ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative Items.

   a. Noncontroversial Legislation – NCAA Bylaw 14.4.3.7.11 – Eligibility – Progress-Toward-Degree Requirements – Eligibility for Competition – Regulations for Administration of Progress-Toward-Degree – Cooperative Educational, Work Experience and Study-Abroad Programs – Adjustment of Progress-Toward-Degree Requirements.

      (1) Recommendation. Adopt noncontroversial legislation to amend Bylaw 14.4.3.7.11 (cooperative educational, work experience and study-abroad programs) to specify that the progress-toward-degree requirements for a student-athlete who participates in a cooperative educational, work experience or study-abroad program may be adjusted to require completion of 12 hours per term of actual attendance in traditional coursework.

      (2) Effective Date. August 1, 2017, for certifications of progress toward degree for fall 2017 and thereafter.

      (3) Rationale. Current legislation provides an exception to the nine-semester/eight-quarter hour requirement for a student-athlete participating in a cooperative exchange, work experience or study-abroad program. However, the legislation does not include an adjustment to meet the necessary annual credit-hour requirements (Bylaws 14.4.3.3 and 14.4.3.4). As a result, while enrollment in one of the programs eliminates the need to meet the term-by-term credit-hour requirement (Bylaw 14.4.3.2), it can create a deficiency for student-athletes who are required to earn 18 hours of degree applicable credit during the regular academic year and 24-hours of degree applicable credit annually. This places a burden on the student-athlete to earn the necessary academic year and annual credit-hour requirements without the use of potential credits earned during that term, and a burden on the institution if a waiver needs to be filed as a result.

      (4) Estimated Budget Impact. None.

      (5) Student-Athlete Impact. Student-athletes who participate in a cooperative exchange, work experience or study-abroad program will only have to complete 12 hours per term of actual attendance in traditional coursework to meet progress-toward-degree requirements.
b. Noncontroversial Legislation - Bylaws 14.5.4.2 and 14.5.4.3 – Two-Year College Transfers – Grade-Point Average Requirement – Calculation of Grade-Point Average – Transferable Degree Credit.

(1) **Recommendation.** Adopt noncontroversial legislation to amend Bylaws 14.5.4.2 (eligibility for competition, practice and athletics aid – qualifier with no four-year college attendance and only one term of attendance at a two-year college) and 14.5.4.3 (eligibility for competition, practice and athletics aid – all other qualifiers, partial qualifiers and nonqualifiers) to clarify that the 2.200 minimum grade-point average required for purposes of meeting the two-year college transfer legislation must be calculated based on transferable degree credit.

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

(3) **Rationale.** Current legislation specifies that a student-athlete who transfers from a two-year institution presents a cumulative 2.200 grade-point average to gain access to competition. The use of the word “cumulative” creates an assumption that all credits earned at the previous institution may be used in the calculation. However, only credits in courses that transfer into the Division II institution shall be considered in calculating the grade-point average (Bylaw 14.5.4.5.3.2). This change would reduce confusion about the proper calculation of the grade-point average to meet the two-year college transfer requirements.

(4) **Estimated Budget Impact.** None.

(5) **Student-Athlete Impact.** None.

c. Noncontroversial Legislation - Bylaw 21.8.5.1 – Committees – Division II Committees – Division II General Committees – Academic Requirements Committee – Duties – Interpretive Authority.

(1) **Recommendation.** Adopt noncontroversial legislation to amend Bylaw 21.8.1.5.1 (duties) to provide interpretive authority over academic bylaws, including incorporations of interpretations into the NCAA Division II Manual, to the NCAA Division II Academic Requirements Committee.

(2) **Effective Date.** Immediate.
(3) **Rationale.** Current legislation does not grant the Academic Requirements Committee interpretive authority. Interpretive authority for all Division II-specific legislation rests exclusively with the NCAA Division II Legislation Committee. This change would give the Academic Requirements Committee interpretive authority for academic bylaws, including incorporations of those interpretations in the Division II Manual.

(4) **Estimated Budget Impact.** None.

(5) **Student-Athlete Impact.** None.

d. **Incorporation of Interpretation into the Division II Manual.**

(1) **Recommendation.** To incorporate the following official interpretation into the Division II Manual:

**Definition of Good Academic Standing**

The Academic Requirements Committee recommended that the [NCAA] Council issue an interpretation of Bylaws 14.01.1 and 14.02.5 to specify that the definition of good academic standing applied to student-athletes shall be a standard at least as demanding as the minimum standard applied to all students in order to participate in extracurricular activities at that institution.

It was VOTED

“That the [NCAA] Council issue an interpretation consistent with the committee's recommendation.”

(2) **Effective Date.** Immediate.

(3) **Rationale.** Incorporating the August 9, 1995, official interpretation into the Manual will clarify the application of good academic standing when institutional policy grants students who are not in good academic standing (e.g., probation) access to extracurricular activities.

(4) **Estimated Budget Impact.** None.

(5) **Student-Athlete Impact.** Student-athletes who are not in good academic standing (e.g., probation) will have the same access to extracurricular activities, such as athletics, as the general student body.
2. **Nonlegislative Items.**

   - None.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

1. **Review of Four-Year College Transfer Requirements.** The committee continued a comprehensive review and discussion regarding the current four-year college transfer legislation. The committee reviewed NCAA Division II Academic Success Rate (ASR) and NCAA Division II Academic Performance Census (APC) data on four-year college transfer student-athletes and feedback on the current legislation from the NCAA Division II Student-Athlete Advisory Committee. The committee agreed that no legislative changes are necessary at this time.

2. **Update on Review of the NCAA Division II Degree-Completion Award Criteria and Process.** The committee received a report on the status of the project to review the Degree-Completion Award program. The NCAA Division II Degree-Completion Program Working Group held a teleconference in December 2016 and will meet in person in March 2017 to review the application process, award criteria and limits, and the results of membership and award recipient surveys. Staff noted that all aspects of the program are subject to modification.

3. **Discussion of NCAA Academic Portal Status and Deadline Extension.** The committee reviewed the timeline for the opening of the Academic Portal, which replaced the NCAA Division II Academic Tracking System in 2016-17 as the web application for submitting APC data. The opening of the Academic Portal was delayed until February 6, 2017, due to technical difficulties, and the NCAA Division II Management Council in October 2016 approved extending the data-submission deadline until July 1, 2017, for this academic year only. The committee noted that due to the new deadline, the penalty for an institution’s failure to submit APC data would not apply to the enhancement fund distribution in March 2017 [see Constitution 3.3.4.15 (academic performance census – failure to submit)]. However, the committee further agreed that an institution’s failure to submit APC data by either July 1, 2017, or in fall 2017, will impact the enhancement fund distribution in March 2018. In addition, after being briefed on shortcomings of APC data in recent analyses for governance committees, the committee discussed the potential ramifications of requiring institutions to submit data annually on all student-athletes, including those who have graduated, instead of only those in the ASR cohort. The committee agreed to revisit the issue during its summer teleconference.
4. **Discussion of SAT Operational Review.** The committee reviewed the operational approach approved by the Management Council in October 2016 for using test scores from the redesigned SAT to certify initial eligibility and evaluate waivers for the 2017-18 academic year. The research staff anticipates that it will take about two years to gather enough data to conduct a test-score validity study that may result in revisions to the initial-eligibility sliding scales. The committee will revisit the issue to determine the appropriate operational process for the 2018-19 academic year and beyond at a future meeting.

5. **Update on Academic Research Data.** The committee received a report on Division II federal graduation rate and ASR data released in November 2016. Research staff presented data on trends in the federal rate and ASR among African-American male student-athletes, which have declined over the past six years but cannot readily be explained by the academic data that are available. The committee agreed to revisit the issue after the next cycle of data are released in fall 2017.

6. **Review of Data on Progress-Toward-Degree Waivers Related to NCAA Division II Path-to-Graduation Legislative Changes.** Division II adopted the Path-to-Graduation legislative package regarding progress toward degree and two-year college transfers with an effective date of August 1, 2016. The committee reviewed the progress-toward-degree and two-year college transfer waiver statistics for the first half of the 2016-17 academic year compared to the previous year (July 1 through January 31). Two-year college transfer waiver requests were up 19 percent from the previous year, and progress-toward-degree waiver requests were up 28 percent. Staff reported that, despite the increases, waiver requests are still at a manageable level.

7. **Update on 2017 NCAA Convention Proposals That Impact Eligibility or Were Sponsored by the Committee and the Division II Philosophy Statement.** The committee reviewed one 2017 NCAA Convention proposal that impacts student-athlete eligibility and one proposal that amended the Division II philosophy statement. Specifically, the committee discussed concerns about whether the subject of academics is prominent enough in the amended statement. The committee agreed that no modifications to the philosophy statement are necessary at this time.

8. **Discussion on Timing of Certification for a Change of Degree.** The committee discussed the application of the timing of certification when a student-athlete changes their degree program after the academic year. Current legislation allows all credits earned before the change to be certified under the previous degree requirements and all credits earned from the time of the change to be certified under the new degree requirements (Bylaw 14.4.3.7.7). An official interpretation from August 25, 1994, permits credits earned during the previous academic year applicable to the degree previously sought to be used in the certification. The committee confirmed the August 25, 1994, official interpretation.
9. **Discussion Regarding the Nonrecruited Student Exception in Progress-Toward-Degree and Transfer Legislation.** The committee discussed whether a legislative change is appropriate to align the requirements of the nonrecruited exceptions in progress-toward-degree and transfer legislation. Student-athletes who transfer to a four-year institution using the nonrecruited student exception would not also be able to access the similar exception to waive the progress-toward-degree requirement on transfer (Bylaw 14.4.3.2.1). The committee agreed that no legislative changes are necessary at this time.

10. **Issuance of Official Interpretations.** The committee issued the following official interpretations, which are updates of previous interpretations due to Path-to-Graduation legislative changes.

   a. **Student-Athlete Who Changes Designated Degree Program After Completion of the Academic Year (II)**

   The Academic Requirements Committee confirmed that a student-athlete who changes his or her designated degree program after the conclusion of the academic year may meet the academic year and annual credit-hour requirements only if the credits earned during the previous academic year are acceptable toward the degree previously sought during that year.

   [References: Bylaws 14.4.3.3 (credit hours earned during the regular academic year) and 14.4.3.4 (annual credit-hour requirement); and an official interpretation (Reference: 8/25/1994, Item No. 7), which has been archived]

   b. **Transfer Student Who Fulfills a Residence Requirement at the Certifying Institution with Enrollment in Nonconsecutive Terms (II)**

   The Academic Requirements Committee confirmed a student-athlete who fulfills a residence requirement by enrolling in nonconsecutive terms (e.g., fall terms of consecutive academic years, while missing the interim spring term), must meet all applicable progress-toward-degree requirements prior to competing in the semester following fulfillment of the residence requirement.

   [References: Bylaws 14.4.3.2 (term-by-term credit-hour requirement), 14.4.3.3 (credit hours earned during the regular academic year), 14.4.3.4 (annual credit-hour requirement) and 14.4.3.5 (fulfillment of minimum grade-point average requirements); and an official interpretation (Reference: 2/8/2010, Item No. 7-b), which has been archived]
c. **Use of Credit Hours Earned During Part-Time Enrollment at Another Institution while Enrolled Full Time at the Certifying Institution (II)**

The Academic Requirements Committee confirmed that a student-athlete, who enrolls as a part-time student in a course(s) at another institution (e.g., traditional, extension, online, correspondence) after the beginning of the certifying institution's semester or quarter, and such course(s) is not completed until after the certifying institution's semester or quarter has ended, may not use these credit hours to satisfy the nine-hour rule but may use the credit hours to satisfy the 18/27-hour rule and/or the 24/36-hour rule. To be counted in the 18/27-hour minimum number of semester or quarter hours required for progress toward degree during the regular academic year, the course(s) must have been completed during the time beginning with the opening of the certifying institution's fall term and concluding with the certifying institution's spring commencement.

[References: Bylaws 14.4.3.2 (term-by-term credit-hour requirement), 14.4.3.3 (credit hours earned during the regular academic year) and 14.4.3.4 (annual credit-hour requirement); and an official interpretation (Reference: 7/24/2007, Item No. 1), which has been archived]

d. **Eligibility - Enrollment as Full-Time Student During Portion of Term (II)**

The Academic Requirements Committee confirmed that a student-athlete who enrolls at any point during a term as a full-time student may use credit hours earned during that term to meet the nine/eight-hour, 18/27-hour and 24/36-hour credit requirements.

[References: Bylaws 14.4.3.2 (term-by-term credit-hour requirement); 14.4.3.3 (credit hours earned during the regular academic year); and 14.4.3.4 (annual credit-hour requirement); and an official interpretation (Reference: 1/20/1994, Item No. 4), which has been archived]

e. **Calculation of Transferable Credit – Term-by-Term Credit-Hour Requirement – Transfer Students (II)**

The Academic Requirements Committee confirmed that when certifying the term-by-term credit-hour requirement for a transfer student-athlete, the certifying institution may calculate the hours based on the earned transferable credit hours as they appear on the previous institution's transcript, rather than converting the transferable credit hours to the certifying institution. For example, a transfer student-athlete who attends a college using a quarter system and completes eight-quarter hours of transferable credit in the previous academic term satisfies the term-by-term credit-hour requirement for transfer students, even though the eight-quarter hours convert to 5.33-semester hours pursuant to the certifying institution's conversion formula.
[References: Bylaws 14.4.3.2 (term-by-term credit-hour requirement), 14.4.3.2.1 (application of rule to transfer student) and 14.5.4.5.3 (determination of transferable degree credit); and an official interpretation [Reference: 2/12/1990, Item No. 1], which has been archived]

11. **Discussion on Institutional Limits on Transferable Credits for Two-Year Transfers.**

The committee discussed the application of the two-year college transferable credit-hour requirement when institutional policy limits the number of transferable degree credits. Current legislation requires a two-year college transfer to earn an average of at least 12-semester or 12-quarter hours accepted toward any baccalaureate degree program at the certifying institution for each full-time term of enrollment. An official interpretation [Reference: 12/16/05, Item No. 6] pertaining to four-year college transfers and the one-time transfer exception permits a student-athlete to meet the credit-hour requirement even if the institutional policy limits the maximum number of transferable degree credits toward any of its degree programs, provided that the courses in question would have otherwise transferred and been accepted as degree credit. Staff has used this interpretation to provide flexibility to two-year college transfers who are unable to meet two-year college requirements due to an institutional limitation on the overall number of credits transferring in to the institution. The committee recommended that a more restrictive staff interpretation [Reference: 7/22/92] be archived and that the Management Council issue the following official interpretation:

**Credit-Hour Requirement for Two-Year College Transfers – Institutional Limits on Transferable Credits (II)**

The Academic Requirements Committee determined a two-year college transfer is able to meet the transferable credit-hour requirement, even if the certifying institution is limited in accepting a maximum number of transferable degree credits toward any of its baccalaureate degree programs, and that number of accepted degree credits is less than the number of transferable credits that the student-athlete is required to transfer based on the number of full-time terms attended. Institutional policy designed to limit the maximum number of transferable credits will not prevent the student-athlete from meeting applicable two-year college transfer requirements, provided the student-athlete has satisfactorily completed enough, normally transferable, degree credits acceptable toward any baccalaureate degree program to satisfy two-year college transfer requirements.

[References: Division II Bylaws 14.5.4.2 and 14.5.4.2; official interpretation (12/16/2005, Item Ref. 6); and a staff interpretation (7/22/1992, Item Ref. a), which has been archived]
12. **Review of University of Mary - Nontraditional Academic Calendar.** The committee reviewed the academic calendar of a University of Mary program that offers more summer courses for students seeking to graduate at an accelerated rate. Under the program, summer becomes a regular academic term, and student-athletes would use a full-time enrollment term during each summer unless they took part-time hours, which would increase the credit burden during other terms. The committee requested that staff seek more information from the institution on its certification schedule and agreed to revisit the issue during its summer teleconference.

13. **Update on Communications Outreach to Incoming Student-Athletes.** The committee received a report on the national office initiative to communicate the value of intercollegiate athletics to student-athletes. The initiative includes sending materials designed to build affinity for college athletics to prospective student-athletes after they are certified as qualifiers by the NCAA Eligibility Center.

14. **Update on NCAA Division II Foundation for the Future Initiatives.** The committee received a progress report on programs funded through the Foundation for the Future initiative. Development of a comprehensive online coaches’ education program that will deliver legislative and health and safety related content to NCAA Division II coaches will begin in March 2017. In addition, funding has been disbursed to the conference offices to support academics, branding, officiating and broadcasting efforts. Also, the first phase of the review of academic data currently gathered in Division II is on schedule to be completed and presented to the committee in September 2017.

15. **Update on Division II Educational Initiatives.** The committee received an update on the planning and development of educational programs and materials for the Division II membership. During the 2016-17 academic year, the number of Regional Compliance Seminars nearly doubled and a new webpage will highlight resources and updates to the current online education resource center.

16. **Review of the NCAA International Student Records Committee Report.** The committee received a report from the International Student Records Committee meeting in October 2016.

17. **Review of the Academic Requirements Committee Report.** The committee reviewed and approved its September 2016 committee report.

19. **Election of a New Chair and Vice Chair.** The committee elected Paul Leidig, faculty athletics representative at Grand Valley State University, to serve as the chair effective September 1, 2017. Jennifer Heimstead, assistant athletics director for compliance at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, was elected to serve as vice chair, effective immediately.

20. **Future Meeting Schedule.** The committee affirmed September 14-15, 2017, as the dates for its fall in-person meeting. The committee agreed to conduct its summer teleconference on June 1, 2017, and its next spring in-person meeting on February 15-16, 2018.

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**Committee Chair:** Brenda Cates, University of Mount Olive  
**Staff Liaisons:** Susan Britsch, Academic and Membership Affairs  
Gregg Summers, Research  
Angela Tressel, Academic and Membership Affairs

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| NCAA Division II Academic Requirements Committee  
| February 23, 2017, In-Person Meeting |
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| **Attendees:** | |
| Brenda Cates, University of Mount Olive | |
| Jennifer Heimstead, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona | |
| Felicia Johnson, Virginia Union University (via teleconference) | |
| Joseph Kissell, Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania | |
| Paul Leidig, Grand Valley State University | |
| Perry Massey, Fayetteville State University | |
| Shawn Ward, Le Moyne College | |
| Patrick Wempe, Henderson State University | |
| Christina Whetsel, Angelo State University | |
| **Absentees:** | |
| Jeff Yasalonis, University of Mount Olive | |
| **Guests in Attendance:** | |
| Kayla Robles, Valdosta State University | |
| **NCAA Liaisons in Attendance:** | |
| Susan Britsch, Gregg Summers and Angela Tressel | |
| **Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:** | |
| Jada Buckner, Geoff Bentzel, Elizabeth Coleman, Greg Dana, Brian Hendrickson, Maritza Jones, Ryan Jones, Faith Morrison, Stephanie Quigg Smith, Ellen Summers and Karen Wolf |