

NCAA DIVISION I ATHLETICS CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Press Release

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Murray State University to Study Athletics Program

Murray, KY. President Randy Dunn announced today that Murray State University will begin a yearlong, campus-wide effort to study its athletics program as part of the NCAA Division I athletics certification program. Specific areas the study will cover are academic integrity, governance and commitment to rules compliance, as well as a commitment to equity and student-athlete well being.

While academic accreditation is common in colleges and universities, this program focuses solely on certification of athletics programs. Following a pilot project, the Division I membership overwhelmingly supported the program and its standards at the 1993 NCAA Convention. Murray State University completed its first certification self-study in 1998. At the 1997 Convention, the Division I membership voted to change the frequency of athletics certification from once every five years to once every 10 years. The current self-study will be the second full re-certification process undertaken by Murray State University.

The certification program's purpose is to help ensure integrity in the institution's athletics operations. It provides further transparency to the rest of the university community and to the public. Institutions will benefit by increasing campus-wide awareness and knowledge of the athletics program, confirming its strengths and developing plans to improve areas of concern.

The committee responsible for the study will include President Randy Dunn, Dr. Judy Brookhiser, chair of the steering committee, and various members of the university faculty and staff, as well as athletics department personnel. A member of the NCAA

membership services staff will conduct a one-day orientation videoconference with the committee and its subcommittees early in fall 2007.

Within each area to be studied by the committee, the program has standards, called operating principles, which were adopted by the Association to place a “measuring stick” by which all Division I members are evaluated. Once the university has concluded its study, an external team of reviewers will conduct a two-day minimum evaluation visit on campus. Those reviewers will be peers from other colleges, universities or conference offices. That team will report to the NCAA Division I Committee on Athletics Certification, another independent group. The committee will then determine the institution's certification status and announce the decision publicly.

The three options of certification status are: (a) certified; (b) certified with conditions; and (c) not certified. While universities/colleges will have an opportunity to correct deficient areas, those universities/colleges that do not take corrective actions may be ruled ineligible for NCAA championships.

The NCAA is a membership organization of colleges and universities that participate in intercollegiate athletics. The primary purpose of the Association is to maintain intercollegiate athletics as an integral part of the educational program and the athlete as an integral part of the student body. Activities of the NCAA membership include formulating rules of play for NCAA sports, conducting national championships, adopting and enforcing standards of eligibility, and studying all phases of intercollegiate athletics.