Meeting**

**Attendees:**  
Michael Anderson; Gulf South Conference.  
Barbara Dearing, Western Oregon University; Great Northwest Athletic Conference.
**Pat Britz**, South Atlantic Conference.

**Kim Duyst**, California State University, Stanislaus; California Collegiate Athletic Association.

**Greg Gilbert**, University of Findlay; Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

**Gary Gray**, University of Alaska Fairbanks; Great Northwest Athletic Conference.

**Jim Johnson**, Pittsburg State University; Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association.

**B.J. Pumroy**, Shepherd University; Mountain East Conference (via teleconference).

**Julie Ruppert**, Northeast-10 Conference.

**Tom Shirley**, Philadelphia University; Central Atlantic Collegiate Conference.

**Ty Dennis**, University of Minnesota, Mankato; Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference.

**Lisa Sweany**, Armstrong State University; Peach Belt Conference.

**Kim Vinson**, Cameron University; Lone Star Conference.

**Absentees:**

**Jacqie McWilliams**, Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (Management Council chair).

**Mike Scales**, Nyack College; Central Atlantic Collegiate Conference (Presidents Council liaison).

**Guests in Attendance:**

**Gary Brown**, NCAA contractor.

**NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:**

**Roberta Page**, Championships and Alliances.

**Molly Simons**, Championships and Alliances.

**Katie Willet**, Academic and Membership Affairs.

**Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:**

**John Baldwin**, Championships and Alliances.

**Lydia Bell**, Research.

**Eric Breece**, Championships and Alliances.

**Katie Burger**, Championships and Alliances.

**Dan Calandro**, Championships and Alliances.

**Kelsey Cermak**, Championships and Alliances.

**Joni Comstock**, Championships and Alliances.

**Morgan DeSpain**, Championships and Alliances.

**Jenn Fraser**, Division I Governance.

**Terri Steeb Gronau**, Division II Governance.

**Leslie Havens**, Championships and Alliances.

**Maritza Jones**, Division II Governance.

**Lauren McLaughlin**, Championships and Alliances.

**John Pfeffenberger**, Administrative Services.

**Julie Rainey**, Division II Governance.

**Marie Scovron**, Championships and Alliances.


**Rachel Stark**, Communications.
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