**Report to the Membership**

**2014-15 Steering Committee of the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics**

**April 2015**

**The Context of College Sports, 2014-15**

**NCAA governance restructuring**: The past (2014) year’s most significant event was the discussion and passage of a controversial plan to restructure NCAA Division 1; featuring the creation of a set of “Power-5” conferences which will have the ability, within a delimited range, to fashion their own operating rules. Under the new rules, the Power-5 conferences will have the ability to spend the additional monies they want on their student-athletes, including paying what they call (but has yet to be defined) “full cost of attendance scholarships” to their athletes. This change represents the official end of the NCAA’s previous standard of competitive equity. The remaining D1 conferences will now face the option to adopt policies and rules set by the wealthier conferences, or face the difficult decision to try to live within their economic means at some competitive disadvantage.

It should be noted that COIA, alone among the faculty groups, opposed the NCAA’s restructuring plan, conducting a campaign that ultimately asked each of the D1 university presidents to consider calling for a full-membership vote to override to the plan as passed by the D1 Board of Directors. That effort, described in more detail below, failed, as reportedly only 25 of the needed number of 75 D1 presidents elected to call for a vote to override the Board’s decision.

**Legal issues**: 2014 also saw increased legal pressures on intercollegiate athletics on three arenas, the first being the O’Bannon case, a lawsuit based on the principle that college athletes have the right to share in the revenues that universities and other businesses earn from media contracts, ticket sales, athletics apparel sales, among other revenue streams. The initial ruling on O’Bannon came close to discarding entirely the NCAA’s assertion that college revenue sports must accord with standards of amateurism. However, noting that amateur standards for student who compete as athletes could have a positive effect on the quality of education school-wide, the ruling chose to retain an amateur standard by limiting the amounts revenue sports athletes could earn from the revenue streams under litigation to a total amount consistent with current levels available to Pell Grant recipients, and deferring payments until after graduation. The judgment was considered a victory for the plaintiffs, and a ruling on an appeal of the decision by the NCAA is expected sometime in the summer of 2015.

A second source of legal pressure comes from the attempt to unionize the football players at Northwestern University. In early 2014, a National Labor Relations Board regional director ruled that intercollegiate football players were, in effect, providing services for hire, and that under Federal law they were entitled to unionize. That case is now under appeal to the full NLRB by the university, and the results of the voting of the players on the unionization issue has been impounded until the NLRB rules on the matter later in 2015.

The third legal challenge is that brought by sports labor attorney Jeffrey Kessler. The most direct challenge yet to the NCAA’s “student-athlete” model, the lawsuit, invoking anti-trust laws, names the NCAA and the five largest conferences (the Southeastern, Big Ten, Pacific-12, Atlantic Coast and Big 12) as defendants and effectively asks for an end to NCAA-style amateurism. Filed in federal court on behalf of several college athletes (football and basketball), the suit argues that the NCAA has unlawfully capped player compensation at the value of an athletic scholarship. The Kessler suit does not ask for “the full cost-of-attendance” that many universities are now planning on trying to pay athletes, and does not ask for specific monetary damages. Instead, the suit argues that no upper limit on compensation is legal in a free market and asked the judge to issue an injunction against the NCAA, ending the practice. The suit also contends that universities are acting as a cartel by fixing the scholarship amounts paid to athletes, who, it is argued, would undoubtedly receive offers well in excess of tuition, room, board and books if not limited by NCAA rules.

All three of these legal issues have the potential to fundamentally change intercollegiate athletics in the direction of increased commercialization and professionalization, which is likely to force the elimination of many Olympic sports programs in order to allow revenue sports to retain income needed to compensate athletes. Ironically, then, student-athletes who generally best demonstrate the positive synergy of athletics and academics that is the rationale for college sports, are expected to lose participation opportunities in order to meet equity demands of student-athletes in the more academically problematic revenue sports.

As a result of both the NCAA’s restructuring, and the current legal environment, in an ominous sign of things to come, Big 12 President Bob Bowlsby was quoted at the BIG 12 media days (7/22/2014) “You’re going to hate it going forward. There’s a lot of change coming. … I think that all of that (lawsuits) will cause programs to be eliminated. I think you’ll see men’s Olympic sports go away as a result of the new funding challenges coming down the pike. I think there may be tensions among and between sports on campus and institutions that have different resources”.

**Faculty voice**: The past year was also a tough year for faculty voice in NCAA matters, as the results of the restructuring are serving to further marginalize faculty influence. Although for the first time the two, presidentially appointed, faculty athletics representative groups (the D1 FARs and FARA) were each granted one seat on the NCAA Board of Directors (there are now 24 board members), within the NCAA Governance Council, which is now the highest D1 legislative body, faculty membership was limited to a negligible share in a Council thoroughly dominated by athletics directors and conference executives. COIA, the D1 FARs and FARA are united in the view that the faculty voice, and the academic perspective, in the overall governance structure is now minimal and has effectively been marginalized. In addition, the important NCAA Governance Council, responsible for high-level policy decisions and recommendations, is now heavily dominated by athletics directors and conference executives. As COIA has argued throughout the past year, despite claims by leadership at the NCAA and conferences to the contrary, the academic perspective in NCAA decision-making appears to have been severely, and conspicuously, relegated to insignificance within the new governance structure. This creates a heightened threat in the area of academic integrity, one that will require our campuses to monitor academic issues in intercollegiate athletics with heightened vigilance.

**COIA in 2014-15**

COIA’s activities over the past year have been focused on the NCAA D1 restructuring process and its aftermath, and continued to reflect the approach the Coalition laid out in 2013, when COIA was first asked to be participant in the process (along with the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, one of only two non-NCAA groups invited to participate. COIA submitted a solicited set of recommendations in the Fall of 2013, and COIA Chair Mike Bowen joined the initial advisory session called for all participating groups in October 2013. Having advocated for increased faculty engagement at the campus and conference levels in response to early drafts of the NCAA’s restructuring plan, COIA Chair Mike Bowen and Steering Committee member Bob Eno participated in an Association-wide “Town-Hall” advisory session on the plan, held at the NCAA’s National Convention in January 2014, where they continued to advocate for increased faculty engagement at the campus and conference levels. (A copy of Eno’s report on that meeting is attached.) Of note, at the meeting, when Bowen and Eno asked the D1 Board, in one of the open sessions, “How would the creation of a set of so-called “Power-5” conferences help the NCAA achieve its stated mission?” the question was ignored.

COIA Chair Mike Bowen, by invitation, also attended the Knight Commission Meeting in Miami, FL, March 17, 2014, where the NCAA’s restructuring plans were discussed by NCAA D1 Board Chair and Wake Forest University President Nathan Hatch, Big 12 Conference President Bob Bowlsby, Knight Commission Executive Director Amy Perko; and others. At that meeting it became increasingly clear that the NCAA’s restructuring plan would include the creation of a “Power-5” set of conferences, thus separating them from the “less-resourced” conferences. Bob Bowlsby in fact suggested that universities in the less-resourced conferences would simply have to scale back their expectations and learn to live within their means, and that the results of the creation of the “Power-5” wouldn’t matter all that much competitively because those conferences already win the vast majority of the national championships.

As the NCAA made its plan clearer and continued to solicit feedback, and in light of the progress of the O’Bannon and Kessler lawsuits and Northwestern University football team’s request to unionize in the courts, COIA sent a letter to all Division 1 Presidents to support the importance of academics in any new governance structure, and the inclusion of a significant number of faculty athletics representatives on the D1 Board of Directors and governance councils (copy of the letter attached). With the resulting vote of the Division 1 Board on August 8, 2014, passing the plan, the COIA Steering Committee issued a statement on the restructuring (letter September 20, 2014) expressing its concerns about the NCAA plan’s impact on the academic integrity of our institutions. Quoting from the letter (copy attached):

*[COIA] considers the current course charted by the NCAA and other intercollegiate athletics decision-makers to be fundamentally misguided. As faculty who are responsible for upholding the academic integrity of our institutions, we believe the recent reorganization plan by the NCAA, supported by college presidents and conference commissioners, is not in alignment with the academic values of our institutions nor does it support the principal tenet of the NCAA’s mission: the amateur student-athlete model.*

Following upon those core beliefs, COIA’s leadership then began a final, and last-ditch, attempt to force a reconsideration of the NCAA’s proposed new governance structure, and sent a letter to all Division 1 university presidents asking them to vote to request a full NCAA presidents’ vote on whether to override the restructuring plan. Quoting from that letter (copy attached):

*It is unacceptable in substance and as a public statement to support a governance model that marginalizes the academic perspective in legislative decision-making and that provides its biggest programs a form of autonomy likely to eliminate those sports which best exemplify the Collegiate Model.*

*COIA is proud of our long history of cooperation with the NCAA. We call for an override vote of the new governance plan not as an adversary of the NCAA but as its advocate. We ask for more time and renewed commitment to find a better solution. We hope that at least 75 Division I presidents, the total necessary to call for an override vote, will agree and will act before the October 6 deadline.*

Despite this effort receiving widespread media mention (AP wire service reports, CHE, Inside Higher Ed, USA Today, etc.), only 25 D1 university presidents voted for the call to override. The NCAA’s new governance structure goes into full effect in fall, 2015.

On November 9, 2014, after much discussion, COIA joined forces with the Drake Group’s legislative attempt to request US Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and President Obama, to create a President’s Commission to reform intercollegiate athletics. Quoting from that letter (copy attached):

*The opportunity still exists to preserve the positive contributions of college sports and re-integrate athletics within the framework of our academic values. Unfortunately, institutions, either individually or in consortia, have not yet found an adequate solution to the problems facing intercollegiate athletics, and this includes the recently approved NCAA restructuring plan. The momentum of market forces and legal rulings thus increasingly determines events. The national stakes are too high to cede control of college sports to forces that are not guided by the research and teaching missions of US higher education.*

At present (April, 2015), the bi-partisan bill [H.R.275 (formerly, HR5743) copy attached] resides in the *Committee on Education and the Workforce* of the U.S. House of Representatives. COIA is presently attempting to gain faculty senate support for the bill in the hope that the bill will be moved out of the committee and onto the floor of the House of Representatives for discussion in the near future. Also currently, a companion bill is being prepared for submission to the U.S. Senate for its full consideration.

**COIA Research**: The 2014 calendar year also saw a group of COIA members, led by **Kelley Withy** (University of Hawaii), **Adrien Bouchet** (The University of Tulsa), and Mike Bowen (University of South Florida), with the generous cooperation and assistance of **Mike Miranda** (Associate Director of Research for Administration, NCAA), work to create a survey of Division I universities, to better understand athletics’ governance issues. That survey was sent to the membership in late January, 2015, with the results reported at the 2015 annual meeting. A summary of those results, as prepared by **Kelley Withy**, is attached, and briefly described below.

**The 2015 COIA National Meeting, San Diego State University, February 20-22, 2015**

Hosted by **Bill Snavely** (San Diego State University), with the generous support from SDSU President, **Elliot Hirshman**, the meeting was held at **San Diego State University** February 20-22, 2015, San Diego, CA. Accommodations were at the ***Town & Country Hotel****,* while on campus meetings were held at the SDSU”s **Conrad Prebys Aztec Student Union** (copy of meeting schedule attached).

**Friday, February 20, 2015**

The 2015 Annual COIA meeting was preceded by a Steering Committee meeting on Friday afternoon. After dinner, the meeting began with an official welcome from host Bill Snavely, and comments from COIA Chair Mike Bowen.

As at last year’s meeting, attendees then heard an informative and provocative talk by **Bob Malekoff**, now of the University of North Carolina. Having been asked to update COIA on the past year’s developments, and any lessons learned from the scandals at UNC, Bob’s presentation in San Diego was titled: “*Lessons to be drawn from the UNC situation and other violations of academic integrity: How faculty can be part of the solutions to the problems*” (a copy of his PowerPoint slides are attached). Bob’s talk took us through the major events on the past year related to intercollegiate athletics, a brief history of the UNC academic scandal and a discussion of what are believed to be its causes (<http://3qh929iorux3fdpl532k03kg.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/UNC-FINAL-REPORT.pdf>):

1. a lack of strong and focused presidential (as opposed to AD’s and/or celebrity coaches) leadership at the university
2. a new overreliance on external monies to fund universities
3. an overreliance on outside legislation to prevent problems
4. the dilution of the universities’ academic goals with athletic goals
5. faculty ambivalence towards athletics and its potential impact on institutional integrity

Some solutions that UNC have developed include (<http://carolinacommitment.unc.edu/actions-and-initiatives/>) :

1. increased independent faculty oversight and accountability for athletics and academics
2. creating more diverse committee structures (including community integration)
3. an integration of academic support services for athletes with the wider university
4. a focus on admissions and admissions standards (no Tier 1 special admits)
5. independent faculty review of enrollment patterns
6. Dean-level approval of all change of grade forms
7. Imposed limits on independent study courses
8. Creation of a student-athlete academic initiative working group

A lively discussion followed. The overall conclusion was that faculty throughout the university need to recognize the important impact that athletics can have on the academic integrity of their institution and assert, or reassert, better oversight.

**Saturday, February 21, 2015**

**8:00 – 9:15 Session**

The Saturday sessions began with a session titled “A Working Conversation with the NCAA on Academic Misconduct: Current and Future Priorities for Policy”, conducted by NCAA Managing Director of Membership Affairs, **Azure Davey**. (copy of her presentation slides attached)

Davey’s 90 minute session was designed to solicit faculty feedback on pending academic misconduct legislation designed to update policy that had not been revised since 1983. In the time since the policy was written, both the academic and intercollegiate athletics landscape have drastically changed, compelling the current legislation. The core principles driving the proposed legislation were presented as follows:

1. Intercollegiate athletics programs shall be maintained as a vital component of the educational program, and student-athletes shall be an integral part of the student-body.
2. Academic misconduct legislation should be consolidated in the NCAA Manual for ease of reference.
3. Academic misconduct legislation should specify institutional responsibility in determining whether academic misconduct has occurred.
4. Academic misconduct legislation should articulate that when institutional personnel are involved in student-athlete academic misconduct, an NCAA violation has occurred.
5. Legislation should require written institutional academic misconduct policies for students.
6. Legislation should require schools to adhere to campus policies for all students when student-athletes are involved in the alleged misconduct.
7. Student-to-student academic misconduct should generally be handled by the institution and not reported to the NCAA.
8. Legislation should specify that providing false or misleading NCAA Division I Academic Performance Program (APP) information is an NCAA violation.
9. There should be a spectrum of penalties associated with various academic misconduct violations based on the facts and the degree of misconduct associated with each case.

Issues the NCAA wished to clarify with our faculty included: “What responsibilities do each of our institutions have in academic integrity cases?” and, “When should the NCAA get involved in academic misconduct cases on our campuses?” The NCAA’s concerns in this issue seem to clearly be focused our institutions treating student-athletes the same as we do non-student athletes, and to define academic misconduct in such a way as to include violations for student-athletes and staff, and to thus hold staff members in violation of NCAA rules regardless of whether their actions resulted in benefits to the student-athletes.

The timeline for next steps on the pending legislation are 1) feedback from members and key external entities through May, 2015; 2) the Committee on Academics finalizes the legislative proposal in June; 3) membership review and comment June, 2015-January, 2016; and 4) the legislation is called to a vote by the NCAA D1 Council, January, 2016.

**9:15 – 11:00am Session**

During this session, **Kelley Withy** (University of Hawaii) presented the results of a survey discussed at the 2014 COIA Annual Meeting, and conducted by COIA members **Kelley Withy**, **Adrien Bouchet** (Tulsa) and **Mike Bowen**, with the generous assistance of the NCAA’s Associate Director of Research, **Michael Miranda**. The survey was intended to shed some light on faculty’s role in athletics governance on our campuses, and was sent in late February, 2015 to the then 59 COIA representatives, 207 COIA member and non-member senate presidents, the 358 D1 FARs. Different versions of the survey, each geared to the specific audience (i.e., senate presidents, FARs and COIA reps), were sent. A copy of the survey that was sent to the FARs is attached.

A total of 41 COIA reps (70%), 75 faculty senate presidents (36%), and 112 FARs (31%) responded to the survey. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation Dr. Withy made at the meeting, with survey results consisting of descriptive statistics and qualitative logs of the responses to the survey questions, is attached.

The results of the survey, very difficult to briefly summarize here, offered some genuine insight into the diversity of faculty are involved in the governance of intercollegiate athletics on our campuses. Of particular interest, the results show that COIA representatives are elected (82%) or nominated by the senates (13%) with 5% of COIA reps appointed by the University CEO. FARs become FARs by being selected by the campus CEO (42%), being nominated by the AD and approved by the CEO, being nominated by the faculty senate and approved by the CEO (13%) and by being appointed through a variety of other methods (24%), all of which end with appointment by the CEO.

Suggestions were made to follow up on the survey, a suggestion that was met with the approval of the members present.

**12:30 – 5:30 Session**

Titled “The Future of COIA: Organization and Leadership Issues”, this session tacked the pressing issues currently facing COIA regarding the make-up and membership of the COIA Steering Committee, and COIA’s leadership structure and succession policies. The discussion began with a round table discussion where each attendee was asked to offer comments on the current state of COIA, how the organization was doing as a representative of our member senates, and the kinds of things that COIA could do to better serve the membership. The conversations that resulted were frank, constructive, informative and most helpful to all those in attendance who care deeply about our institutions and intercollegiate athletics.

After everyone had their say on the issues, Mike Bowen explained the urgent needs for the organization to restructure, and perhaps reconstitute, the COIA Steering Committee due to retirements, conference realignment having left some conferences over- and some under-represented on the committee. He also explained the need for COIA to deal with long-term leadership issues, including cultivating and involving the next generation of COIA leadership.

He also outlined an idea to form a national organization of faculty senates that would provide a national forum for discussing issues of relevance to faculty and faculty governance bodies and help strengthen faculty voice, of which COIA or some successor to COIA, would serve as a sub-group. That idea was tabled for discussion at future meetings.

The ensuing conversation brought out the strongly supported suggestion that COIA needs to regain its former spirit by issuing an update to the acclaimed “Framing the Future” paper, or producing a new document on that order. There was also a great deal of conversation on the possible future structure of the COIA Steering Committee, a structure not based on conference representation, but rather based on COIA’s organizational needs and tasks. The conversation on this topic generated a loose consensus that COIA might restructure around a set of officers (Chair and Vice-Chair) and three working groups (a Student Athlete Welfare work group; an Academic Integrity work group, and an Administration and Communications workgroup). Using this as a tentative model, the attendees split into three such working groups, which then convened in a separate break-out room.

Each of the work groups then discussed possible roles for the group as COIA moves forward, and were asked to select leaders for each committee. Bruce Dugger (Oregon State University) was selected as Head of the Administration and Communications committee, while Patrick Arndt (University of Minnesota) was selected as Head of the Academic Integrity Committee. Copies of two of the groups’ output (Administration and Communication, and, Academic Integrity) are attached. Those conversations are ongoing at this time and will be first subject to acceptance of the restructuring plan by the current COIA Steering Committee, and then subject to members joining and contributing to each committees charge. The consensus at the meeting was that each COIA representative should choose to join one of the committees. An incomplete, but best available, list of each of the committee’s membership is attached.

**Sunday, February 22, 2015** (Prepared from notes taken by **Betty Sindelar**, Ohio University)

**9:00 – 10:00am Session**

The morning session began with a presentation from **Gerry Gurney** (University of Oklahoma) and **Allen Sack** (University of new Haven) from the Drake Group (handout attached).

Presentation started with background information regarding the Drake Group and the NCAA.

* The Drake Group is interested in college sports reform and the value of education in relationship to the collegiate athlete. In addition, fiscal responsibility must be considered in the reform process.
* NCAA does not respond proactively but is instead influenced by lawsuits and publicity. The NCAA is not capable of self-reform.
* Current lawsuits (specifically the O’Bannon and Kessler-Jenkins cases) threaten the integrity of college sports in relation to academics and a university experience

Second portion of presentation focused on House Bill HR 5743 (HR5743 is the number of the bill as introduced in Fall, 2014. HR 275 is the number of the bill as reintroduced in Spring, 2015).

* Bill developed from a meeting among members of the Drake Group, the Secretary of Education, congressmen, and White House staff on domestic policy. Results of the meeting were that:
* The issue of college sports reform can be a bipartisan issue. Support for reform measures was garnered from the members of this meeting.
* The best way to approach the current system is to put emphasis on student/athletes being more like any student at an academic institute – suggestions included shortening sports seasons and including student/athletes in academic remediation processes that are available for all students.
* White House staff drafted a memorandum for President Obama regarding the meeting
* From this meeting, HR 5743 was developed through a collaborative effort of the Drake Group and congress members. A complete version of the bill is included in the handouts. Essentially the bill proposes that a Presidential commission be established and funded whose purpose will be to identify and examine issues of national concern regarding intercollegiate athletics.

Final portion of presentation consisted of answering questions from the audience. Question topics were as follows:

* Implications of Kessler-Jenkins lawsuit: Kessler sued NCAA for anti-trust violations. Legal consensus is that Kessler’s case is strong. If Kessler wins, **potential** results include no limit on athletic scholarships, open market bidding for talented collegiate athletes, end of Olympic sports especially for male athletes, and Title IX issues.
* Implications of O’Bannon lawsuit: Case focuses on institutes’ use of athlete’s name, image, and likeness. Ruling in favor of O’Bannon could result in each athlete receiving up to $5000/year in a trust fund. Cost of attendance and multi-year scholarships are responses to this case.
* What is the power of investigation created by HR 5743? Recommendations to the President of the U.S. that would include law implementation/changes.
* Timeline of HR 5743 is one year – is that sufficient? The authors of the bill believed that the timeline is sufficient to create the commission, hold the investigation, and make recommendations to the President.
* Who has the lobbying power to get HR 5743 through congress? Currently there are 2 congressmen lobbying for the bill and the NCAA has increased their budget for lobbying efforts for this year.
* Will the lawsuit from the athletes at Northwestern University affect the bipartisan aspect of the HR 5743? The issue of unionization does have the possibility of polarizing the efforts for HR 5743 based on traditional party-line interests.
* Other current efforts by the Drake Group: The Drake Group functions as a think-tank and advocacy group and as such is constantly reviewing events that have the potential to influence intercollegiate athletics and responding to them. The Group is currently writing a book on reforming college sports.
* Joining the Drake Group: the Drake Group is open to individual membership only. Please see their website.
* Efforts by Drake Group to join with other groups in support of HR 5743: process has only just begun.
* Speculation on unintended consequences to HR 5743: the commission will not fully investigate all aspects of intercollegiate athletics. This might lead to little or no substantive changes occurring or that the Power 5 becomes stronger.
* How can COIA help? By supporting HR 5743 by notifying faculty of efforts, contacting bill supporters, and contacting individual congressional representatives when the time comes. Discussion about a member of COIA being named to the commission established by HR 5743. The Drake Group will keep in touch with COIA to up-date on progress of HR 5743.

**10:00 – 11:00am Session: Business meeting**

* Suggestion to invite representative from Knight Commission. Mike Bowen stated that they were contacted but were not able to come to meeting this year.
* Presentation of COIA governing structure developed during yesterday’s meeting. Discussion regarding some process issues that would need to be worked out in the future of new structure is adopted. Motion by Bill Snavely: “I move that the COIA members here direct the current steering committee to create the language and by-law changes needed to implement the presented restructuring changes. These changes will then be sent out to COIA members for a formal vote.” Seconded. Since not all COIA members were present at this meeting, a sense of the members present was taken. Vote was 27 in favor and 2 abstentions.
* Informal vote was taken regarding the number of university athletic councils that have discussed eliminating sports within the last year. About one half of the remaining members raised hands.
* Discussion on efforts to increase participation of more institutions in COIA. If new structure is approved, then the subcommittee on *Administration & Communication* will be tasked with this job.
* Discussion on the most effective means of COIA to help the Drake Group regarding the commission (assuming that HR 5743 is passed). Membership on the commission would have influence on the activities of the investigation. If a member were on the commission, COIA might not be able to testify during the investigation. However, members could testify as individuals but not as COIA reps.
* Discussion on expanding membership to include FCS institutions: points were noted that issues are common among FBS and FCS schools, expanding could dilute the effectiveness of the group, and committees could become too large. One solution was that COIA might be a position to assist the FCS institutes in setting up a similar group to COIA.
* Tasks for members:
  + Bring a motion to your faculty senate requesting a 5 year appointment for COIA representative.
  + Take your FAR to lunch initiative.
* Recognition of Mike Bowen for all of his efforts on behalf of COIA this past year. Recognition of Bill Snavely for his efforts in organizing this meeting. Mike Bowen charged to write formal letter of thanks to the President of SDSU for his tremendous support of this meeting.
* Mike Bowen to explore possibility of 2016 meeting in Indianapolis.