

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

from THE COALITION ON INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS (COIA)

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Recent reports from Auburn University of possible faculty academic fraud involving special treatment of athletes highlight the critical role campus faculties must play in ensuring that the collegiate model of athletics is not based on academic deception. Although the facts concerning this specific case are still being investigated, the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA), an alliance of Division IA faculty senates, has called for policy changes that would enable campus faculties to prevent the type of fraud at issue here. Without such policies, "academic reforms" such as those recently established by the NCAA, will increase incentives for fraud; with them, faculties can join the NCAA in attempting to ensure that intercollegiate sports are based on integrity. Faculties can only determine whether academic abuse connected with athletics exists on their campuses if their governance bodies are provided data concerning athlete enrollment and grading patterns. Data would be gathered in a manner that would not compromise the privacy of individual athletes and would be evaluated in the context of the academic standards and culture of the local institution. A COIA proposal for adoption of a new Division I bylaw mandating such data reports is currently under consideration by the NCAA. Such a mandate is the essential tool that will provide faculty on all campuses with the ability to monitor faculty conduct in this area.

Academic integrity and guaranteeing that all students receive the best possible education are the faculties' responsibility, but schools have not shown a willingness to provide their faculties the means necessary to fulfill these roles. COIA strongly supports the direction of NCAA academic reform, and has proposed a way to remove a critical weakness in the reforms as they now stand. The investigations underway now underscore the need for swift and positive action on COIA's proposal to the NCAA.

For more information on COIA's proposal, please refer to Section 3 (Curriculum Integrity) of our 2005 white paper: "Academic Integrity in Intercollegiate Athletics" (<http://www.neuro.uoregon.edu/~tublitz/COIA/A3.html>).

This statement has been approved by the Steering Committee of the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (<http://www.neuro.uoregon.edu/~tublitz/COIA/SC.html>)

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