

# SAAC votes on NCAA proposals

**SAAC representatives approve various changes to impact student athletes in the classroom and on the field**

BY CURT WICHMER  
Staff Reporter

Truman State's Student Athlete Advisory Committee recently conducted a meeting to review new rule changes proposed by the NCAA.

In the SAAC, student athletes representing each sport voice their opinions about a variety of proposed alterations, ranging from how many credit hours a student needs each semester to restrictions of teams' training regimens. At the meeting, representatives from every varsity team on campus weighed the pros and cons of the proposals before deciding whether or not they wanted a change.

Many minor rule changes were discussed, and the committee approved several important changes. The SAAC approved the NCAA's plans to allow up to two more contests per season for volleyball, baseball and softball. This has additional impact for baseball and softball because their outdoor games occasionally are rained out. The committee also approved the proposal to increase each athlete's credit hour requirement for every semester to nine. Currently, athletes are required to earn six credit hours a semester, but if more universities agree with Truman and approve of the change, the NCAA requirement will be increased to nine credit hours.

Linda Anderson, Truman's associate athletic director, said the rules mainly are being proposed to help student athletes have a better experience by giving them more time to practice or through mandating they distribute their time evenly between sports and studies. Anderson said one of the items discussed — changing the date basketball teams can begin practice from Oct. 15 to Oct. 1 — would be great for Truman athletics.

However, Anderson said she foresees a few problems some of the changes could bring to Truman. At the moment, all teams do not need to have designated strength and conditioning coaches specially certified by the NCAA, but the amendments proposed by the NCAA would change that.

Although she said specialized coaches used in conjunction with the teams' head coaches would be useful for distributing work, Anderson said Truman doesn't have these certified coaches at the moment. Anderson said even if Truman were able to get a coach certified, it would limit coaches in training, and teams would be unable to have separate weightlifting programs and practices with lifting weights included. She said teams would have to make a lot of changes in their routines.

Anderson said during the past, athletes who competed in sports while studying abroad during the first semester were disqualified from participating with their home team during the postseason during the second semester. Although this would hardly affect team sports such as football and baseball, Anderson said it would have a significant effect on individual, internationally prevalent sports such as swimming and wrestling.

## Div. II Management Council

**Supported Proposals:**

- Student athletes can use up to six credit hours to fulfill progress-toward-graduation requirements for a voluntary or optional minor.
- Allow football athletes to participate in no more than two hours per week of individual skill instruction outside of the playing season during the academic year.



Source: ncaa.org

Anderson said the entire process of changing the NCAA rules will take a significant amount of time before new rules are implemented at schools nationwide. She said the proposals must be voted on and submitted to the NCAA before June and to be passed, a proposal must have the majority of support from two conferences. Anderson said the approved changes then go before the champions committee, the president's committee and the management committee. The changes reach the committees during the summer, at which point committees review and sometimes propose amendments to the changes. Should the changes pass, they

will be given a final review during October and November, and are voted on and ratified the following January. Anderson said if any of the proposals approved by Truman are finalized, it still could be at least a year before these changes are put into action.

Redshirt freshman wrestler Austin Dovin said he thinks it would be good to change restrictions on athletes who study abroad.

"If the changes are made — if we were studying abroad in, say, Turkey, and we took part in the Greek or Turkish styles of wrestling there, we would still be able to take part in the championships in the next semester," Dovin said. "Originally that transfer season would have made us ineligible for competing if our team made it that far."

Redshirt junior J.J. Dorrell, a wrestler and SAAC Vice President, said the proposed rules would change how points are scored. Dorrell said during the past, putting the opponent in a near fall — almost, but not quite pinning your opponent — would earn either 2 or 3 points, depending on the duration of the hold. Dorrell said this year the NCAA is going to try changing the maximum points earned from 3 to 4. He said the NCAA is trying to make the sport more similar to the world wrestling styles that European, Middle-eastern and even some Asian countries use.

Dorrell said the SAAC is also looking to change how teams enter postseason play.

"In Div. I schools, if you win your conference, you don't have to participate in a regional tournament to make it to nationals," Dorrell said. "Div. I schools have already implemented this, but Div. II schools like Truman have not, and it's really something we were hoping to implement at the SAAC meeting."

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- Junior J.J. Dorrell

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