KEY ITEMS.

1. **Expiration of NCAA Division I Academic Performance Program (APP) Filters for Limited-Resource Institutions (LRIs).** In June, the NCAA Division I Committee on Academics extended the improvement filters for LRIs by one year and began discussing long-term solutions. Since June, the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU)/LRI Academic Advisory Group examined the current filter system to discuss and recommend long-term solutions. These recommendations were reviewed at the October 6 roundtable of HBCU and LRI chancellors, presidents and commissioners. The Committee on Academics reviewed and approved the recommendations. Beginning with submission of 2015-16 NCAA Division I Academic Progress Rate (APR) data in the fall 2016, the filters under the current system may be used twice over the next five years. The filters, however, will require an APR Improvement Plan that meets enhanced criteria established by the committee, and educational programming will also be required when a team has a multiyear APR below 930. The committee will refine the enhanced criteria for the APR Improvement Plan and educational programming at its February meeting. [Informational Item No. 2.]

2. **Review of NCAA Accelerating Academic Success Program (AASP).** The committee reviewed the AASP to provide feedback to the NCAA Division I Board of Directors in connection with a review of funding of the AASP by the NCAA Board of Governors. The committee supported the AASP while also recognizing the opportunity to obtain additional information needed to determine the extent to which the AASP has resulted in successful academic outcomes for institutions in the program. [Informational Item No. 3.]

3. **Academic Outcomes of Graduate Student-Athlete Transfers.** The committee responded to a referral by the NCAA Division I Council to address academic outcomes of graduate student-athlete transfers. The committee recommended that the Council sponsor legislation enhancing existing academic eligibility standards for graduate and postbaccalaureate student-athletes to engender a more meaningful academic experience for these student-athletes. The committee also examined data related to current trends and academic outcomes for the postgraduate enrollment of student-athletes, and APP policy and models to enhance accountability of postgraduate student-athletes. [Informational Item No. 4.]

4. **Time Demands and Facilitating Academic Opportunities for Student-Athletes.** In an effort to address challenges to better balancing student-athlete time commitments devoted to athletics participation in response to a referral from the Board of Directors, the committee reviewed full-time enrollment and progress toward-degree requirements to determine whether the legislation provided sufficient flexibility for student-athletes to pursue an academic path that provides educational opportunities, in addition to ensuring student-athletes earn degrees within five years. The committee recommended that the Council sponsor legislation modifying progress-toward-degree requirements to provide flexibility for student-athletes to participate in cooperative educational work experience or institutionally approved study-abroad programs and voluntary or optional minors. [Informational Item No. 5.]
5. **Review of Board of Directors Referrals Resulting from NCAA Division I Strategic Summit.** The committee reviewed the Board referrals resulting from the Strategic Summit and engaged in robust discussion in response to the referrals on academically at-risk student-athletes and the NCAA benchmark-setting role and effective measurement of academic achievement. [Informational Item No. 6.]

6. **Review of NCAA Proposal No. 2015-66 – Academic Misconduct.** The committee reviewed the feedback received from the NCAA Division I Committee on Infractions and leadership of the Division IA Athletic Directors’ Association. After a nearly two-year legislative drafting process in which the committee incorporated significant feedback from the membership and the Committee on Infractions, the committee concluded that the proposal is in final format and the membership may amend the proposal from November 1 to November 15. [Informational Item No. 1.]

7. **Review of Pre-Enrollment Academic Misconduct Legislation.** The committee reviewed pre-enrollment academic misconduct legislation. The committee determined that it should examine legislative change and appropriate ways to educate the membership on application of the existing legislation, including the responsibility by the membership to report a violation. [Informational Item No. 7.]

8. **NCAA Division I Graduation Success Rate (GSR).** The committee received this year’s GSR, including a review of data pertaining to demographic groups. [Informational Item No. 19.]

**ACTION ITEMS.**

1. **Legislative Items for the Council.**

a. **Academic Eligibility – Exceptions to Progress-Toward-Degree Rule – Graduate Student/Postbaccalaureate Exception – Six Hours of Degree-Applicable Credit.**

   (1) **Recommendation.** Require graduate and postbaccalaureate student-athletes with remaining athletics eligibility to complete a minimum of six hours of academic credit toward the student-athlete’s designated degree program during each regular academic term in which the student-athlete is a full-time graduate or postbaccalaureate student. If an institution permits postbaccalaureate students to remain enrolled without declaring a second degree program and/or major, the student-athlete may use credits acceptable toward any of the institution’s degree programs to satisfy the six-hour requirement.

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

   (3) **Rationale.** Under the current legislation, graduate and postbaccalaureate student-athletes may use credits acceptable toward any of an institution’s
degree programs (graduate and undergraduate) to meet the six-hour academic eligibility requirement. Recent data, however, indicates that a significant number of these student-athletes do not complete their chosen graduate or postbaccalaureate degree program. Low degree-completion rates are common for student-athletes who remain at their undergraduate institution as well as among student-athletes who transfer to a new institution subsequent to graduating. While several factors likely impact graduate and postbaccalaureate degree completion rates, the committee recognized that the current academic eligibility requirements may not adequately measure or incentivize graduate and postbaccalaureate student-athlete academic degree-specific work and progress. This recommended change will ensure that graduate and postbaccalaureate student-athletes make meaningful academic progress toward a designated degree program while completing their athletics eligibility.

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

(5) **Student-Athlete Impact.** Graduate student-athletes and postbaccalaureate student-athletes that are required to declare a second degree program and/or major will no longer be able to use credits acceptable toward any of an institution’s degree programs to meet the six-hour academic eligibility requirement to participate in intercollegiate athletics but must use credits acceptable toward the student-athlete’s designated degree program during each regular academic term in which the student-athlete is a full-time graduate or postbaccalaureate student. This change will result in graduate and postbaccalaureate student-athletes making more meaningful progress toward a designated degree.

**b. Academic Eligibility – Graduate Student/Postbaccalaureate Participation – Designation of Graduate Degree Program.**

(1) **Recommendation.** Require a graduate student-athlete to be a fully admitted, degree-seeking graduate student enrolled in a designated graduate degree program to be eligible for intercollegiate athletics participation.

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

(3) **Rationale.** Under the current legislation, a graduate student-athlete who has been admitted to the certifying institution and is enrolled as a regularly enrolled, degree-seeking graduate or professional school student is not required to designate a specific graduate degree program to be eligible for intercollegiate athletics participation. While institutions may currently permit students to be considered undeclared graduate students, the general expectation should be that graduate student-athletes are enrolled in a designated academic program while completing their athletics eligibility. The
recommended legislative change ensures that student-athletes who opt to pursue graduate degrees obtain a focused, meaningful and comparable graduate-level academic experience by declaring and pursuing a designated degree program rather than enrolling in an undeclared graduate program.

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

(5) **Student-Athlete Impact.** Graduate student-athletes will be required to be enrolled in a specific graduate or professional degree program as a fully admitted, degree seeking graduate student in order to participate in intercollegiate athletics. This change will result in graduate student-athletes making more meaningful progress toward a designated degree.

c. **Academic Eligibility – Progress-Toward-Degree Requirements – Exceptions to Progress-Toward-Degree Rule – Cooperative Educational Work Experience and Study-Abroad Programs.**

(1) **Recommendation.** Permit the 18-semester/27-quarter hour regular academic year progress-toward-degree credit-hour requirement per NCAA Bylaw 14.4.3.1-(b) to be prorated to nine hours for each term the student-athlete is enrolled in a cooperative educational work experience (e.g., co-op, internship, practicum, student teaching) or institutionally approved study-abroad program provided:

a. The institution recognizes the student-athlete as a full-time student while participating in the cooperative educational work experience or study-abroad program;

b. The student-athlete satisfactorily completes the cooperative educational work experience or study-abroad program; and

c. At the time of certification, the student-athlete has fulfilled the progress-toward-degree requirements (per Bylaw 14.4.3) for the terms in which the student-athlete has been in attendance.

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

(3) **Rationale.** Under the current legislation, student-athletes involved in cooperative educational work experience and study-abroad programs are not required to complete six credits during the term(s) they are enrolled in these programs. Student-athletes who pursue such opportunities during the academic year, however, are generally required to earn 18-semester or 27-quarter hours of academic credit. Many times student-athletes participating in these cooperative educational work experience programs are considered full-time students by their institutions but receive no, or minimal, academic credit for the experience. As a result, these student-athletes must complete 18-
semester or 27-quarter credit hours during the remainder of the academic year to remain academically eligible to compete the following academic year. In order to pursue cooperative educational work experience and study-abroad programs, which in some cases are required for degree completion, student-athletes must balance increased course loads, often in conjunction with demanding athletics participation schedules. As a result, some student-athletes are discouraged from participating in these programs because of the potential impact on their future academic eligibility. Currently, waiver requests where the student-athlete meets the recommended criteria to permit the provisions of Bylaw 14.4.3.1-(b) to be prorated to nine hours are approved because the student-athlete still met percentage-of-degree requirements despite receiving no credit during the term(s) they participated in the cooperative educational work experience or study-abroad program.

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

(5) **Student-Athlete Impact.** Student-athletes will be provided increased flexibility to pursue cooperative educational work experience and/or institutionally approved study-abroad programs in light of demands on time from participation in intercollegiate athletics. Student-athletes will be required to meet progress-toward-degree requirements and will be on track to graduate in five years or less.

d. **Academic Eligibility – Progress-Toward-Degree Requirements – Fulfillment of Credit-Hour Requirements – Hours Earned or Accepted Toward a Minor.**

(1) **Recommendation.** Permit credit hours earned toward all established and ongoing institutionally approved minors, including voluntary or optional minors, be used to satisfy credit-hour requirements (per Bylaw 14.4.3.1). In order for the voluntary or optional minor credit hours to be used to satisfy credit-hour requirements, the minor must be declared prior to the first day of the applicable academic term.

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

(3) **Rationale.** Current legislation does not permit credit hours earned toward a voluntary or optional minor to be used to satisfy credit-hour requirements after the student-athlete is required to designate a degree program. As a result, student-athletes could be unduly burdened by completing voluntary or optional minor coursework in addition to coursework used to satisfy credit-hour requirements while otherwise balancing time demands of athletics and co-curricular activities. In some cases this leads to student-athletes having to choose between maintaining athletics eligibility and pursuing a desired minor or extending time in school to complete a minor after exhausting athletics eligibility. Student-athletes will still be required to meet all percentage-of-
degree benchmarks without using voluntary or optional minor credits, ensuring that student-athletes continue to progress toward graduation within five years of initial full-time enrollment.

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

(5) **Student-Athlete Impact.** Student-athletes will be provided increased flexibility to pursue voluntary or optional minors in light of demands on time from participation in intercollegiate athletics.

2. **Nonlegislative Items.**

a. **Review of Official Visit Legislation Related to Tests Associated with ACT and SAT, Including ACT Aspire Early High School.**

   (1) **Recommendation.** The NCAA Division I Student-Athlete Experience Committee review the legislated requirements for prospective student-athlete official visits due to the ACT Aspire Early High School (ACT Aspire test). Specifically, the Student-Athlete Experience Committee should consider recommending that the new ACT Aspire test replace the ACT PLAN test under the official visit legislation.

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

   (3) **Rationale.** The ACT Aspire test has recently replaced the ACT PLAN test, which is no longer offered by the ACT. The ACT Aspire test is not offered on a national testing date under national testing conditions; however, the official visit legislation requires a high school or prospective student-athlete to present a score from a PSAT, SAT, PLAN or ACT taken on a national date under national testing conditions before an institution may provide an official visit. Likewise, the College Board has redesigned the SAT suite of assessments. Accordingly, the legislation should be reviewed to ensure the legislated official visit requirements are appropriate.

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

   (5) **Student-Athlete Impact.** Prospective student-athletes that take the ACT Aspire test may be adversely impacted during the recruiting process. Under the current legislation, prospective student-athletes are unable to use the ACT Aspire test to satisfy requirements for an official visit. A review of the legislation could result in legislative modifications that could benefit these prospective student-athletes.

b. **Temporary Review Process for Initial-Eligibility and Student-Athlete Academic Waivers.**
(1) **Recommendation.** The Council make the temporary review process permanent for initial-eligibility and student-athlete academic waivers.

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

(3) **Rationale.** The temporary review process provides national office staff the authority to engage in an additional level of review. Specifically, in circumstances where application of the legislation or guideline is disproportionate to or inconsistent with legislative intent, the temporary review process enables staff to exercise reasonable flexibility in reaching the appropriate waiver outcome. Since adoption of the temporary review process in January 2014, the NCAA Eligibility Center staff has applied the temporary review analysis in approximately 20 initial-eligibility waivers to reach a more favorable outcome (generally partial approval for athletics aid) for the involved student-athlete. Further, approximately 150 student-athletes who received a partially-approved initial-eligibility waiver for athletics aid have been afforded an opportunity to earn practice by meeting an academic condition in the initial term of full-time collegiate enrollment. Likewise, since January 2014, the student-athlete academic waivers staff has applied the temporary review analysis in approximately 26 cases to reach a more favorable outcome for the involved prospective student-athlete(s) and/or student-athlete(s). This recommendation ensures student-athletes will continue to benefit from the temporary review process.

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

(5) **Student-Athlete Impact.** Student-athletes who request initial-eligibility and academic waiver relief will be provided the benefit of additional consideration of mitigating factors, as appropriate, that could result in the approval of waivers that would not otherwise be approved.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

1. **Review of NCAA Proposal No. 2015-66 – Academic Misconduct.** The committee reviewed the proposal, question-and-answer document and feedback received from the governance structure and membership—including from the Committee on Infractions and IA Athletic Directors’ Association—since sponsorship of the proposal in June.

The committee carefully considered each of the specific areas of feedback from the Committee on Infractions, which centered on application of the proposed impermissible academic assistance legislation. The committee reviewed each area of feedback, noting that it considered this feedback in prior discussions and on several joint teleconferences with members of the Committee on Infractions.
Likewise, the committee also carefully considered feedback provided by leadership of the 1A Athletic Directors’ Association. The committee discussed concepts raised from leadership of the 1A Athletic Directors’ Association and ultimately concluded that the committee had addressed many of the same philosophical tenets via the proposal, and the proposal best reflects the committee’s approach.

Lastly, the committee noted the membership feedback indicating the proposal is a better alternative to the current state.

The committee concluded that the proposal is ripe for review by the membership. In this regard, the committee emphasized the importance of educating the membership on application of the entirety of the proposed legislation and best practices. This education will include webinars available to the membership, continued staff participation at conference meetings and meetings of constituent groups, an education session at the 2016 NCAA Convention and communication from the vice president of NCAA enforcement clarifying the enforcement staff’s role in investigating academic integrity issues.

The membership has an opportunity to amend the proposal from November 1 to November 15. The Council will vote on the proposal in April 2016.

2. **Expiration of APP Filters for LRIs.** In June, the committee agreed to extend the improvement filters for LRIs by one year to provide the committee one year to develop long-term solutions regarding LRIs and the APP penalty structure that are not time-based and do not have an expiration date. At the request of the committee, the HBCU/LRI Academic Advisory Group examined the current filter system to discuss and recommend long-term solutions. The advisory group conducted a meeting and teleconferences as part of its review. The advisory group also collaborated with the NCAA Division I Committee on Academic Performance Subcommittee on Penalties and Appeals. In addition, a roundtable of chancellors, presidents and commissioners from HBCUs and LRIs reacted to the recommendations and provided feedback for committee consideration. The committee reviewed the recommendations from the advisory group and feedback resulting from the roundtable. The committee also received a presentation on recent trends and proposed models resulting from the filters that included a summary of the number of teams below the APR benchmark to access postseason competition from the 2006-07 to the 2013-14 academic years.

The committee approved the recommendations of the advisory group. Beginning with submission of 2015-16 APR data in the fall 2016, the three filters under the current system may be used twice over the next five years. Currently, there is no restriction on the number of times the filters may be used. In addition, the filters will require an APR Improvement Plan that meets enhanced criteria established by the committee. Educational programming will also be required when a team has a multiyear APR below 930. Lastly, the filter system will be reevaluated again in five years based on research, data analysis and practical experience.
The committee will refine the enhanced criteria for the APR Improvement Plan and educational programming at its February meeting.

3. **Review of Accelerating Academic Success Program.** The committee reviewed the AASP to provide feedback to the Board of Directors in connection with a review of funding of the AASP by the Board of Governors. In particular, the committee reviewed the background and purpose of the program, recipients of funding under the program, data pertaining to the year-end cumulative grade-point-average of student-athletes, total credits earned by student-athletes, single year APR and single-year eligibility and retention rates for all Division I institutions, AASP eligible institutions and the first class of AASP grant recipient institutions from 2009 through 2014 and plans for future funding of the program.

The committee discussed the information presented. The committee identified additional information needed to determine the extent to which the AASP has resulted in successful academic outcomes for institutions in the program. The additional information includes an accounting by institutions of the use of funds received through the program, surveys measuring the academic success of student-athletes at institutions that received funds and other such demonstration from institutions. The committee also recognized that an administrative and operational assessment should be included in future assessments of the program.

4. **Academic Outcomes of Graduate Student-Athlete Transfers.** The committee continued its work on the Council referral to review applicable APP policy and academic eligibility requirements for graduate and postbaccalaureate student-athletes. The committee took action in the area of academic eligibility and considered how it might amend APP policy to better address graduate and postbaccalaureate retention.

a. **Graduate and Postbaccalaureate Student-Athlete Academic Eligibility Standards.** The committee reviewed data related to current trends and academic outcomes for postgraduate enrollment of student-athletes and the academic eligibility requirements for graduate and postbaccalaureate student-athletes. While the committee acknowledged that additional factors may impact the degree completion trends of graduate and postbaccalaureate student-athletes, the committee agreed that the existing academic eligibility standards should be revised to engender a more meaningful academic experience for graduate and postbaccalaureate student-athletes. As a result, the committee approved two legislative recommendations:

(1) **Require graduate and postbaccalaureate student-athletes with remaining athletics eligibility to complete a minimum of six hours of academic credit toward the student-athlete’s designated degree program during each regular academic term in which the student-athlete is a full-time graduate or postbaccalaureate student.** If an institution permits postbaccalaureate students to remain enrolled without declaring a second degree program and/or major, the student-athlete may use credits acceptable toward any of the institution’s degree programs to satisfy the six-hour requirement. [Legislative Action Item No. 1a.]
(2) Require a graduate student-athlete to be a fully admitted, degree-seeking graduate student enrolled in a designated graduate degree program to be eligible for intercollegiate athletics participation. [Legislative Action Item No. 1b.]

b. APP Policy and Models to Enhance Accountability of Postgraduate Student-Athletes. The committee examined the automatic awarding of the APR retention point for student-athletes and APP policy as it relates to graduate and postbaccalaureate student-athletes. The committee began to review potential APR models and identified the following principles to guide review:

(1) Postgraduate student-athletes representing an institution in athletics competition should be engaged academically and should be expected to satisfy a minimum standard of academic performance.

(2) Student-athletes enrolled in postgraduate work should be treated similarly, regardless of transfer status.

(3) Institutions should be accountable for the academic success of postgraduate student-athletes.

(4) Changes to APP policy should positively impact the academic success of postgraduate student-athletes without deterring them from enrolling in postgraduate and graduate programs.

(5) Any change to APP policy should be simple and easy to implement.

The committee reacted to the following models:

(1) Model No. 1: Retention Point is No Longer Automatically Awarded to Postgraduate Student-Athletes. For each regular academic term subsequent to graduation, a student-athlete must return to the institution as a full-time student in the next regular academic term in order to be awarded the retention point. A postgraduate student-athlete’s APR would be determined out of two points (e.g., “2/2”). This is the current application for undergraduate student-athletes.

(2) Model No. 2: Retention Point is Removed from the Calculation of APR for Postgraduate Student-Athletes. For each regular academic term subsequent to graduation, a student-athlete must earn the eligibility point but retention will not be calculated. For example, a postgraduate student-athlete who meets the eligibility requirements during a term would be a “1/1,” whereas a student-athlete who fails to meet the eligibility requirements would be a “0/1.”
(3) **Model No. 3:** Retention Point is Removed from the Calculation of APR for Postgraduate Student-Athletes Pursuing Undergraduate Work but the Retention Point Must Be Earned for Student-Athletes Pursuing Graduate Work. Once a student-athlete has graduated, a student-athlete who continues studies in undergraduate work must earn the eligibility point but retention will not be calculated. These student-athletes would be either “1/1” or “0/1.” Student-athletes pursuing graduate level work must earn both the eligibility and the retention point. These student-athletes’ APRs would be calculated out of two points (e.g., “2/2”).

(4) **Model No. 4:** If the Retention Point is Not Earned the Postgraduate Student-Athlete Would Lose Both the Retention and Eligibility Points. After graduation, a student-athlete would be considered to have lost both the retention and eligibility points if the student-athlete does not return as a full-time student in the next regular academic year, regardless of academic eligibility. Student-athletes who fail to return in the next academic year would automatically be considered “0/2.”

(5) **Model No. 5:** Maintain the Current Policy. After graduation, a student-athlete is automatically awarded the retention point but must still earn the eligibility point. For example, if a student-athlete leaves the institution while ineligible, he or she would still earn the retention point and be considered a “1/2.”

Following consideration of each of these models, the committee agreed that the fourth and fifth model should no longer be alternatives moving forward. Accordingly, the committee charged the NCAA Division I Committee on Academics Subcommittee on Data with reviewing the first three models—or variations of the models—in more detail, including data pertaining to application of the models, and making recommendations for the committee to consider at its February 2016 meeting.

5. **Time Demands and Facilitating Academic Opportunities for Student-Athletes.** In an effort to address challenges to better balancing student-athlete time commitments devoted to athletics participation, the committee discussed academic measures that could best prepare student-athletes for life at the committee’s June meeting. During this discussion, the committee focused on concepts related to the ways in which the legislation and waiver directives pertaining to full-time enrollment and progress-toward-degree requirements facilitate the student-athlete pursuit of academic opportunities. As a result, the committee approved two legislative recommendations:

a. Permit the 18-semester/27-quarter hour regular academic year progress-toward-degree credit-hour requirement per Bylaw 14.4.3.1-(b) to be prorated to nine hours for each term the student-athlete is enrolled in a cooperative educational work experience (e.g., co-op, internship, practicum, student-teaching) or institutionally approved study-abroad program provided certain conditions are met. [Legislative Action Item No. 1c.]
b. Permit credit hours earned toward all established and ongoing institutionally approved minors, including voluntary or optional minors, be used to satisfy credit-hour requirements (per Bylaw 14.4.3.1). In order for the voluntary or optional minor credit hours to be used to satisfy credit-hour requirements, the minor must be declared prior to the first day of the applicable academic term. [Legislative Action Item No. 1c.]

The committee recognized that its continued review of time demands issues during 2016-17 and thereafter will be based on referral(s) from the Student-Athlete Experience Committee.

6. **Review of Board of Directors Referrals Resulting from Strategic Summit.** The committee reviewed the referrals by the Board resulting from the Strategic Summit and began addressing areas of focus in response to the referral.

   a. **Academically At-Risk Student-Athletes and NCAA Benchmark-Setting Role.** The Strategic Summit participants addressed how the NCAA and its member institutions could better assist student-athletes and determined that identification and support of academically at-risk student-athletes should be further explored by the governance structure. During the Board meeting that immediately followed the Strategic Summit, the Board charged the committee with addressing academically at-risk student-athletes and the NCAA benchmark-setting role.

   The committee reviewed the referral, background of prior review of the academic risk of student-athletes by the governance structure and potential areas of focus in response to the referral. The committee discussed core principles to guide the committee in future discussion on academic measures to identify and support academically at-risk student-athletes. The committee will continue its discussion and address options in response to the referral at its February 2016 meeting. Committee review will be ongoing.

   b. **Effective Measurement of Academic Achievement.** The Strategic Summit participants discussed existing academic metrics, including whether the metrics accurately capture academic achievement and whether the NCAA should account for campus-based differences across institutions to measure academic achievement. Accordingly, the Board charged the committee with addressing effective measurement of academic achievement with a focus on campus-based comparisons. The Board also approved the principle recommended by the Summit participants that metrics for measuring academic achievement and progress toward degree were never meant to be static, and Division I should prioritize regular reassessment of these metrics, including perhaps adjusting metrics to account for differences among the membership.

   To identify areas of focus in response to the referral, the committee engaged in high-level discussion on several key issues, including what constitutes academic achievement and different approaches to how academic achievement could be
measured on a national and local level. The committee will continue its discussion and address options in response to the referral at its February meeting. Committee review will be ongoing.

7. **Review of Pre-Enrollment Academic Misconduct Legislation.** The committee reviewed pre-enrollment academic misconduct legislation, including legislative intent, application of the legislation and the roles of the NCAA Eligibility Center, NCAA High School Review Committee, NCAA Student Records Review Committee and NCAA enforcement staff in regulating pre-enrollment academic misconduct. The committee determined that it should examine legislative change and emphasized language consistency between pre- and post-enrollment academic misconduct legislation. Further, the committee recognized the need to educate the membership on application of the existing legislation, including the responsibility by the membership to report a violation. The committee will consider enhancements to the legislation at its February meeting for a potential proposal in the 2016-17 legislative cycle.

8. **Update on Redesign of SAT in March 2016 and Ongoing Communications with College Board.** In March 2016, the College Board will begin administering the redesigned SAT. The NCAA has regularly communicated with the College Board regarding the timeline for administration and potential impact of the redesigned SAT on the initial-eligibility certification process for prospective student-athletes. The committee received an update from the August meeting between the NCAA and College Board to review the timeline for administering the redesigned SAT and the preliminary sampling of data. The committee was advised that there has been no change to the timeline since the committee’s prior update in June.

As noted in the original College Board timeline, concordance tables (between current SAT and redesigned SAT) will not be available until approximately eight weeks after the first test administration. The committee discussed aspects of the concordance tables that could be problematic during the initial-eligibility certification process. The Eligibility Center reiterated its operational approach to minimizing any adverse impact of the redesigned SAT in its initial administration and the application of the 2016 initial-eligibility standards. The Eligibility Center also provided the committee a recommendation regarding the combining of section scores from the current and redesigned tests (i.e., superscore). This recommendation is a result of the most recent information provided by the College Board. The committee agreed to not superscore section scores between the current SAT and the redesigned SAT. The committee emphasized the importance of communicating to prospective student-athletes, high schools and the membership how the redesigned SAT will be used during the initial-eligibility certification process.

As the committee continues to receive additional information regarding the redesigned SAT, the committee will evaluate how the redesigned SAT may affect the predictive value of the test and how to account for those changes within initial-eligibility standards. The committee discussed the timeline for the examination of data by NCAA research staff.

9. **Progress-Toward-Degree Directive for “Aid Only” Waiver Requests.** During the 2014-15 academic year, authority to waive Bylaw 14.5.5.4 (eligibility for institutional
athletically related financial aid) transferred from the NCAA Division I Legislative Council Subcommittee for Legislative Relief to the NCAA Division I Progress-Toward-Degree Waivers Committee. The legislation requires a transfer student-athlete from a four-year institution to have been academically eligible to compete during the next regular academic term had the student-athlete remained at the previous institution in order to receive institutional athletically related financial aid during his or her first academic year at the certifying institution. The Subcommittee for Legislative Relief’s directive for the processing of requests to waive the legislation established a clear expectation that transferring student-athletes meet all academic eligibility requirements in the terms before transfer. Therefore, analysis of the waivers had historically been consistent with the analysis of progress-toward-degree waivers, relying on the presence of mitigation outside the control of the student-athlete that prevented the student-athlete from meeting the eligibility requirement. Currently, waivers of the legislation are reviewed under the same standard as waivers requesting relief of progress-toward-degree requirements.

The committee reviewed the directive, background and options considered. The committee determined the directive should be modified to allow flexibility to approve “aid only” waivers where the previous institution supported the transfer and offer of aid and the student-athlete met percentage of degree requirements, or equivalent credit-hour requirements for those student-athletes not yet responsible for a percentage benchmark. The committee noted that such a directive will require student-athletes make meaningful progress toward a degree at the time of transfer and positively impact student-athlete well-being by providing access to aid.

10. **Nontraditional College Coursework Update.** In response to a charge from the Board to review nontraditional college coursework, the committee previously determined that the current legislation achieves the appropriate institutional deference over the regulation of nontraditional college coursework. The committee confirmed its position and received an update on the 2015 Growth, Opportunities, Aspirations and Learning of Students in College Study administered to collect data on student-athlete experiences, including whether taking traditional in-person courses was an important part of the student-athlete experience, and the timeline for the release of the data. The committee recognized that student-athlete integration on campuses would likely be addressed in the larger student-athlete well-being discussions.

11. **Recommendation on Review of Official Visit Legislation Related to Tests Associated with ACT and SAT, Including ACT Aspire Early High School.** The committee recommended that the Student-Athlete Experience Committee review the legislated requirements for prospective student-athlete official visits due to the ACT Aspire test replacing the ACT Plan test. The committee noted this review should also consider changes made by the College Board to its suite of SAT assessments. [Nonlegislative Action Item No. 1a.]

12. **Recommendation on Temporary Review Process for Initial-Eligibility and Student-Athlete Academic Waivers.** In January 2014, the Board of Directors ratified the NCAA Division I Leadership Council’s action granting NCAA staff the authority to consider extenuating circumstances and exercise reasonable discretion in evaluating cases in which the
legislative analysis, case precedent or committee guidelines result in a disproportionately negative impact to prospective or enrolled student-athletes. The committee recommended that the Council make this temporary review process a permanent review process in designated initial-eligibility and student-athlete academic waivers. [Nonlegislative Action Item No. 1b.]

13. **Reports of the Subcommittee on Data.** The committee reviewed the reports of the July 2, July 16, July 30, August 13, August 27, September 10, September 24 and October 8 teleconferences. Actions taken by the committee on the recommendation of the subcommittee are addressed in the action and informational items of this report. Such recommendations are not repeated in the following subcommittee updates.

a. **APR Adjustments for Professional Athletics Departures.** During its July 16 and July 30 teleconferences, the subcommittee revisited its February 2015 clarification of the application of the professional athletics adjustment based on feedback received from member institutions and conferences.

The membership indicated that institutions have applied the professional athletics adjustment if the student-athlete was drafted by a professional athletics team in the next regular academic term, regardless of when the professional draft occurred. The subcommittee also reviewed data from the 2005-06 through 2008-09 APR reporting years. This data demonstrated the common membership application of these adjustment requests is consistent with how staff processed these adjustment requests prior to the shifting of the responsibility for processing these adjustment requests (e.g., submitted during data collection and applied by institution) to the membership.

Based on the information provided, the subcommittee issued the following clarification immediately effective with the submission of APR data in fall 2015:

A student-athlete may qualify for the professional athletics adjustment for the fall or winter term retention point provided the student-athlete triggers any component of the professional athletics adjustment directive criteria (e.g., signed contract with a professional team, established pattern of acceptance of prize money for competition) by the institution’s fifth week of class or census date (whichever is earlier) of the following academic year. If a student-athlete fails to trigger any component of the professional athletics adjustment directive by the established deadline, the adjustment cannot be applied. Lastly, for quarter institutions, a student-athlete may still qualify for the professional athletics adjustment for the fall quarter if the student-athlete does not enroll in the winter and spring quarters.

Lastly, the subcommittee approved a plan to educate the membership on this clarification, which included notice in the August and September Collegiate Commissioners Association Compliance Administrators’ updates, three teleconferences with the membership during August and September, posting of
information on the Legislative Services Database for the Internet, coverage at a session during the 2016 NCAA Regional Rules Seminars, updates to the committee’s operating manual and additional outreach as necessary.

b. **Application of Track and Field APR Cohort Definition.** In January 2015, the committee approved amendments to the APR cohort definition for indoor track and field and outdoor track and field to specify that indoor and outdoor track and field shall be combined into one sport for APR purposes and consist of student-athletes on athletics aid, enrolled full time as of the institution’s fifth week of classes or official census date for that institution, whichever is earlier, and on the indoor and/or outdoor track and field squad list. At its July 30 teleconference, the subcommittee reviewed a request from the membership and confirmed that the application of the new track and field cohort should not disadvantage one track and field team because of the status of the other track and field team for purposes of APR penalties, access to postseason competition and public recognition. Specifically, through the collection of the 2017-18 APR data, institutions may use the most favorable cohort definition (i.e., mixed definition, old definition or new definition) to calculate the track and field team’s multiyear APR in order to avoid penalties, gain access to postseason competition and qualify for public recognition.

c. **GSR and Student-Athletes Who Depart Academically Eligible But Return Within Six Years of Initial Collegiate Enrollment.** At its July 30 teleconference, the subcommittee continued its review of a request from the membership regarding student-athletes who depart their institutions academically eligible, but later return within six years of initial collegiate enrollment. The subcommittee determined current policy is appropriate and opted not to add an exception for student-athletes who leave their institutions academically eligible to pursue professional athletics opportunities but return within six years of initial collegiate enrollment as requested by the membership.

Specifically, GSR policy allows institutions to discount any student-athlete who withdraws from an institution within the six-year window if that student-athlete would have been academically eligible had he or she returned. Student-athletes who withdraw but later return to their institutions must be reported based on their status at the end of the six-year window, rather than their status at the time of original withdrawal. Therefore, student-athletes who return (part time or full time) but do not graduate within six years are considered “non-graduates.” The membership request noted that this policy may discourage institutions from bringing back former student-athletes to complete their degrees.

In its decision to uphold current policy, the subcommittee noted that the GSR is intended to be a metric of actual graduation, and any change to the GSR calculation would erode the GSR as a metric. Much like the Federal Graduation Rate, the GSR provides student-athletes six years to graduate, which accounts for periods of nonenrollment. Further, the subcommittee noted that student-athletes may leave their institutions for a variety of reasons, and GSR policy should consistently apply
to any academically eligible student who leaves his or her institution. Participation in professional athletics, as well as the many other reasons a student-athlete may depart his or her institution, is already accounted for in the APR.

14. Reports of the Subcommittee on Penalties and Appeals. The committee reviewed the report of the September 10 teleconference.

- Review of the HBCU/LRI Academic Advisory Group’s Report and Recommendations on Filters and Programming for LRIs. At its September 10 teleconference, the subcommittee invited the HBCU/LRI Advisory Group to the teleconference to review the advisory group’s recommendations regarding long-term solutions to the expiration of the longer transition period and improvement filters designed for LRIs. These recommendations included modifications to the current filters, requirement of a more robust APR Improvement Plan in order to access the filters and educational programming to assist underperforming teams at LRIs. The subcommittee was generally supportive of the work of the advisory group. The subcommittee offered suggestions for educational programming. The advisory group planned to incorporate the feedback into its final recommendations to the committee at the October meeting.

15. Reports of the NCAA Division I Committee on Academics Subcommittee on Student-Athlete Academics. The committee reviewed the reports of the August 5, September 2, September 16 and September 30 teleconferences. Actions taken by the committee on the recommendation of the subcommittee are addressed in the action and informational items of this report. Such recommendations are not repeated in the following subcommittee updates.

a. Blanket Waiver Request for ACT Aspire Test Official Visit Legislation. At its August 5 teleconference, the subcommittee recommended the NCAA Division I Committee for Legislative Relief approve a blanket waiver to allow the use of the ACT Aspire test in lieu of the ACT PLAN test for official visit purposes, expiring August 1, 2017. The ACT Aspire has replaced the ACT PLAN test and is not offered on a national testing date under national testing conditions. The official visit legislation, however, requires a high school or prospective student-athlete to present a score from a PSAT, SAT, PLAN or ACT taken on a national date under national testing conditions before an institution may provide an official visit. Prospective student-athletes living in states that only offer the ACT Aspire test and lack access to the PSAT, or for other reasons choose to take the ACT Aspire test, may be adversely impacted during the recruiting process. Granting legislative relief through the 2016-17 academic year allows for a holistic review of official visit academic requirements by the Student-Athlete Experience Committee.

b. Directive for Two-Year College Transfer Waivers Citing Misadvisement. At its August 5 and September 6 teleconferences, the subcommittee continued its review of two-year college transfer waivers citing misadvisement and approved a revision to the waiver directive. The revision indicates that if an institution submits multiple
waiver requests in the same year or in consecutive years citing misadvisement as mitigation, despite repeated failures on the part of the institution to correctly advise two-year college prospective student-athletes, the misadvisement mitigation will not be viewed favorably in those subsequent requests.

c. **Progress-Toward-Degree Waiver Directive for Student-Athletes in Restrictive Degree Programs.** During its September 2 and 16 teleconferences, the subcommittee reviewed the progress-toward-degree waiver directive for student-athletes in restrictive degree programs. Each year institutions submit a number of waiver requests for student-athletes who fail to meet progress-toward-degree requirements because of the restrictive nature of the student-athlete’s degree program. These programs are restrictive due to prerequisites that must be completed prior to starting any major courses, the total number of credits required to complete the degree (e.g., PharmD programs) or the specific sequencing of courses that make it impossible to meet progress-toward-degree requirements. Pursuant to the directive, the waivers are approved if the student-athlete has not created the academic deficiency (e.g., failed a class that was needed to move to the next sequence of courses). The subcommittee agreed with the existing directive as the best approach to this issue.

16. **Review of Committee for Legislative Relief Waiver Requests.** The Committee on Academics received a summary of the requests to waive the one-year residence requirement on recommendation of the committee for student-athletes who transferred due to lack of access to postseason competition during the 2015-16 academic year.

17. **APR Improvement Plans Longitudinal Review Update.** The committee received a summary of the longitudinal review of improvement plans submitted by institutions during in 2010-11. During this summary, the committee discussed best practices for creating effective improvement plans. The information obtained from the review and committee input on best practices will be used to develop education for the membership and provide ongoing support to institutions creating or updating improvement plans.

18. **Committee on Academics Liaison to NCAA Division I Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) Update.** The committee received a request from SAAC that a committee member serve as a liaison to SAAC. Committee members will consider the request and arrangements will be made for a committee member to serve in a liaison capacity to SAAC.

19. **Research Update.** The committee received an update on the upcoming GSR data collected for student-athletes who entered college in 2008 and timeline of the public release on the GSR.

20. **Academic Technology Update.** The committee received an update on the development of an academic portal, which will bring all APP processes under one umbrella. A pilot of the portal is scheduled to be available to the membership during spring 2016. The portal is scheduled to be fully released to the membership during fall 2017.
21. **Review of Two-Year Strategic Priority List.** The committee reviewed its strategic priorities for the 2015-16 and 2016-17 academic years. The committee developed the priorities in an effort to provide more transparency and accountability to the membership.

22. **Board of Directors Update.** The committee received an update on key items from the Board’s August 4-5 meeting.

23. **Council Update.** The committee received an update on key items from the Council’s June 23-24 and September 28-30 meetings.

24. **Review of Reports of the Committee on Academics.** The committee reviewed and approved the full report of the June 23-24 meeting, the strategic report of the June 23-24 meeting to the Board and the report of the September 22 teleconference.

25. **Priority Future Agenda Items.** The following items have been identified as priority items for the committee:

   a. Provide education to the membership on the application of Proposal No. 2015-66 – Academic Misconduct.

   b. Refine enhanced criteria for the required APR Improvement Plan and required educational programming in new filter system for LRIs beginning with submission of 2015-16 APR data in fall 2016.

   c. Address areas of focus in response to Board referrals on academically at-risk student-athletes and effective measurement of academic achievement resulting from the Strategic Summit.

   d. Continue to review APP policy and models to enhance accountability of postgraduate student-athletes in response to referral from the Council and reach final decision at February meeting.

26. **Future Meeting Dates.**

   a. February 1-2, 2016 - Indianapolis;

   b. April 18-20 - Indianapolis;

   c. June 20-21 - Indianapolis; and

   d. October 10-11 - Indianapolis.

*Committee Chair: Roderick McDavis, Ohio University, Mid-American Conference*

*Staff Liaisons: Shauna Cobb, Academic and Membership Affairs*

*Azure Davey, Academic and Membership Affairs*
### Attendees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Institution &amp; Conference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carray Banks, Jr.</td>
<td>Norfolk State University; Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeri Beggs</td>
<td>Illinois State University; Missouri Valley Conference.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jacqueline Blackett</td>
<td>Columbia University – Barnard College; The Ivy League.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jerry Bovee</td>
<td>Weber State University; Big Sky Conference.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greg Burke</td>
<td>Northwestern State University; Southland Conference.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tom Burman</td>
<td>University of Wyoming; Mountain West Conference.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carolyn Callahan</td>
<td>University of Virginia; Atlantic Coast Conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Clough</td>
<td>University of Colorado, Boulder; Pac-12 Conference.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beth DeBauche</td>
<td>Ohio Valley Conference (Wednesday only).</td>
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<tr>
<td>John DeGioia</td>
<td>Georgetown University; Big East Conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raymond Harrison, Jr.</td>
<td>Texas A&amp;M University, College Station; Southeastern Conference.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhonda Hatcher</td>
<td>Texas Christian University; Big 12 Conference.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brandon Martin</td>
<td>California State University, Northridge; Big West Conference.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roderick McDavis</td>
<td>Ohio University; Mid-American Conference.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frank Messina</td>
<td>University of Alabama at Birmingham, Conference USA.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Renae Myles</td>
<td>Alabama A&amp;M University; Southwestern Athletic Conference.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thomas Yeager</td>
<td>Colonial Athletic Association.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kurt Zorn</td>
<td>Indiana University, Bloomington; Big Ten Conference.</td>
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### Absentees:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Institution &amp; Conference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pamela Eibeck</td>
<td>University of the Pacific; West Coast Conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jarred Koerner</td>
<td>Murray State University; Ohio Valley Conference.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Guests in Attendance:

None.

### NCAA Staff Liaisons in Attendance:

Shauna Cobb and Azure Davey.

### Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:

Lydia Bell, Emily Capehart, Andy Cardamone, Greg Dana, Gary deCastro, Diane Dickman, Jenn Fraser, Judy Gauer, Doug Healey, Michelle Hosick, Kurt Hunsaker, Megan Kassabian, Ken Kleppel, Andy Louthain, Binh Nguyen, Tom Paskus, Todd Petr, Bill Regan, Anne Rohlman, Tiese Roxbury (via teleconference), Dave Schnase, Naima Stevenson, Wendy Walters, Brittany Washington, Quintin Wright, Katy Yurk.