



Synergy Between Athletic Programs And Enrollment Growth

DAN WOOD

Executive Director

National Christian College Athletic Association





Synergy Between Athletic Programs and Enrollment Growth

The NCCAA

Since 1968, the National Christian College Athletic Association is an association of Christ-centered collegiate institutions whose mission is to keep Jesus Christ at the center of intercollegiate athletics.

DAN WOOD

Student-Athlete (1978-1982)

Coach (1983-1998)

Athletics Director (1988-1992)

Executive Director, NCCAA (2000-present)





Synergy Between Athletic Programs and Enrollment Growth

Our Mission

ACADEMICS: Serves 92 member institutions, which enroll approximately 105,000 students (17,000 student-athletes) annually and employ over 5,000 faculty and staff nationwide (1,000 coaches).

ATHLETICS: Sponsors 24 National Championships in men's and women's sports.

OUTREACH: Implements Christian Service Projects at its championship events, provides monthly devotionals, and subsidizes sports ministry trips for member schools.
#KingChasing



Synergy Between Athletic Programs and Enrollment Growth

What We Do

We serve our members by setting association standards, developing communication resources, providing regional and national competition, and partnering in outreach to our communities and the world.

Intercollegiate is simply our vehicle for Great Commission initiatives and the interaction with culture and sports allows us that platform.

Why or Why Not an Intercollegiate Athletic Program

Benefits

- ★ Allows gifts to be utilized
- ★ Develops leadership & team skills under handpicked leadership
- ★ **New fiscal avenues**
- ★ Great tool for outreach & discipleship internally, across the street, and around the world

Pitfalls

- ★ Inflates value if over-emphasized or “perched on a pedestal”
- ★ Demands time management skills (12-16 credits + 20 hours for sport)
- ★ **Dilution of current fiscal avenues**
- ★ Combative athletics vs. academics culture possible



Synergy Between Athletic Programs and Enrollment Growth

Enrollment Growth Without Mission Drift

Benefits

- ★ Every contest should place your school in front of local and national community through digital platforms
- ★ Open door to promote your institution to target high schools & homeschoolers
- ★ Brand/institutional loyalty priority with student-athletes

Pitfalls

- ★ Intensity of athletics creates opportunity to fail or “stub your toe”
- ★ Athletics “excused” from institutional mission
- ★ Potential for general population and student-athlete gap to form

Do you have an athletics mission statement?



Assessing Program within the Institutional Mission

Who is responsible for the MISSION & management?

Administrator (indirect)

- ★ Student Development? Advancement? Academic Dean? **President?**

Staff (direct)

- ★ Athletics Director (dual role as coach?)
- ★ Chaplain or Campus Pastor

Role of the Registrar and Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR)

- ★ Critical part of process
- ★ Additional workload (Fall term & Spring term)



Assessing Program Within the Institutional Mission

Measurement of set goals for program (MISSION vs. \$\$\$)

- ★ Competitive goals
- ★ Roster size = enrollment growth and need for missional recruiting
- ★ PR goals (do not promote above MISSION!)
- ★ Ministry goals (on campus, outreach, service projects, interaction)

Long-term versus short-term “success”

- ★ 1-, 3-, and 5-year plan developed



Assessing Program Within the Institutional Mission

Compliance with association standards (MISSION)

Eligibility of Student-Athletes

- ★ GRACE...great spiritually, not so athletically
- ★ Learn rules and stay informed (*group/herd impact, not isolated*)

Title IX Adherence

- ★ Overlooked or ignored in most small institutions
- ★ Understand the “why” and “how”
- ★ Implement properly
- ★ Evaluate your community to offer best sports (Men’s Basketball does not mean Women’s Basketball is the best alternative)
- ★ Whole new set of challenges in culture (gender identity, faith divide, political polarization)



Synergy Between Athletic Programs and Enrollment Growth

Assessing Program Within the Institutional Mission

Best Practices

Athletic Council

- ☆ Administration, Athletics staff, Faculty, Student-Athletes, Alumni, Community
- ☆ Develop/maintain policies; Create “student first” concept; Vision casting

On Campus

- ☆ Integration of all students into “One”
- ☆ Develop partnerships amongst campus populations
- ☆ Housing paradigm sets tone
- ☆ Cafeteria, chapel, classroom seating norms speak loudly
- ☆ Build facilities with “All” benefits versus “Athletes” benefits (*Intramurals*)



Assessing Program within the Institutional Mission

Best Practices

Off Campus

- ★ Guidance and awareness of representation of brand
- ★ Proactive model and reactive model (own errors and address)

On Social Media

- ★ Guide, educate, and track
- ★ Set parameters for digital handheld use

In Community

- ★ Faculty/Staff “adoptables” program (campus wide not just athletics)
- ★ Worship opportunities, pods, service roles
- ★ Brand/Team residue card (leave behind)



Synergy Between Athletic Programs and Enrollment Growth

Enrollment & Athletics Staff Partnership

Best Practices

(begins 90-120 days before cycle)

- ★ Leadership creates partnership and sets tone
- ★ Joint education on each departments process, timeline, goals
- ★ Athletics compliance, initial eligibility markers, screening needs
- ★ Enrollment forms/docs, protocols, campus visit model, recruit venues
- ★ Create prayer partners, shared tracking models, “lanes”
- ★ Have a coach/athletic rep accompany venues/events when possible
- ★ Create a student-athlete collateral/digital “1st touch” piece
- ★ Mesh Financial Aid rep into mix (NCAA III policies)
- ★ Use well-known coach/student-athlete in general population efforts



Synergy Between Athletic Programs and Enrollment Growth

Reality Check: “Why So Much Failure in Athletics?”

#1 = Leadership Allows & Tolerates

Omission

- ★ Failure to place proper guardrails; Place mission in the center; Hire well
- ★ Failure of enrollment, faculty, alumni, or general population “buy-in”

Commission

- ★ Poor hires recruit outside mission constraints w/o **Enrollment** guidance
- ★ “Pedestal” culture allowed and even fostered

In Community

- ★ Failure to coach/communicate need for goodwill and partnership
- ★ Failure of intentional campus community integration



Synergy Between Athletic Programs and Enrollment Growth

Guiding Principles for Correcting or Sustaining Programs

#1 = Leadership Must be Active

Goals and Compliance

- ★ Place proper guardrails; Place mission in center; Hire well
- ★ Must get enrollment faculty, alumni, general population “buy-in”

Dismiss and Attract

- ★ Hire mission-match staff, and recruit within missional constraints/target...w/ **Enrollment partnership**
- ★ Accept contests losses, if necessary, but not missional drift

In Community

- ★ Coach/communicate need for goodwill and partnership, role modeling
- ★ Demand intentional campus community integration (chapel, housing)





Synergy Between Athletic Programs and Enrollment Growth



Game Plan 4 LIFE

LOVE • INTEGRITY • FAITH • EXCELLENCE

#KINGCHASING

