



**REPORT OF THE NCAA DIVISION III
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION WORKING GROUP
SEPTEMBER 13, 2017, TELECONFERENCE**

ACTION ITEMS.

- None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Welcome and Roster.** The NCAA Division III Diversity and Inclusion Working Group commenced business at 11:02 a.m. Eastern time Wednesday, September 13, 2017. The chair, Gerard Bryant, commenced the teleconference. He welcomed the group and conducted a roll call.
2. **Report of July 26, 2017, Teleconference.** The working group reviewed the report and had no changes.
3. **Building Toward a Career in Collegiate Athletics Resource.** The working group reviewed the latest version of the resource and provided suggested edits and revisions. Staff will electronically send the next version to the working group for final approval prior to releasing it to the membership in early Oct.
4. **Division III Voluntary Graduation Rates – Next Steps.** Staff reviewed feedback from the 2012 NCAA Convention Division III Issues Forum related to the division's submission of student-athlete graduation rates. In 2012, the Issues Forum feedback included the following:
 - a. Responses were generally in favor of the academic reporting telling the Division III story and supporting the division's philosophy.
 - b. The membership expressed concerns related to tracking transfers, dual sport student-athletes and student-athletes leaving teams.
 - c. The majority noted that the campus-level burden outweighed the benefits – both time and money. Further, some noted there was no significant benefit.
 - d. Generally, the responses indicated a need to annually mandate the reporting for consistency.

Since 2010, staff has continued to annually collect, on a voluntary basis, student-athlete graduation rates. During this eight-year period, 278 institutions have submitted information during at least one of the reporting cycles. Further, the data show that football players, and in particular football players of color, have a significantly lower rate of success. The latest federal graduation rate for football student-athletes was 53 percent. The federal graduation rate of African-American football student-athletes was 36 percent; a rate that is 18 percentage points lower than Division I (54 percent).

Based on the recent data and the division's focus on diversity and inclusion efforts, the working group confirmed that it recommends the Division III Presidents Council consider 2019 legislation to create an annual mandatory student-athlete graduation rate submission. (Attachment) The working group believes mandatory data collection provides the following benefits:

- a. A census of valid and reliable data allows for legally and scientifically defensible evidenced-based policies.
 - b. Enhancement to the Institutional Performance Program (IPP), the free self-assessment and benchmarking tool provided by the NCAA.
 - c. Institutions are currently required to submit similar data, per federal regulations, so the submission to the NCAA may not be overly burdensome.
 - d. A mandatory collection will enable Division III to tell its very positive academic story and highlight its philosophy. The current data shows that overall Division III student-athletes graduate at a higher rate than the student-body and typically higher than the other NCAA divisions.
- 5. Recognition Award.** The working group discussed establishing an annual Division III specific national award to recognize either an individual, institution or entity that champions women and/or ethnic minorities. Since the NCAA office of inclusion already has a national diversity award, the working group charged staff to discuss with the NCAA Minority Opportunities Interest Committee (MOIC) and the Minority Opportunity Athletics Association (MOAA) the feasibility of having divisional winners. Further, the office of inclusion will share the award's criteria for the working group to review on its next teleconference. Next steps also will be discussed on this teleconference.

- 6. Student Immersion Program Update.** Staff noted that by the Sept. 30 deadline it anticipates approximately 75 applications for the 40 available spots. In early Oct. the working group's subcommittee (Gerard Bryant, Dan Schumacher, Jason Verdugo, and Natalie Winkelfoos) will participate in a one-hour teleconference to make the final selections
- 7. SWA Program Update.** Staff shared the draft agenda and roster for the second annual SWA Program being held in early Oct. in conjunction with the Women Leaders in Sport (formerly NACWAA) Convention. The working group also noted the importance of alternating the SWA Program between the fall and spring so more SWAs may attend the programming.
- 8. Next steps.** The chair summarized the teleconference's discussions. The chair noted that staff will provide a final electronic copy of the Building Toward a Career in Collegiate Athletics resource; the working group will maintain its request for mandatory student-athlete graduation rate submission; staff will discuss with MOIC and MOAA the possibility of having the current annual diversity award create divisional winners and on its next teleconference, the working group will review the diversity award's criteria as it determines next steps in establishing a Division III specific diversity award.
- 9. Future teleconferences.** The working group's next teleconference is scheduled for noon Eastern time Thursday, November 2.
- 10. Adjournment.** The call adjourned at 11:50 a.m. Eastern time.

*Staff Liaisons: Louise McCleary, Division III Governance
Sonja Robinson, Office of Inclusion
Amy Wilson, Office of Inclusion*

Teleconference date: September 13, 2017
Attendees:
Nnenna Akotaobi, Swarthmore College
Gerard Bryant, John Jay College of Criminal Justice
Jason Fein, Bates College
Dan Schumacher, University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire
Natalie Winkelfoos, Oberlin College
Nicolle Wood, Salem State University
Absentees:
Heather Benning, The Midwest Conference Javier Cevallos, Framingham State University Chris Deddo, New York Maritime College Joe Onderko, Presidents Athletic Conference Jason Verdugo, Hamline University Amy Wilson, NCAA
NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:
Louise McCleary and Sonja Robinson.
Other in Attendance:
None.

2012 NCAA Convention Division III Issues Forum Feedback

- Responses were generally in favor of academic reporting telling the Division III story and supporting the division's philosophy.
- Some concerns with the results from a one-year data collection and if the results were truly representative of the division.
- Concerns related to tracking transfers, dual sport student-athletes and student-athletes leaving teams were expressed.
- Majority noted that campus-level burden outweighed the benefits – both time and money. Further, some noted there was no significant benefit.
- Generally, the responses indicated a need to annually mandate the reporting for consistency. Some supported a biennial mandate; however, the majority noted it would increase inconsistency and inaccuracy.

2017 Analysis of Student-Athlete Voluntary Grad Rate Data

- Over the eight-year data collection, 278 institutions (62% of the membership) have submitted data at least once.
- The division's federal graduation rate (FGR) is consistently 69% while the academic success rate (ASR) is consistently 87%.
- Football student-athletes, and in particular African-American football student-athletes, have significantly lower graduation rates (FGR and ASR) than other sports.
- The 2016 FGR for football student-athletes was 53%.
- The FGR for African-American student-athletes was 36%; a rate that is 18 percentage points lower than Division I FBS (55 %).
- There are two key factors, the large size of some football recruiting classes; and shortcomings with the federal rate collection (i.e., no transfers) that can potentially negatively impact the federal rates.
- Research shows the larger the recruiting class, the lower the graduation rate – especially with football recruiting classes of 50 or more student-athletes.

Mandatory Student-Athlete Grad Rate Benefits

- Provides a census of valid and reliable data and allows for legally and scientifically defensible evidenced-based policies.
- Enhances use of the NCAA Institutional Performance Program (IPP).
- With similarity to current federal requirements and an improved data collection system, institutions may find the data submission less burdensome.
- The past several years, the division, as well as the NCAA Association, has pledged a commitment to diversity and inclusion efforts. Data shows an area of concern with African-American football players.
- A mandatory collection will enable Division III to tell its very positive academic story and highlight its philosophy. The current data shows that overall Division III student-athletes graduate at a higher rate than the student body and typically higher than the other NCAA divisions.