

## **White Paper Regarding Strategic Management of NCAA Division II Membership Growth**

### **Background.**

In spring 2010, the NCAA signed a new media agreement for the Association with CBS and Turner Sports, which will be in effect for the next 14 years (until the 2023-24 academic year). In light of the new media agreement, the NCAA Division II Presidents Council formed the NCAA Division II Long-Range Projections Task Force. The task force was charged with reviewing current Division II budget practices and budget projections and offering a long-range budget framework by March 2011 to the NCAA Division II Planning and Finance Committee and Presidents Council for consideration and approval in April 2011.

In addition, to provide Division II tools to strategically manage its membership growth, the Presidents Council and Division II chancellors and presidents who attended the 2010 Chancellors and Presidents Summit urged a study of membership matters that would (1) seek to achieve greater understanding of current conference discussions regarding membership and possible expansion; (2) consider the ramifications of what happens when expansion does occur; and (3) identify strategic solutions to address these issues.

As part of this study of membership matters, the Division II staff has modeled Division II membership at different numbers of institutions (Attachment A). This modeling includes a review of whether viable member schools exist in certain geographic areas and, also, a review of budget implications on the overall size of the division. The effects of membership growth on sports sponsorship and championships access are also part of the modeling.

### **Landscape of Intercollegiate Athletics Membership.**

According to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, there are over 3,900 institutions in the United States granting associate degrees and above. Over 2,100 institutions grant bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees and 1,400 of those institutions are members of the NCAA, the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), the United States Collegiate Athletics Association (USCAA) or the National Christian College Athletic Association (NCCAA).

Since more than 95 percent of institutions that sponsor intercollegiate athletics are either affiliated with the NCAA or the NAIA, this white paper (and the membership modeling) focuses on membership within these two associations.

NCAA Membership Overview.

Since 1978, the NCAA has grown from an Association of 725 active members to an Association of 1,062 active members. This roughly 46 percent growth can be attributed to a number of situations beyond the NCAA's control including the migration of institutions previously affiliated with the NAIA.

In 1990, the overall NCAA membership of 828 active member institutions included 296 institutions in Division I, 209 institutions in Division II and 323 institutions in Division III. Since the 1990-91 academic year, there has been significant growth in all three divisions (Attachment B). Today, Division I has 337 active member institutions; Division II has 290 institutions (Attachment C); and Division III has 435 institutions.

Within the past 20 years, there has also been an interest in NCAA membership from international institutions. In January 2007, the NCAA Executive Committee approved a 10-year pilot program to allow the respective divisions to assess the benefits, as well as the challenges, of Canadian membership and to determine how seamlessly Canadian colleges and universities could integrate into the NCAA system. At the 2008 NCAA Convention, the Division II membership adopted legislation to establish a pilot program to allow Canadian institutions to join the Division II membership (2008 Convention Proposal No. 2008-3). Division II is currently the only division to permit Canadian colleges and universities to become active members. In September 2009, Simon Fraser University became the first Canadian institution to enter the Division II membership process.

NCAA Membership Process.

Over the years, the three divisions have reacted to the consequences of membership growth and have modified their respective membership processes.

1. **Division II.** A streamlined membership process was adopted at the 2007 NCAA Convention (2007 Convention Proposal No. 2007-4), which treats provisional and reclassifying members alike. As a result, the membership process now requires that an institution seeking to become an active member be sponsored by another active Division II member institution or conference. The process is a three-year process, consisting of a candidacy period and a provisional period. This new process, which emphasizes systematic manageable growth and clarifies the expectations for Division II active membership, increases the likelihood that potential members are prepared for Division II active membership. Institutions in the membership process are also required to meet the NCAA Division II Membership Committee's minimum requirements, which include enhanced criteria to strengthen and clarify membership standards (Attachment D). These minimum requirements must be satisfied on application to the division. The committee

also developed additional evaluation criteria for assessing prospective members (Attachment E).

Further, the Membership Committee has approved a number of policies to assist in the future, if the division attracts more applicant institutions that it can accommodate in a given year. One such policy is that it may accept a maximum of eight applicant institutions for each membership class in a given year, with no more than 30 total institutions in the membership process at one time (refer to Item No. 2 under actions taken by the NCAA Division II Management Council during its January 2011 in-person meeting on Page No. 17). Another policy specifies that the Membership Committee will evaluate each year's applicant pool on its own merit. As such, institutions that previously applied and were not invited to enter the membership process should not assume that subsequent applications will be successful.

2. **Division I.** In order to address its membership issues, in August 2007, the NCAA Division I Board of Directors adopted a four-year moratorium that prohibited consideration of any new institutional, conference or multidivisional Division I members until August 2011. The previous provisional membership process in Division I permitted an institution outside the NCAA to become a Division I member through a seven-year process. However, in January 2011, the Board of Directors adopted a legislative proposal that eliminated the provisional and multidivisional membership processes and established (in its place) a four-year process for an institution that wishes to reclassify from Division II to Division I. According to the new process, potential new Division I members shall have been active members of Division II for at least five years. In addition, the reclassifying institutions must receive a bona fide offer of membership by an active Division I multisport conference. Further, the process requires an application fee to be paid before entering the reclassification process, and the amount of the fee shall be determined each year based on the estimated annual average value of direct benefits through distributions and championships made available to Division I members (the application fee for the 2011-12 and 2012-13 academic years has been set at \$1.4 million). Finally, according to the new process, once the institution becomes an active Division I member, it must wait three calendar years to begin receiving revenue distributions related to sports sponsorship and grants-in-aid. [Note: The legislation has an August 1, 2011, effective date.]
3. **Division III.** The Division III provisional membership process takes five years (one exploratory year and four years of provisional membership). In addition, there is a maximum entering class size of four institutions each year for the provisional and reclassifying process. Institutions shall be assigned a start year based on the following criteria: (a) geographic location in an area that needs or can accept new members; (b) reclassifying versus provisional status; (c) existing or potential membership in an active Division III conference; and (d) broad-based sports-sponsorship profile.

*Division II Conference Membership Overview.*

There are currently 22 Division II conferences. Conference membership for the 2010-11 academic year ranges from seven to 16 institutions, with the average number of institutions per Division II conference being 12. Four conferences are composed of only private institutions and one conference is composed of only public institutions, while the remaining 17 conferences include both private and public institutions. The average number of sports sponsored by Division II conferences is 15. Of the 22 conferences, 13 sponsor football (Attachment F). [Note: In February 2011, the Membership Committee elected the Great American Conference as a Division II member conference, effective August 1, 2011; which increases the number of Division II conferences to 23.]

While the potential increase of active member institutions is important to evaluate, conference membership must also be a focus of discussions regarding strategic management of the division's membership growth. In February 2010, the Membership Committee initiated discussions about conference membership, including the expansion of current active conferences and the possibility of new conferences forming in the division. The committee noted that the membership needs to study and assess membership growth from an institutional perspective, as well as from a conference perspective. The committee also noted that current active conferences may reach their limit for new members and institutions may begin having to look at forming new conferences. These potential new conferences could place a burden on the current Division II budget and championships access. To assist with conference membership issues in the future, the committee developed a set of minimum requirements for conferences to be considered for membership. These requirements are very similar to the minimum requirements for applicant institutions. The committee also developed additional evaluation criteria for assessing prospective conference members (Attachment G).

*NAIA Membership Overview.*

NAIA membership has declined from approximately 550 member institutions in the mid-1970s to approximately 300 institutions today. The NAIA has 50,000 student-athletes participating at colleges and universities throughout the United States and Canada. Divided into 25 conferences and the Association of Independent Institutions (A.I.I.), the NAIA offers 23 championships in 13 sports.

The highest concentration of NAIA members is located in California. The Midwest and Texas have the next largest group, while smaller densities exist in the Northeast and Mountain zones (Attachment H).

Conclusions.

According to the Association of American Colleges and Universities, there are over 2,600 accredited four-year colleges and universities. Less than half of those institutions are currently members of the NCAA. Many of the remaining 1,500 institutions may never seek to affiliate with the NCAA. However, if 20 percent of those were to indicate an interest and are able to demonstrate philosophical compatibility and have the ability to meet financial aid and other commitments, the NCAA could be looking at upwards of 300 new institutions trying to enter the membership process in one of the three divisions.

**Potential Recommendations to Strategically Manage Membership Growth.**

Since fall 2010, different groups within the Division II governance structure have had the opportunity to discuss the possible effects of membership growth based on the membership modeling project. These groups have provided their feedback to the Membership Committee and the Long-Range Projections Task Force.

The Division II Conference Commissioners Association (CCA) has also engaged in extensive discussions regarding possible membership growth. The CCA forwarded a series of recommendations for review by the Membership Committee and concluded that the best approach to manage growth is by using "controlled excellence" as part of the membership process.

In November 2010, the Membership Committee and the Long-Range Projections Task Force met jointly to review the feedback received from different groups and discuss the membership modeling and projections. Based on the membership modeling project, the Membership Committee believes that Division II could stabilize membership at 24 conferences and 365 member institutions. However, the committee is opposed to imposing a cap on the number of institutions (either by legislation or policy). The Membership Committee developed an initial list of possible recommendations regarding the strategic management of Division II membership growth and requested feedback from the Division II membership and different governance groups at the 2011 NCAA Convention.

In addition, as part of its charge, the Long-Range Projections Task Force has developed a long-range budget framework, which accounts for membership growth. The Task Force acknowledged that while the division's optimal membership could be at 24 conferences and 365 institutions (particularly due to regionalization and championship selection issues), the framework was developed to accommodate growth up to a capacity of 26 conferences.

The Membership Committee met again in February 2011 to discuss the feedback received since November 2010 regarding the potential recommendations to strategically manage membership

growth. Based on the feedback, the Membership Committee made some amendments to the original list of possible recommendation, as outlined below.

**To help illustrate how the potential recommendations to strategically manage Division II membership growth would apply to current Division II conferences and athletics conferences applying to become a Division II conference, timelines for implementation of these potential recommendations have been created (Attachment I).**

**1. 2012 NCAA Convention Legislation – NCAA Constitution 3.3 – NCAA Membership – New Member Conference – Minimum Size of 10 Members for Application**

- a. Recommendation: Sponsor legislation for the 2012 NCAA Convention to amend NCAA Constitution 3.3 (member conference), as follows: (1) to require that an athletics conference desiring to become a Division II member conference must be composed of at least 10 active Division II institutions and/or institutions in the provisional period of the Division II membership process at the time of application; (2) to specify that the 10 institutions must be located in the same geographic area as specified in Constitution 4.13 (geographical area); (3) to specify that the Membership Committee may waive the requirements above if it deems that unusual circumstances warrant such action; and (4) to eliminate the current process for a conference with fewer than six active member institutions desiring to attain voting conference status and gain access to voting conference membership privileges.
- b. Effective Date: Immediate.
- c. Rationale: Since the summer of 2010, Division II has engaged in a study of membership matters and has modeled the effects of possible membership growth on different areas. This recommendation is intended to address the effects of possible conference growth in the division. Conferences with less than 10 institutions often face increased financial challenges. The challenges are even greater for newly formed conferences. In addition, small conferences might face scheduling issues that could be alleviated with an increase in the number of institutions. Requiring new conferences intending to become a Division II members to have at least 10 institutions at the time of application will assist these conferences with long-term viability and stability. In addition, the 10 institutions applying to become a member conference can be either active institutions or institutions in the provisional period of the membership process. This would allow the conference to apply while the provisional institutions make their way through the membership process; however, all 10 institutions must be active prior to the conference being approved into active membership. The requirement that all institutions must be in the same geographic area will further assist conferences

with scheduling, missed class time and travel issues. Further, if a conference can demonstrate that unusual circumstances have precluded the conference from meeting the recommended requirements at the time of application, the Membership Committee will have the authority to waive those requirements. Due to the increase in the minimum number of institutions required to apply for conference membership, the current process for conferences with fewer than six active member institutions trying to attain voting conference status and gain access to voting conference membership privileges will be eliminated. The immediate effective date would require any new conference applying to become a Division II member conference after the adjournment of the 2012 NCAA Convention to be composed of 10 institutions.

- d. Estimated Budget Impact. None.
- e. Student-Athlete Impact. None.

**2. 2012 Convention Legislation – Constitution 3.3 – NCAA Membership – New Member Conference – Minimum Size of 10 Active Members to Become an Active Conference**

- a. Recommendation: Sponsor legislation for the 2012 Convention to amend Constitution 3.3 (member conference) to specify that an athletics conference shall be composed of at least 10 active member institutions to become an active Division II member conference; further, to specify that the Membership Committee may waive this requirement if it deems that unusual circumstances warrant such action.
- b. Effective Date: August 1, 2013.
- c. Rationale: Since the summer of 2010, Division II has engaged in a study of membership matters and has modeled the effects of possible membership growth on different areas. This recommendation is intended to address the effects of possible conference growth in the division. Conferences with less than 10 institutions often face increased financial challenges. The challenges are even greater for newly formed conferences. In addition, small conferences might face scheduling issues that could be alleviated with an increase in the number of institutions. Requiring new conferences to have at least 10 active institutions before they become a Division II member conference will assist these conferences with long-term viability and stability. A new conference may be allowed to apply to become a Division II conference with 10 active institutions and/or institutions in the provisional period of the membership process. This would allow the conference to apply while the provisional institutions make their way through the

membership process; however, all 10 institutions must be active prior to the conference being approved into active conference membership. Further, if a conference can demonstrate that unusual circumstances have precluded the conference from having 10 active members, the Membership Committee will have the authority to waive this requirement. The delayed effective date will allow a conference that applies and is invited to become a Division II member conference prior to August 1, 2013, to become an active conference with six active member institutions. However, any conference that becomes active on or after August 1, 2013, will have to meet the minimum of 10 active member institutions.

- d. Estimated Budget Impact. None.
- e. Student-Athlete Impact. None.

**3. 2012 Convention Legislation – Constitution 3.3 – NCAA Membership – New Member Conference – Annual Limit on Conference Membership**

- a. Recommendation: Sponsor legislation for the 2012 Convention to amend Constitution 3.3 (member conference) to specify that the Management Council, on recommendation of the Membership Committee, may establish an annual limit on the number of athletic conferences applying to become a member conference that will be invited to active conference membership.
- b. Effective Date: August 1, 2012.
- c. Rationale: Since the summer of 2010, Division II has engaged in a study of membership matters and has modeled the effects of possible membership growth on different areas. This recommendation is intended to assist the Membership Committee in controlling conference growth in the division and to allow the governance structure to address any potential operational issues with conference growth. If the Membership Committee recommends that a limit should be imposed on new conferences joining the division and the Management Council approves the recommendation, the Membership Committee will still have the ability to review the applications of all conferences applying for membership; however, the committee will only be allowed to invite a limited number of conferences into active conference membership, unless unusual circumstances warrant a different action.
- d. Estimated Budget Impact. None.
- e. Student-Athlete Impact. None.



**4. 2012 Convention Legislation – Constitution 3.3 – NCAA Membership – Member Conference – Minimum Size of Eight Active Member Institutions**

- a. Recommendation: Sponsor legislation for the 2012 Convention to amend Constitution 3.3 (member conference) to specify that an active Division II conference shall be composed of at least eight active member institutions; further, to specify that the Membership Committee may waive this requirement if it deems that unusual circumstances warrant such action.
- b. Effective Date: August 1, 2017.
- c. Rationale: Since the summer of 2010, Division II has engaged in a study of membership matters and has modeled the effects of possible membership growth on different areas. This recommendation is intended to address the effects that possible membership growth could have on current Division II conferences. Current legislation requires a minimum of six active institutions for active conference membership. However, conferences with less than 10 institutions often face increased financial challenges. In addition, small conferences might face scheduling issues that could be alleviated with an increase in the number of institutions. The delayed effective date will provide current Division II conferences with five years (from August 1, 2012) to reach the minimum of eight active members, although the ultimate target is that all Division II conferences have at least 10 active member institutions. This will assist these conferences with long-term viability and stability. Further, if a conference can demonstrate that unusual circumstances have precluded it from meeting the minimum size of eight, the Membership Committee will have the authority to waive this requirement. The recommended minimum number of institutions will not affect current minimum sports sponsorship requirements for purposes of automatic qualification.
- d. Estimated Budget Impact. None.
- e. Student-Athlete Impact. None.

**5. 2012 Convention Legislation – Constitution 3.3 – NCAA Membership – Member Conference – Minimum Size of 10 Active Member Institutions**

- a. Recommendation: Sponsor legislation for the 2012 Convention to amend Constitution 3.3 (member conference) to specify that an active Division II conference shall be composed of at least 10 active member institutions; further, to

specify that the Membership Committee may waive this requirement if it deems that unusual circumstances warrant such action.

- b. Effective Date: August 1, 2022.
  - c. Rationale: Since the summer of 2010, Division II has engaged in a study of membership matters and has modeled the effects of possible membership growth on different areas. This recommendation is intended to address the effects that possible membership growth could have on current Division II conferences. Current legislation requires a minimum of six active institutions for active conference membership. However, conferences with less than 10 institutions often face increased financial challenges. In addition, small conferences might face scheduling issues that could be alleviated with an increase in the number of institutions. The delayed effective date will provide current Division II conferences with 10 years (from August 1, 2012) to reach the minimum of 10 active member institutions. This will further assist these conferences with long-term viability and stability. If a conference can demonstrate that unusual circumstances have precluded it from meeting the minimum size of 10 institutions, the Membership Committee will have the authority to waive this requirement. The recommended minimum number of institutions will not affect current minimum sports sponsorship requirements for purposes of automatic qualification.
  - d. Estimated Budget Impact. None.
  - e. Student-Athlete Impact. None.
- 6. 2012 Convention Legislation – Constitution 3.3.2 and NCAA Bylaw 31.3.4 – NCAA Membership and Executive Regulations – Member Conference – Privileges – Timetable for Automatic Qualification**
- a. Recommendation: Sponsor legislation for the 2012 Convention to amend Constitution 3.3.2 (privileges) and NCAA Bylaw 31.3.4 (automatic qualification) to increase from two years to five years the waiting period for a new Division II conference to become eligible for automatic qualification.

[Note: See recommendation for noncontroversial legislation on Page No. 14 for current timetable for receipt of conference membership privileges.]

- b. Effective Date: August 1, 2013.

- c. Rationale: Since the summer of 2010, Division II has engaged in a study of membership matters and has modeled the effects of possible membership growth on different areas. This recommendation is intended to address the effects that possible membership growth could have on the division. By requiring a newly formed conference to wait five years after becoming active to be eligible for automatic qualification, the division will ensure that new conferences are committed to the Division II philosophy before receiving an automatic qualification. This change further ensures that interest in the division is not based solely on receipt of automatic-qualification privileges. The delayed effective date will allow any group of institutions that is currently working on forming a Division II conference to be able to access automatic qualification in two years, thereby further assisting the division to reach the goal of stabilizing around 24 conferences and strengthening the requirements to better control growth beyond 24 conferences.
  - d. Estimated Budget Impact. None.
  - e. Student-Athlete Impact. None.
7. **2012 Convention Legislation – Constitution 3.3.2 and Bylaw 31.3.4 – NCAA Membership and Executive Regulations – Member Conference – Privileges – Grace Period**
- a. Recommendation: Sponsor legislation for the 2012 Convention to amend Constitution 3.3.2 (privileges) and Bylaw 31.3.4 (automatic qualification) to create a two-year grace period during which a conference may continue to qualify for conference membership privileges following the date of withdrawal of the institution(s) that causes the conference’s membership to fall below the minimum number of institutions required for active membership, provided the conference remains within one member institution of that minimum number.
  - b. Effective Date: Immediate.
  - c. Rationale: Since the summer of 2010, Division II has engaged in a study of membership matters and has modeled the effects of possible membership growth on different areas. This recommendation is intended to address the effects that possible membership migration could have on a Division II conference. Membership privileges for purposes of this recommendation would include eligibility for automatic qualification, enhancement fund distribution, conference grant distribution, vote at the NCAA Convention, and Division II Management Council and Student-Athlete Advisory Committee representation. This proposal will allow a conference that drops below the minimum number of members

required for conference membership to retain its membership privileges for two years. However, the two-year grace period will only apply if the conference remains within one member of the minimum number of members required. The proposal permits the remaining members of an established conference a reasonable amount of time to add a new member to satisfy the minimum requirement. After the two-year grace period, the conference must re-establish the minimum number of members to retain its membership privileges. The immediate effective date will allow conferences to take advantage of this grace period starting in 2012.

d. Estimated Budget Impact. None.

e. Student-Athlete Impact. None.

**8. 2012 Convention Legislation – Bylaw 20.3.2 – Division Membership – Division II Membership Process – Provisional and Reclassifying Institutions – Conference Membership**

a. Recommendation: Sponsor legislation for the 2012 Convention to amend Bylaw 20.3.2 (Division II membership process – provisional and reclassifying institutions) to specify that before the Membership Committee can invite an institution into active Division II membership, a Division II conference (or a conference applying for Division II membership) must have taken action to allow such institution to join the conference as a full member.

b. Effective Date: August 1, 2012, for any institution applying to enter the Division II membership process on or after September 1, 2012.

c. Rationale: Since the summer of 2010, Division II has engaged in a study of membership matters and has modeled the effects of possible membership growth on different areas. This recommendation is intended to assist institutions applying for Division II membership find a home in a Division II conference and to promote long-term stability of institutions in Division II. Independent institutions often face challenges with scheduling, finances and championship opportunities that could be alleviated by conference membership. This recommendation will increase the likelihood that such institutions will operate successful, competitive programs in Division II. This recommendation would prevent an institution from becoming active until it has received an invitation to join a conference as a full member. The committee will require the conference commissioner and conference chancellor or president to sign a letter confirming that action to allow an institution to join the conference has been taken in accordance with the

conference's policies and bylaws. The committee will further outline via policy what constitutes compliance with this requirement.

d. Estimated Budget Impact. None.

e. Student-Athlete Impact. None.

**9. 2012 Convention Legislation – Bylaw 31.3.4 – Executive Regulations – Selection of Teams and Individuals for Championships Participation – Automatic Qualification – Limitations on Automatic-Qualifying Positions – Minimum Number of At-Large Teams for Regional Tournaments**

a. Recommendation: Sponsor legislation for the 2012 Convention to amend Bylaw 31.3.4.6 (limitations on automatic-qualifying positions) to specify that in Division II championship sports in which automatic qualification is offered, a sports committee must reserve at least 50 percent of the championship field for regional tournaments for at-large teams; further, to specify that the remainder of the championships field will be awarded to conferences that meet automatic-qualification criteria.

b. Effective Date: August 1, 2012.

c. Rationale: Since the summer of 2010, Division II has engaged in a study of membership matters and has modeled the effects of possible membership growth on different areas. This recommendation is intended to address the effects that possible membership growth could have on selection of teams for regional championships. With the potential increase in conference membership, some regions could have more than four conferences that meet the automatic qualification criteria; therefore significantly reducing the number of at-large teams participating in these tournaments. This recommendation would guarantee each region at least 50 percent of the championship field for at-large teams; which would prevent automatic qualifiers from dominating regional brackets. The Division II Championships Committee will be responsible for determining the policy for building the regional brackets.

d. Estimated Budget Impact. None.

e. Student-Athlete Impact. None.

In addition, the Membership Committee is recommending that the Management Council adopt the following noncontroversial amendment:

- **Noncontroversial Legislation – Constitution 3.3.2 – NCAA Membership – Member Conference – Privileges – Timetable for Receipt of Privileges**

- a. Recommendation: Adopt noncontroversial legislation to amend Constitution 3.3.2 (privileges) to codify the timetable for receipt of conference membership privileges, as specified:

Immediate upon Active Conference Membership: A conference will be eligible for conference grant distribution, vote at the NCAA Convention, and Management Council and Student-Athlete Advisory Committee representation.

One Year after Active Conference Membership: A conference will be eligible for enhancement fund distribution.

Two Years after Active Conference Membership: A conference will be eligible for automatic qualification.

- b. Effective Date: Immediate.
- c. Rationale: Since the summer of 2010, Division II has engaged in a study of membership matters and has modeled the effects of possible membership growth on different areas. This recommendation is intended to address the effects that possible membership growth could have on the division. Membership privileges for purposes of this recommendation include eligibility for automatic qualification, enhancement fund distribution, conference grant distribution, vote at the NCAA Convention, and Division II Management Council and Student-Athlete Advisory Committee representation. The recommended timetable will codify current legislation and policy. Therefore, even if the recommendation is not adopted, this timetable will continue to apply unless otherwise modified. The immediate effective date will provide notice that the timetable applies to any new conference applying to become a Division II member.
- d. Estimated Budget Impact. None.
- e. Student-Athlete Impact. None.

Further, the Membership Committee is recommending that the Management Council consider the following item to further assist with the management of Division II membership growth:

- **Creation and Implementation of In Region, Non-Conference Incentive Plan.**

- (1) Recommendation. To create and implement an incentive plan according to which a Division II conference that meets the following criteria will receive an additional distribution of funds through the conference grant program: a) the conference must be composed of at least 12 active member institutions; and b) the conference must have participated in an aggregate of at least 15 in region, non-conference contests or dates of competition in at least three men's and three women's sports during the previous academic year. The principles of regionalization would apply in determining whether a contest or date of competition would count to meet the criteria.
- (2) Rationale. Since the summer of 2010, Division II has engaged in a study of membership matters and has modeled the effects of possible membership growth on different areas. A financial incentive is another way to encourage Division II conferences to grow, which, in turn, will assist these conferences with long-term viability and stability. In addition, this is another way to promote in region, non-conference games within the division. This recommendation is contingent on approval of the budget necessary for implementation. It is recommended to use \$100,000 of the funds previously allocated for the NCAA Division II Membership Fund for this new incentive plan. The Long Range Projections Task Force has recommended reducing the membership fund from a \$250,000 to a \$100,000 annual line item. Therefore, if the use of this line item is approved for the incentive plan, the membership fund would cease to exist and the funds would be allocated for this new initiative (Attachment J).
- (3) Estimated Budget Impact. Special funding needed for implementation.
- (4) Student-Athlete Impact. None.

Finally, the Membership Committee decided to invite the Conference Commissioners Association to partner with the committee in gathering feedback on institutions applying to enter the Division II membership process. The committee would like to gather feedback from conference offices on institutions applying to enter the membership process and use this feedback as another tool to evaluate whether such institutions should be invited to join the process. The committee requested that the CCA provide a proposed template for use when providing feedback by May 16, 2011. The committee will then review the template to determine whether it can be used to review the 2011 class of applicants.

The Membership Committee believes that the recommendations and actions above will help the division strategically manage its membership growth. However, the committee realizes these recommendations might not be enough. There are other strategies that have been discussed by the committee, such as continuing to increase the application fee for the membership process and continuing to reduce the maximum number of institutions invited to enter the process each year.

The committee is seeking feedback on these recommendations. It is expected that the Membership Committee will take official action at its July 2011 in-person meeting to recommend sponsorship of legislation for the 2012 Convention.

*Championship Committee's Recommendations.*

During its February 2011 in-person meeting, the Championships Committee made the following recommendation to the Management Council:

- **Automatic Qualification per Conference.**
  - (1) Recommendation. To amend Bylaw 31.3.4 (automatic qualification) to permit one automatic qualification per conference in each sport; effective August 2011.
  - (2) Rationale. Current language in the Division II Manual does not place a limit on the number of automatic qualifiers permitted to each conference. The recommendation provides clarity and equity among all current eligible conferences.
  - (3) Estimated Budget Impact. None.
  - (4) Student-Athlete Impact. None.

*Management Council's Actions.*

The following nonlegislative actions were taken by the Management Council in January 2011 in an effort to contribute to the management of Division II membership growth:

1. **Moratorium on the Creation of New Division II Conferences.** In January 2011, the Management Council agreed to establish a two-year moratorium on the acceptance of petitions for membership from new Division II conferences, beginning with the adjournment of the 2011 NCAA Convention through the adjournment of the 2013 Convention. The Council believes that instituting a two-year moratorium on new conference membership will allow for legislative recommendations regarding changes to the conference membership process to be properly vetted through the governance structure and voted on by the delegates at the 2012 NCAA Convention. The moratorium



will allow the various constituent groups the time to review the recommendations and provide feedback. The Membership Committee noted that it would be supportive of recommending the removal of the moratorium following adjournment of the 2012 NCAA Convention if a consensus has been reached on the proposals forwarded by the committee.

**2. Policy Regarding the Number of Institutions Accepted Into Membership Each Year.**

In January 2011, the Management Council agreed to amend the committee's policy and reduce the maximum number of institutions accepted into the membership process each year from 10 to eight institutions. The Council noted that current policy allows for a maximum of 10 institutions to be accepted in the process on a yearly basis with no more than 30 institutions permitted in the membership process at one time. Per Bylaw 20.3.2.2 (application and sponsorship), the Management Council, on recommendation of the Membership Committee, may establish an annual limit on the number of eligible institutions that will be selected to begin the membership process. Therefore, the Council approved an amendment to the policy to reduce the maximum number of institutions accepted into the process each year to eight. The Council agreed that the maximum number of institutions in the membership process be maintained at any one time to 30. The Council decided that in order to adhere to the current strategic membership growth initiatives, the Membership Committee should be selective in which institutions receive an invitation to begin the membership process.

**Conclusions and Next Steps.**

The changing landscape in membership is not a cause for undue concern, but rather a call to assess the current membership structure. Ultimately, the NCAA and the respective divisions need to study and understand the potential for membership growth and proactively develop strategies to manage membership growth in the future.

**Timeline for Discussion.**

October 2010	Review and discussion by the Division II CCA
	Initial Review by the Management Council and Presidents Council
November 2010	Joint meeting of the Long-Range Projections Task Force and Membership Committee
January 2011	Joint meeting of the Management Council and Presidents Council
	Education sessions at the 2011 Convention for the Division II membership

February 2011	Championships Committee meeting
	Membership Committee meeting
	Long-Range Projections Task Force meeting
April 2011	Review of potential recommendations by the Management Council and Presidents Council
April – July 2011	Discussion of potential recommendations by the Division II Membership
July 2011	Membership Committee meeting
August 2011	Sponsorship of legislative proposals by the Presidents Council
August – December 2011	Discussion of legislative proposals by the Division II Membership
January 2012	Legislative Proposals Considered by the Division II Membership