

**MICHIGAN STATE**  
**UNIVERSITY**

**November 8, 2006**

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Ralph Putnam, Chairperson  
University Committee on Academic Policy

**FROM:** E. James Potchen, Chairperson  
Executive Committee of Academic Council (ECAC)

**SUBJECT:** Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA)

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OFFICE OF THE  
**SECRETARY**  
**FOR ACADEMIC**  
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As a follow up to our ECAC meeting of November 7, 2006, I would like formally forward the attached information to the University Committee on Academic Policy with regard to the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA). We ask that UCAP discuss this topic and plan to report back to the Executive Committee at our January 9, 2007 meeting.

Thank you.

Attachment

JP/jh

**From:** Nathan Tublitz [mailto:tublitz@uoneuro.uoregon.edu]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 02, 2006 6:25 PM  
**To:** Jim Potchen  
**Subject:** Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics

2006-07:22

Dear Professor Potchen:

We write on behalf of the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics, or COIA, an alliance of faculty senates at schools that belong to the NCAA's Division 1A. COIA was formed in 2002 as a way to link representative faculty governance on many campuses and articulate a faculty voice on athletics reform on the national level. Currently, 53 of the 117 Division 1A faculty senates have joined, and COIA has become a partner with the NCAA, Division 1A Faculty Athletics Representatives, and other national groups in searching for ways to address problems in intercollegiate athletics and help college sports achieve their full potential as educational enhancements for athletes and campuses.

This message renews our invitation to you and your senate colleagues at Michigan State to consider joining COIA and helping to shape the future of college sports. Our direction is determined by our member senates, and we welcome any senate that votes to join on the basis of a general agreement with the principles the Coalition has laid out in several policy documents adopted over the past three years, all posted on our website at:

<http://www.neuro.uoregon.edu/~tublitz/COIA/index.html>.

For an independent view of COIA and assessment of our latest policy statement covering issues such as athletics and admissions standards, scholarships, curricular integrity, and advising, please see the May 23, 2005 issue of the "NCAA News Online" at:  
[http://www2.ncaa.org/media\\_and\\_events/association\\_news/ncaa\\_news\\_online/2005/05\\_23\\_05/front\\_page\\_news/4211n01.html](http://www2.ncaa.org/media_and_events/association_news/ncaa_news_online/2005/05_23_05/front_page_news/4211n01.html)

COIA was founded by a group of faculty senate chairs, and it is guided by a Steering Committee (<http://www.neuro.uoregon.edu/~tublitz/COIA/SC.html>), most of whose members have served as senate chairs. The senate representatives who participate in our online discussions and national meetings include the chairs of member senates. We are an ad hoc group, operating without a staff or budget. However the willingness of our members to keep open minds, to listen to knowledgeable groups such as Athletics Directors, FARs, and the NCAA leadership, and to bring a faculty perspective to complex policy and advocacy work has allowed the Coalition to make significant contributions. For example, at the invitation of the NCAA, the Coalition co-chairs met this past June with Myles Brand and his NCAA colleagues to discuss numerous issues surrounding intercollegiate athletics including a series of proposals for NCAA bylaw changes developed by COIA that have been brought into the NCAA legislative stream. This meeting evolved into a series of on-going conversations with the NCAA leadership that continue on a wide range of topics surrounding intercollegiate sports reform. Those familiar with NCAA procedures will recognize how exceptional an opportunity this is.

Our agenda for the coming year centers on policy formation and advocacy work. We are starting internal conversations as a prelude to holding a national COIA meeting where we will produce a COIA paper detailing our goals for the future of intercollegiate sports. In addition, we are working closely with several national organizations including the NCAA and the Knight Commission. The NCAA has commissioned a task force of forty Division I university presidents to address a broad set of reform questions, including issues of financial responsibility and commercialization in college sports, balancing internal and external constituencies, articulating values, and strengthening athlete welfare. COIA has developed a working paper on many of the issues raised by the NCAA presidential task force (<http://www.neuro.uoregon.edu/~tublitz/COIA/PTF%20report%20%20Dec%2005.htm>) and many of our suggestions have been incorporated into the final report by the presidential task force. We are also working with the Knight Foundation to develop a symposium on the myths of intercollegiate athletics to be web cast live next spring. As more senates join the Coalition in thoughtful advocacy of significant reform, we hope that the presidents of our schools, acting together, will be empowered by our support to tackle issues more complex and politically difficult than would otherwise be the case.

For these reasons, and in light of the contributions that many senates have worked hard to make over the past three years, we hope that you and your senate colleagues will consider devoting a portion of your busy Senate calendar to discussion of joining the Coalition. The 53 senates that have joined, who are listed on our website (<http://www.neuro.uoregon.edu/~tublitz/COIA/Members.html>), have tried hard to represent the perspective of faculty at all Division 1A schools, but our effort will only be truly successful when all of us are taking part and contributing our ideas and views. There are no obligations to membership, though we hope for active participation; there are no dues, and participation in our annual meetings is completely voluntary. Nor do we require lockstep agreement - it is likely that no single member senate agrees with every one of the many proposals and best practice standards the Coalition membership has adopted. We work through flexible consensus, guided by values and principles that we feel our major policy documents make clear, and we present our recommendations in large part as best practices that campuses can use to guide their local athletic governance.

We would be happy to answer any questions you may have, either by email or phone.

With best wishes,

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