



Legislative Council supports most Rules Working Group proposals

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By Michelle Brutlag Hosick
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The Division I Legislative Council reviewed the proposals recommended by the Rules Working Group and provided significant feedback for the working group to consider when it meets in December.

The Council largely supported the proposed measures during its meeting Monday and Tuesday in Indianapolis. Rules Working Group members intend the 27 proposals to begin the shift toward a Division I Manual that is meaningful, enforceable and that supports the student-athlete experience.

"The members of the Council were fully engaged on the issues," said Council chair Greg Sankey, executive associate commissioner of the Southeastern Conference. "There is support for change but a desire to make sure we get it right."

Council members acknowledged that the philosophical changes proposed within Division I will require more decision-making to occur on campus, and the discussion reflected varying degrees of comfort with that reality. Some specifically noted the move away from a competitive-equity model of rules-making toward a model that supports fair competition, which acknowledges variability among schools but is not guided by balancing those differences through rules.

While that shift will allow more institutional autonomy, generally regarded as a positive factor, others were concerned it would sharpen the divide among institutions based on budgets. Overall, the group supported seeing how the new model unfolds.

While most of the proposals generally received Council support, members paid particular attention to measures that changed rules governing recruiting and amateurism. The Council felt strongly that the principle of amateurism should be protected as a core value of the NCAA. Their support was somewhat mixed for some of the bylaw proposals they believed could jeopardize that principle.

The Council also took a position opposite the one voiced by most of the membership in feedback received by the Rules Working Group to date: They prefer to eliminate entirely the rules governing printed recruiting materials, as proposed in Proposal No. 13-5-A. In earlier feedback to the working group, the membership expressed a preference for Proposal No.13-5-B, which would prohibit sending recruits anything

other than general correspondence.

Duke lacrosse student-athlete Maddie Salamone, representing the Division I Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, expressed skepticism that any recruited student-athlete based school decisions on the quality, size or volume of printed materials.

Some Council members worried that deregulating printed recruiting materials would reinvigorate an arms race in the size and “flash” of media guides, largely dormant since the rules became effective several years ago. Others were less concerned about the possibility and believed such decisions are best left to individual schools.

The Legislative Council also did not support Proposal No. 13-6, which would eliminate restrictions related to general advertising or promotional materials designed to solicit enrollment of prospective student-athletes.

The group generally supported most proposals that deregulate rules regarding awards, benefits and expenses, including one that allows schools to pay for any medical expenses for student-athletes and another that allows schools, conferences and the NCAA to pay for academic support, career counseling or personal development services intended to support the success of the student-athlete.

The feedback will go to the Rules Working Group, which will consider the proposals and make final alterations before the Board of Directors votes on the measures in January 2013.

In other business, the Council also approved modifying a previous official interpretation to now permit certain athletics department staff members (other than coaches and those with sports-specific responsibilities) to speak to outside groups, including prospects, so long as no recruiting occurs. Schools may have direct contact with prospective student-athletes in conjunction with the activity but would not be allowed to make any recruiting presentations. In addition, no such presentations can be made during dead periods.

The change accomplishes a Division I Committee on Academic Performance recommendation that schools be allowed to educate high schools and pre-high school groups about the upcoming changes to initial-eligibility standards.