Implementation and Management of Intercollegiate Athletics

DAN WOOD
Executive Director
National Christian College Athletic Association

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 center of intercollegiate athletics.

DAN WOOD
Student-Athlete (1978-1982)
Coach (1983-1998)
Athletics Director (1988-1992)
Executive Director, NCCAA (2000-present)

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Our Mission

ACADEMICS: Serves 88 member institutions, which enroll approximately 98,000 students (16,000 student-athletes) annually and employ over 5,000 faculty and staff nationwide (1,000 coaches).

ATHLETICS: Sponsors 23 National Championships in men's and women's sports.

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

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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 athletics is simply our vehicle for Great Commission initiatives and the interaction with culture and sports allows us that platform. Sports has been invalidly elevated to one of the top two cultural platforms and the enemy is prevalent within that enterprise.

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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 + 25-30 hours for sport)
- ✯ Dilution of current fiscal avenues
- ✯ Combative athletics vs. academics culture battle

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Enrollment Growth Without Mission Drift

Benefits

- ✯ Every contest should place your school in front of local community through media, website, etc.
- ✯ 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; best coaches/teams get a pass
- ✯ Potential for general population and student-athlete gap to form

Do you have an athletics mission statement?

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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 / Spring term)

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Assessing Program Within the Institutional Mission

Measurement of set goals for program (MISSION)

- ★ Competitive goals
- ★ Roster size
- ★ 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 ★ ***RETENTION***

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

Title IX Adherence

- Overlooked or ignored in most small institutions
- Understand the “why” and “how”
- Implement properly (political impact with gender, transgender)
- Evaluate your community to offer best sports (Men’s Basketball does not mean Women’s Basketball is the best alternative)

Assessing Program Within the Institutional Mission

Best Practices

Athletic Council

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

On Campus

- Integration of all students into “One”; facilities for intramurals
- Develop partnerships amongst campus populations (local area)
- Housing paradigm sets tone
- Cafeteria, chapel, classroom seating norms speak loudly

Assessing Program within the Institutional Mission

Best Practices

Off Campus

- ✯ Guidance and awareness of representation of brand ***(The King)***
- ✯ Proactive model and reactive model (own errors and address)

On Social Media

- ✯ Guide, educate, battle for their souls, and track
- ✯ Set parameters for digital handheld use

In Community

- ✯ Faculty/Staff “adoptables” program (campus wide not just athletics)
- ✯ Worship opportunities, pods, service roles
- ✯ “Residue Cards”

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Reality Check: "Why So Much Failure in Athletics?"

#1 = Leadership Allows & Tolerates

Ommision

- ✯ Failure to place proper guardrails; Place mission in the center; Hire well
- ✯ Failure to get faculty, alumni, or general population to "buy-in"

Commission

- ✯ Allow bad hires to recruit outside mission constraints/target audience
- ✯ "Pedestal" culture allowed and even fostered

In Community

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

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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 faculty, alumni, general population “buy-in”; spend wisely

Dismiss and Attract

- ✯ Hire mission-match staff, and recruit within missional constraints/target
- ✯ 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)

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