Text of 'Joint Statement on Academic Integrity'

WASHINGTON

Following is the text of a "Joint Statement on Academic Integrity" issued last week by the American Council on Education, the National Collegiate Athletic Association, the National Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, and the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics.

The American Council on Education and the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers have joined with the National Collegiate Athletic Association and the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics in proposing specific actions designed to deal with recently publicized problems related to credit received by student-athletes under questionable circumstances through nonresident academic arrangements such as extension courses.

Revised Regulation

These actions include a revision of N.C.A.A. legislation to preclude the use of extension courses to establish a student-athlete's eligibility for intercollegiate athletics under certain specified circumstances. The revised regulation would not apply to extension courses taken from the institution in which a student was last enrolled as a full-time student, but it would preclude the use of extension courses taken from other institutions for the purpose of establishing a student-athlete's eligibility under N.C.A.A. legislation which requires the student to be in "good academic standing" and to maintain "satisfactory progress toward a baccalaureate or equivalent degree" in order to participate in intercollegiate athletics.

In addition. A.C.E., A.A.C.R.A.O., N.C.A.A., and the N.A.I.A. have agreed to encourage the production of transcripts which clearly identify correspondence courses, extension course work, and credits by examination. This action is intended to alleviate difficulties encountered by registrars and admissions officers in reviewing the large number of transcripts received annually for evaluation by collegiate institutions. Furthermore, institutional policies should be implemented to require that all transcripts be sent from registrars to regular admissions officers.

Noting the potential for abuses in institutional procedures for the certification of athletic eligibility, the executive officers have supported a proposal to require that individuals responsible for certification of athletic eligibility be designated for that specific purpose through the direct action of the chief executive officer of each N.C.A.A. member institution. This proposal is designed to insure that the administration of each institution is involved in and aware of the procedures utilized to certify eligibility for participation in intercollegiate athletics.

An additional legislative proposal which would require action by the N.C.A.A. membership voting in the Association's Annual Convention (January, 1981) has been referred to the N.C.A.A. Division I Steering Committee by the Association's Council. The proposal, which relates to restrictions governing the use of nonresident credit courses and summer school courses, will be reviewed by the Division I Steering Committee during its June 12-13 meeting.

Raise Grade-Point Average

Also on the steering committee's June agenda is consideration of a proposal to raise the required high school grade-point average (presently 2.00 on a 4.00 scale) to 2.20 for the determination of initial eligibility for intercollegiate athletics at a Division I member institution.

These actions have been taken in response to concerns about eligibility certification problems which have received widespread publicity during recent months. A study was initiated by the N.C.A.A. Academic Testing and Requirements Committee in response to the following statement issued by the N.C.A.A. Council on January 9, 1980: "Recent publicity with regard to enrollment by student-athletes in extension courses offered by institutions other than their own has caused members of the N.C.A.A. Council to express deep concern. "It is recognized that maintenance of satisfactory progress toward a baccalaureate degree is a fundamental responsibility of each member institution. However, published reports indicate that present practices accepted and maintained by institutions in accepting transferred credits from accredited colleges and universities may be susceptible to abuse, for a variety of reasons, where extension credit is involved.

"Therefore, the N.C.A.A. Council requests that the N.C.A.A. Academic Testing and Requirements Committee review existing practices pertaining to the award, transfer, and acceptance of credit earned by extension correspondence, examination, or other types of nonresident academic endeavor, taking into consideration information available regarding recent cases involving student-athletes receiving such credits under questionable circumstances.

"The purpose of this review is to develop information upon which the Council, and ultimately the N.C.A.A. membership, may determine whether the need exists for a more specific definition of acceptable academic progress for student-athletes or any other action by the Association which might curb or eliminate any opportunity for intentional evasion of sound academic standards by individuals associated with intercollegiate athletics."

In considering this matter, the Academic Testing and Requirements Committee noted that the academic problems of athletics are not confined to that particular aspect of college activities, but reflect difficulties involving established policies (such as those related to extension course offerings for other students) in the present higher education system. The complexity of these issues also was noted by the committee, which stressed the importance of maintaining institutional autonomy in academic matters to the greatest extent possible while attempting to resolve the issues in question.

The committee noted further that these matters also may be reviewed by the appropriate accrediting agencies.

The action of A.C.E., A.A.C.R.A.O., N.C.A.A., and the N.A.I.A. in issuing this joint statement is intended to convey the interest of each of the organizations in making every effort to resolve these issues which relate directly to the academic integrity of collegiate institutions.

Adopted July 1980