



# **Framing the Future: Reforming Intercollegiate Athletics**

## **The Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA)**

*[blogs.comm.psu.edu/thecoia](http://blogs.comm.psu.edu/thecoia)*

**Adopted on 15 June 2007 by vote of the Coalition membership**

**ALTERNATE FORMATS AND PREVIOUS  
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### **SUMMARY**

The Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA) is an alliance of 55 Division IA faculty senates whose mission is to provide a national faculty voice on intercollegiate sports issues. Our underlying premise is that intercollegiate athletics, while providing positive benefits to athletes, the campus and the broader community, at times clashes with the educational goals and mission of our institutions. These conflicts, which by many measures are on the increase, have the potential of undermining the values and aims of higher education. This paper identifies the current, major challenges facing intercollegiate athletics and offers a set of proposals that are meant to enable college sports to be integrated into the overall academic mission and remain a positive force on our campuses.

This paper is the result of a lengthy deliberative and revision process. The initial version was developed over the period of January through March 2007 by the COIA Steering Committee in consultation with the NCAA leadership. A second draft was prepared by the COIA Steering Committee and sent out for evaluation to many external groups including the NCAA, the Association of Governing Boards (AGB), the Faculty Athletics Representatives Association (FARA), the Division IA Athletics Directors Association, the Division IA Faculty Athletics Representatives (DIA FARs), the Knight Commission, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the College Sports Project, and the National Association of Athletic Academic Advisors (N4A). Their thoughtful comments formed the basis for a third draft which was reviewed by all COIA faculty senates in early May 2007. Representatives of COIA member senates met at Stanford in mid-May 2007 to revise the third draft. The final version was formally adopted by a vote of the entire COIA membership in June 2007.

The 28 proposals in this paper cover four major areas of concern: academic integrity and quality, student-athlete welfare, campus governance of intercollegiate athletics, and fiscal responsibility. The level of implementation - local, conference, and/or national - is identified for each proposal. This paper is meant to stimulate dialog at these various levels with the ultimate goal of having these proposals accepted as standard working policies and practices.

Proposals earmarked for local action should initially be addressed by the campus governance body, usually the Faculty Senate or equivalent, in close consultation with the campus Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR) and the Campus Athletics Board (or equivalent) where applicable. Success of these proposals on each campus will ultimately depend on the commitment and leadership exhibited by the University President (i.e., the head administrator of the campus on which the student-athletes are registered). We strongly urge each University President to take an active role in addressing the issues and proposals raised in this paper. The COIA understands that not all local proposals will be appropriate for all institutions because each school has its own unique atmosphere, faculty governance system and athletics department. We hope each institution will carefully review the proposals in this paper and initiate a campus wide dialog resulting in the adoption of those proposals that fit local needs and strengthen the academic mission.

Several proposals in this paper are focused at the conference level. The FARs are the institutional liaisons to the conferences and as such are in the best position to evaluate and champion this group of proposals. The COIA encourages FARs to work closely with their conference commissioners and university presidents to discuss, promote and accept these proposals.

Most reforms proposed here can only be implemented successfully at the national level. Five require changes in or enforcement of existing NCAA legislation. The rest are proposed as best practices to become part of the NCAA certification process. The COIA continues to work closely with NCAA leaders to formulate strategies enabling these proposals to be adopted as national policies and best practices.