



USER'S GUIDE

for

Division II Institutional Self-Study Guide

To Enhance Integrity In Intercollegiate Athletics

Preface

This user's guide is designed to accompany the NCAA Institutional Self-Study Guide (ISSG) to enhance integrity in intercollegiate athletics. It offers suggestions about who should complete the ISSG, when and how. The purposes of the ISSG and this user's guide are to:

1. *Sensitize* top administrators and key campus constituencies of NCAA Division II member institutions to major types of problems that commonly occur in intercollegiate athletics programs,
2. *Identify* specific areas in their own athletics programs that may represent potential problems and develop written plans for improvement for those areas, and
3. *Guide* institutions toward review of documentation to support selected areas of the study and, as necessary, actions that might prevent or minimize the severity of identified problems.

This guide has been organized into two separate sections corresponding to each purpose. These sections are preceded by an introductory section that discusses the benefits of self-study and self-improvement as essential parts of the NCAA's growing efforts to enhance integrity in intercollegiate athletics.

Introduction to the ISSG

NCAA Constitution 6.3.1 (self-study report) requires each member institution to conduct a self-study at least once every five years. Procedures established pursuant to this rule require institutions to certify that they have accomplished the necessary self-study by obtaining the necessary signatures upon completion.

The ISSG has been designed to satisfy the requirements of Constitution 6.3.1. When institutional administrators certify that they have completed a self-study in accordance with Constitution 6.3.1, it will be necessary for them to have access to their completed ISSG (and documentation for their answers).

The ISSG consists of a set of "YES/NO" questions. Each "NO" answer to one of these questions indicates a potential problem that should receive more detailed inquiry. Each item also has an associated "importance rating," which indicates the magnitude of the potential problem revealed by a negative response. "NO" answers to items rated as "*material weakness*" or "*significant deficiency*" are indicative of situations that already may be or may become a major threat to athletics program integrity. "NO" answers to items rated as "*deficiency*" are indicative of less threatening situations; nevertheless, they should command some attention in efforts to follow-up on the self-study.

Prerequisites for productive use of the ISSG are:

- A sincere commitment on the part of top institutional administrators to honest self-examination and self-improvement.
- Meaningful involvement of key campus constituencies.
- Development of a written plan for improvement in response to each "NO" answer for items rated as "*material weakness*", "*significant deficiency*" or "*deficiency*"
- Provision of supporting documentation for selected areas of the study.

The president or chancellor of the institution can enhance the ISSG by making it clear, by word and action, that the self-study is a priority and that the entire institution -- not just the athletics department -- is responsible for its completion.

Given this commitment, the instrument can indeed enhance athletics program integrity.

I. Use of the ISSG as a Sensitization Tool

One of the initial purposes of the ISSG is to sensitize institutional administrators and key campus constituencies to questions and areas of concern within athletics programs. In this role, the ISSG serves not only as an information-gathering tool but also as a checklist to help ensure a comprehensive review.

Who Should Use the ISSG?

To begin the sensitization process, one ISSG should be reviewed by an institution's president or chancellor. He or she should take care to read the rationale statements for each section as these statements were designed to communicate the reasons why certain questions have been included and the implications of negative answers for athletics program integrity.

Following the president or chancellor's personal survey, and depending on the results of that survey, other institutional personnel representing key campus constituencies (e.g., administration, faculty, coaches, students) could be assigned by the president or chancellor to serve on a committee to oversee completion of the ISSG. The president or chancellor could use an existing committee (e.g., athletics board) representing key campus constituencies to oversee the self-study process.

When Should the ISSG Be Completed?

The ISSG must be completed at least once every five years for an NCAA Division II institution to meet the self-study requirements of Constitution 6.3.1. An institution may choose to complete the ISSG at any time within its five-year cycle. For example, as changes in institutional or athletics leadership occur the ISSG may be a helpful tool in familiarizing key administrators who may be new to the institution (e.g., president or chancellor, faculty athletics representative, director of athletics) with their jobs and/or provide the institution with a current evaluation of its athletics program.

How Should the Results Be Used?

Many personnel who review the ISSG for the first time will discover that they do not know the answers to some items. "Unknown" responses are understandable but should not be dismissed. Institutional administrators would be well advised to follow-up on such responses until they can be confident of an answer. This is especially true for items with "*material weakness*" or "*significant deficiency*" importance ratings for which the development of written plans is required.

For items to which there is a negative response, the president or chancellor shall review and approve the institution's plans for improvement.

In most cases, raised sensitivities to potential problem areas will give rise to an expanded awareness of the things that already are being done to observe both the letter and the spirit of NCAA rules. If this is *not* the case, president or chancellors may wish to contact the NCAA academic and membership affairs staff for assistance at 317/917-6222. That staff is available to assist the institution, at no cost, in reviewing its compliance program.

II. Use of the ISSG in Identifying Potential Problem Areas

The ISSG also has been designed to help pinpoint specific areas where institutional policies, procedures or practices (or lack thereof) may represent areas for enhancement. For this use, it is essential that the ISSG be completed as accurately as possible by campus constituencies that are widely representative of different viewpoints regarding the athletics program.

Who Should Use the ISSG?

A primary benefit of the self-study is to provide self-awareness; the president or chancellor should consider establishing an ad hoc committee or using an existing committee to oversee completion of the ISSG. In appointing the steering committee, the president or chancellor may wish to consider the differing perspectives, range of expertise and access to information that may be offered by representatives of the following groups:

- Institution's governing board (i.e., regents or trustees).
- Administration external to athletics including academic affairs, fiscal affairs, student affairs, admissions, registration and financial aid.
- Faculty.
- Student body.
- Alumni or representatives of the institution's athletics interests in good standing.
- Athletics administrators including the senior woman administrator and sports information director.
- Coaches.
- Student-athletes.

When Should the ISSG Be Completed?

To facilitate problem identification, the ISSG should be completed periodically, in connection with routine institutional self-study efforts or whenever institutional administrators have any reason for concern about integrity in their institution's athletics program.

A five-year cycle is required by Constitution 6.3.1 for in-depth athletics program self-studies. This cycle could be reduced to coincide with the institution's regional accreditation cycle, so that the athletics program self-study could be made a part of the overall institutional self-study process. Additionally, unplanned events, such as turnover of athletics program leadership or the discovery of NCAA rules violations, might make it necessary to increase the frequency of conducting the self-study with attention to problem identification.

How Should the Results Be Used?

During a problem-identification self-study, there may be disagreements among members of the self-study committee about the correct answers to particular ISSG items. For example, members of the athletics staff may feel that certain procedures exist yet there may be no documentation or

records to substantiate that existence to the larger institutional community. In this case, one course of action may be simply to publicize more widely what already is being done. Another possible course of action may be to formalize policies and/or procedures that are generally followed but that could be misapplied by some persons or in some circumstances.

Finally, some negative responses indeed may be considered problematic. Such responses to questions rated as "*material weakness*", "*significant deficiency*" or "*deficiency*" require the institution to develop and maintain a written plan for improvement.

III. Use of the ISSG to Guide Action

The ISSG also can serve as a tool to guide specific institutional efforts to address areas of concern within intercollegiate athletics programs.

Who Should Use the ISSG?

In this role, the ISSG should be used by institutional constituencies that have been assigned responsibilities for the prevention or control of athletics program abuses.

When Should the ISSG Be Completed?

The ISSG could be repeated periodically (e.g., annually) to check on institutional progress in undertaking actions designed to reverse previous negative responses. Follow-up studies may be conducted by the same individuals or committee that undertook the problem-identification process or by a new group.

How Should the Results Be Used?

One of the initial implications of a problem-identification administration of the ISSG is to set action priorities for those negative responses deemed truly problematic and for which written plans are required. Priority setting can be aided by reference to the "severity ratings" associated with each ISSG item. All other things being equal, items rated as "*material weakness*" and "*significant deficiency*" should be reviewed as priorities are assigned. It will be helpful to the institution for written plans developed for these areas to include:

- The intended end result.
- The individuals or offices that will be responsible for taking specific actions.
- The specific timetable for completing the work.

Where the institution concludes that these improvements may affect existing programs or activities in other areas, a description of how the institution intends to maintain the current level of quality for those areas will be beneficial.

The choice of methods for converting any particular item from a negative to a positive response is, of course, best determined by institutional officials familiar with the history and context of the identified problem. The ISSG and any plans developed as a result of its completion should reflect where the institution is currently, where the institution wants to be and how the institution intends to move forward.

The institution is encouraged to maintain documentation that supports the findings of its self-study. Such information can be of assistance to the institution during its current or future assessments of the areas of study, as well as during any review of those areas by an external body.

It is important for the institution to ensure that its plans are formally adopted by the institution's final authority in a particular area to ensure that it carries the commitment and support of the entire institution.

It may be helpful for the president or chancellor to meet with the self-study committee to review the completed self-study and approve plans for improvement.

The president or chancellor and his or her designee should feel free to contact the NCAA academic and membership affairs staff for assistance with particular ISSG items or specific issues. The NCAA staff may be contacted at 317/917-6222.

When improvement-oriented goals have been set, the ISSG also can be used periodically to check on progress, verifying that particular items or groups of items no longer are indicative of potential problems.

Continuing Improvement of the ISSG

Both the ISSG and this guide can benefit from the constructive comments of users. Future revisions will be undertaken with respect for such comments. Please take a few minutes to communicate your experiences to a member of the NCAA staff or complete the attached formative evaluation questionnaire and return it to the address indicated.

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR GUIDING IMPROVEMENTS
IN THE ISSG AND USER'S GUIDE**

Information collected via this evaluation questionnaire will be helpful in future revisions of the ISSG and user's guide. Please answer the following questions and return the results to the NCAA.

1. How have you used the ISSG?

2. If you have any suggestions for additions or modifications to or deletions from the ISSG, please attach a copy with your suggestions written in or appended. If possible, indicate a rationale for your suggestions.
3. If you have any suggestions for additions or modifications to or deletions from the user's guide, please attach a copy with your suggestions written in or appended.

Send your suggestions to: Division II Membership Committee Liaison
NCAA
P.O. Box 6222
Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-6222

