

SECTION IV EQUITY, WELFARE AND SPORTSMANSHIP

Previous Certification Self-Study

- 1. List all the “corrective actions,” “conditions for certification” or “strategies for improvement” imposed by the NCAA Division I Committee on Athletics Certification in its first-cycle certification decision (if any) as they relate to equity and welfare issues. In each case, provide: (a) the original “corrective action,” “condition,” or “strategy” imposed; (b) the action(s) taken by the institution and the date(s) of those action(s); and (c) an explanation for any partial or non completion of such required actions. Please note, the institution is not required to respond to recommendations for required actions developed by the peer-review team unless those same recommendations were adopted by the Committee on Athletics Certification.**

Mercer University was found to be in compliance during its 1994 first-cycle certification process. The NCAA Division I Committee on Athletics Certification imposed no “corrective actions,” “conditions for certification,” or “strategies for improvement.” Therefore, Mercer has no follow-up items on which to report.

- 2. Report on the implementation of the plan to address gender equity issues developed by the institution during its first-cycle certification process. Specifically, include: (a) the original plan, (b) the action(s) taken by the institution, (c) the date(s) of the action(s); (d) action(s) not taken or not completed; and (e) explanation(s) for partial completion. Include plans for improvement or other recommendations developed during the interim report process, if any.**

During its first-cycle certification process, a plan to address gender equity was developed. The original plan is included as Appendix IV-A. The goals of the plan, actions taken by the institution to meet those goals, and dates of the actions, include the following:

- Mercer named a Senior Woman Administrator in 1996, and this individual was named Assistant Athletic Director in 2001.
- A new University Center is set for completion in spring 2004, and positions referenced in the first-cycle plan will not report to the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics.
- Swimming as an eighth sport was added in 1995-1996. Due to low student interest and participation, swimming was discontinued.
- Each year the Athletic Director submits reports to the Mercer Athletic Council detailing the current year’s gender distribution of athletic department students and staff, and the Chair of the Athletic Council submits these reports to the President of the University. The Director of Intercollegiate Athletics informs the Athletic Council of all changes in NCAA standards in gender equity areas and evaluates Mercer’s current compliance with the changes. The Faculty Athletic Representative conducts an end of season exit survey that includes items to assess student-athlete feelings on issues related to gender equity. The data is reviewed and tabulated by the Faculty Athletic Representative who submits

the data and the results to the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics. The Faculty Athletic Representative brings any perceived inequities to the attention of the Athletic Council.

As a result of the interim report in which the NCAA Division I Committee on Athletics Certification certified the institution, but expressed concern regarding the absence of progress toward the goal in the institution's first-cycle gender equity plan related to participation opportunities for female student-athletes, an expanded gender equity plan was developed that addressed all 13 NCAA program areas related to gender equity. The University continued to take steps to increase female participation in the University intercollegiate athletics program. Increasing the number of female student-athletes is a high priority of the University and its Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, and actions taken include the following:

1. Since the early 1990s, the University has increased the scholarship allocations to females at a higher rate than for males. Scholarship equivalencies budgeted for women's teams exceed that of men's teams. Athletic aid awarded to female student athletes exceeds their rate of participation. In 2001-02 over half, 53% of dollars awarded went to female athletes. As a result of the increase in the number of scholarships for female athletes, women's teams have been more successful, and this success will make the women's athletic programs more attractive to prospective athletes.
2. The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics has developed challenging and attractive schedules for female sports programs.
3. The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics hired significantly more experienced coaches for the women's softball and soccer teams.
4. All athletic teams have open tryouts, and walk-on opportunities are emphasized at the start of each season.
5. The University has significantly increased the operational budgets for women's sports. Total operating expenditures for women's teams increased by 23%. Total operating expenditures for men's and women's teams increased by 21% from \$2,462,827 to \$2,992,337; over half (54%) of the \$529,510 increase in expenditures was for women's teams.
6. The Senior Woman Administrator was named Assistant Athletic Director in 2001.
7. The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics and individual coaches work closely with the Office of Admissions to identify applicants who express an interest in intercollegiate athletics participation to ensure those students are given the opportunity to try out.

Mercer has experienced steady growth in the number of female student-athletes. Participation, however, is not proportionate to Mercer's full-time, Macon campus, undergraduate female enrollment. In 1999-00, the undergraduate population was 57% female and the student-athlete population was 40% female, a 17 percentage point deficit. In 2002-03, the deficit was 12.7% (42.4% of student-athlete population female versus 55.1% of total enrollment). This deficit is similar to that of other NCAA Division I programs. According to NCAA statistics, women comprise 53% of the undergraduate student population at NCAA member schools, but only 41% of the student-athlete population.

Mercer University fields seven women's sports and seven men's sports. There have been no student requests for program expansion. The men's basketball team is larger than the

women's basketball team, and there are a larger overall number of male walk-on players – especially for men's basketball, men's soccer, and baseball. In addition, in response to a request from the University's Office of Admissions as related to its goal of attracting more male students, the University established a junior varsity men's basketball team in 1995-96 and a junior varsity baseball team in 2002-03. These additions served to increase the number of male participants.

Mercer's current Gender Equity Plan calls for continued emphasis on walk-on opportunities for females and an assessment of the interest and abilities of current students. In the fall of 2003 the Mercer Athletic Council and the Office of Student Life will assess the interest and abilities of its student body with respect to the sports offered and possible additions. The survey will be administered to Macon campus undergraduate students. The Mercer Athletic Council will report the survey results to the President. If survey results indicate sufficient interest and ability, Mercer will add a women's team in 2005-06. If there is lack of sufficient interest, Mercer will continue to assess interest annually. Other actions called for in the plan include:

- One full-time coach will be added to the women's program in 2004-05.
- An additional coach will be hired for golf in 2003-04; men's and women's golf will both have a full-time head coach.
- A new softball facility equivalent to the baseball facility will be built in the summer of 2004.
- Both men and women in sports other than basketball must personally furnish some equipment items. The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics will undertake a detailed evaluation of equipment and supplies from a gender equity perspective and remedy any deficiencies. The quality, amount, suitability, maintenance and replacement, and availability of equipment and supplies will be equitable.
- To ensure equivalent competitive events for men and women, equivalent competitive events will be scheduled for comparable team sports. Individual sports will be provided the same number of regular season events.
- A new travel policy mandates that each student-athlete is provided his/her own bed while traveling. A new Operations/Equipment Manager assists coaches with travel arrangements that comply with the policy.
- The University Center with athletic facilities will open spring 2004. The new facility will provide, among other things, new locker rooms of the same size for men's and women's programs and improved facilities for weight and conditioning and training.
- The assistant full-time trainer will be reassigned from baseball to a women's high risk sport, and trainer assignments will be based on injury rates as determined by the National Athletic Trainers Association.
- A full-time sports information assistant position will be created in 2004-05 with primary responsibility for women's programs. The new coaching position for women's programs will also promote women's programs, and an effort is being made to find a radio station to broadcast women's basketball.

- The gender equity planning process will be improved to broaden participation. The new process will expand the role of coaches and staff in the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics.
- The Director of Intercollegiate Athletics will augment the annual report to the Mercer Athletic Council to include trend data (at least three years) and an evaluation of the data by the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics. The Mercer Athletic Council will review and evaluate the data and submit an evaluation report to the President. The report will be shared and discussed by the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics with coaches and departmental staff and the Student Athletic Advisory Committee (SAAC).
- A Gender Equity Committee has been added to the Mercer Athletic Council.

The current gender equity plan is included as Appendix IV-D.

3. Report on the implementation of the plan to address minority issues developed by the institution during its first-cycle certification process. Specifically, include: (a) the original plan; (b) the action(s) taken by the institution; (c) the date(s) of the action(s); (d) action(s) not taken or not completed; and (e) explanation(s) for partial completion. Include plans for improvement or other recommendations developed during the interim report process, if any.

During its first-cycle certification process, a plan to address cultural diversity was developed. This original plan is included as Appendix IV-B. The goals of the plan, actions taken by the institution to meet those goals, and dates of the actions, include the following:

- The Senior Woman Administrator was named the Assistant Athletic Director in 2001. This individual does not have minority status.
- The University Center is set to open in the spring of 2004, and positions referenced in the first-cycle report will not report to the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics.
- Each year the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics submits reports to the Mercer Athletic Council detailing the current year minority distribution of athletic department students and staff, and the Chair of the Athletic Council submits these reports to the President of the University. The Director of Intercollegiate Athletics informs the Athletic Council of all changes in NCAA standards in minority equity areas and evaluates Mercer's current compliance with the changes. The Faculty Athletic Representative conducts an end of season exit survey that includes items to assess student-athlete feelings on issues related to minority equity. The data is reviewed and tabulated by the Faculty Athletic Representative who submits the data and the results to the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics. The Faculty Athletic Representative brings any perceived inequities to the attention of the Athletic Council.
- Swimming was implemented as an eighth sport in 1995-96. It was discontinued as a result of low interest and participation.
- In the first-cycle plan for cultural diversity, the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics set the goal for the percentage of minority coaches to equal or exceed the percentage of minority faculty. For 2001-2002, the percentage of minority coaches was 9% (2 of 22), and the percentage of minority faculty was 13%. For 2002-03, the percentage of minority

coaches was 17% (4 of 24) and the percentage of minority faculty was 11%. The number of minority coaches has increased from 1 to 4 since 1999-00.

In 2002-03, as part of the self-study process, the minority plan was revised to better address the evolving standards of the NCAA. The new plan covers all eight NCAA program areas related to minority equity. The current minority equity plan is included as Appendix IV-E.

- 4. List all actions the institution has completed or progress it has made regarding all plans for improvement/recommendations developed by the institution during its first-cycle certification process in the student-athlete welfare area. Specifically, include: (a) the original plan; (b) the actions(s) taken by the institution; (c) the date(s) of the action(s); (d) actions not taken or not completed; and (e) explanations for partial completion. Please note, the institution will not be required to fulfill an element of a first-cycle plan if the element does not affect conformity with an operating principle.**

The NCAA Division 1 Committee on Athletics Certification in its first-cycle certification decision did not impose "corrective actions," "conditions for certification," or "strategies for improvement" in the student-athlete welfare area. The institution did not develop plans for improvement as part of the first-cycle certification process. The Athletic Program has a strategic planning process. That strategic plan for the Athletic department developed in 1998 contains goals related to student-athletic welfare, and the plan is updated every five years.

- 5. Describe any additional plans for improvement/recommendations in the area of student-athlete welfare developed by the institution since the first-cycle certification decision was rendered by the Committee on Athletics Certification.**

Improvements since the first-cycle certification process include the following:

- The training protocol for athletic injuries is well developed and implemented, and an additional trainer was added to the staff in July 2002. The medical training staff is nationally certified and now comprised of two full-time trainers and four graduate assistants.
- The institution began following national organization guidelines relevant to drug testing policies for student-athletes in 2000.
- As of 2000, all physical examinations for athletes are completed on-site at the University.
- CHAMPS, the University's academic support program for student-athletes, was established in 1998.
- The food allowance for travel by student-athletes was increased from \$18 to \$21 in 2001.
- A new softball facility equivalent to the baseball facility will be built in the summer of 2004.
- In some cases, female teams have been assigned four to a room and two to a bed. The Director of Intercollegiate Athletics has mandated that each student-athlete is to be provided his/her own bed while traveling. The policy is outlined in the department's policy manual, and an Operations/Equipment Manager position has been created to assist coaches with travel arrangements that comply with policy.

- Mercer is constructing a 230,000 square foot University Center set to open in the spring of 2004, which will house the intercollegiate athletics program. Approximately half of the building is dedicated to athletics. The facility will house team dressing rooms, improved athletic weight and training facilities, as well as office space for athletics administrators, and coaches. The arena of the University Center will accommodate basketball and volleyball and the Center will house facilities for air rifle practices and competitions. Equipment storage will be centralized in the new University Center, and an Operations/Equipment Manager has been employed. Mercer has also made major improvements in the baseball field, soccer field, the softball field, and the tennis center since the first-cycle certification process.
 - A Student Welfare Committee has been formed on the Mercer Athletic Council.
- 6. List all actions the institution has completed or progress it has made regarding required actions identified by the NCAA Committee on Athletics Certification during the institution's interim report process (if applicable) as they relate to equity and welfare issues. Specifically, include for each: (a) the required action, (b) the action(s) taken by the institution, (c) the date(s) of these actions(s), (d) action(s) not taken or completed, and (e) explanation(s) for partial completion.**

There were no required actions identified by the NCAA Committee on Athletics Certification during the institution's interim-report process related to equity and welfare issues.

Operating Principle

- 4.1 Gender Issues. Consistent with NCAA Constitution 2.3, it is the responsibility of each institution to implement the Association's principle of gender equity. In accordance with this fundamental principle, the institution shall:**
- a. Have implemented its approved gender-equity plan from the previous self-study. If modified or not carried out fully, the institution shall provide an explanation from appropriate institutional authorities.**
 - b. Demonstrate that it is committed to, and has progressed toward, fair and equitable treatment of both male and female student-athletes and athletics department personnel.**
 - c. Formally adopt a written plan for the future for the intercollegiate athletics program that ensures the institution maintains a program, or continues progress toward a program, which is equitable for both genders. The plan shall include measurable goals the institution intends to achieve, steps the institution will take to achieve those goals, persons responsible and timetables.**

Self-Study Items

- 1. Explain how the institution is organized to further its efforts related to the gender issues operating principle above for both staff and students and provide evidence that matters concerning gender equity are monitored, evaluated and addressed on a continuing basis.**

Staff

Mercer University is committed to equal opportunity in employment without regard to race, color, national origin, disability, sex, or age. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including but not limited to hiring, placement, promotion, termination, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training. In addition, as a federal contractor, the University has adopted affirmative action plans for minorities and women, individuals with disabilities, and Vietnam-era and special disabled veterans and veterans who have served on active duty during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized. These plans are reviewed and updated annually by Human Resources.

Mercer University expressly prohibits any form of unlawful employee harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability. The Associate Vice President for Human Resources is the Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Officer and is responsible for monitoring and coordinating compliance with the policy and applicable laws and regulations, including Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Executive Order 11246, and other federal and state laws.

The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics strictly adheres to Mercer University's policy of equal opportunity, and Human Resources works closely with members of the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics to monitor compliance with this policy and insure that recruitment is done in such a manner as to actively recruit and consider qualified female staff members for existing vacancies. The Department of Athletics publishes Mercer's equal opportunity policies in all job advertisements and in special cases where programmatic concerns warrant, such as selection of coaching staff for woman sports programs, the department aggressively recruits women candidates.

Students:

Mercer University is committed to providing educational opportunities to all student applicants and enrolled students without regard to race, color, sex, age, national origin, or disabilities. This commitment to equal opportunity includes recruitment, admissions, access to and usage of facilities, counseling and testing, financial assistance, placement, and co-curricular programs. The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics rigorously adheres to and promotes these policies by operating its athletic program in a manner that is consistent with the fair and equitable treatment of both male and female student-athletes as outlined in the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX).

Matters concerning gender equity for both students and staff are monitored, evaluated and addressed on a continuing basis through the gender equity planning process. The process is outlined in the response to 4.1.4.

In addition, the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics presents a report annually in the spring to the Mercer Athletic Council detailing the current year's gender distribution of student-athletes and staff. As a result of self-study process, the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics

will augment future reports, starting spring 2004, to include trend data and an evaluation. The Mercer Athletic Council will review and evaluate the data and submit an evaluative report to the President. Further, the report will be shared and discussed by the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics with coaches and departmental staff and the Student Athletic Advisory Committee (SAAC).

The Mercer Athletic Council is an external standing committee that reports to the President and is charged with the oversight of athletic programs. The Mercer Athletic Council assists in the monitoring and evaluation of gender equity issues by approving the Gender Equity Plan and assessments, reviewing gender distribution reports presented by the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, and addressing gender equity issues as they are brought before them or identified by the membership. The President has the option to communicate Athletic Council concerns to the University Board of Trustees. The Mercer Athletic Council is currently (2002-2003) comprised of the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics (non-voting), six faculty representatives (4 male, 2 female), two student-athlete representatives (1 male, 1 female) and two student government representatives (1 male, 1 female).

Other channels besides the Mercer Athletic Council are available for students to voice concerns regarding gender equity. Specifically, student concerns may be directed to the Student Athletic Advisory Committee (SAAC). SAAC is comprised of representatives from each intercollegiate sport, meets bi-weekly, and acts as a sounding board for student-athletes on a myriad of issues including equity. This committee is currently (2002-2003) comprised of eleven males and thirteen females. Student-athletes can also voice concerns through an anonymous student-athlete survey and exit interviews conducted annually. Additionally, the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics and Faculty Athletic Representative maintain an open-door policy regarding athletic concerns.

The Office of Student Financial Planning handles student-athlete financial aid grievances. Grievance procedures for other student-athlete concerns were implemented in 2002-03 and are outlined in Appendix IV-H. Prior to this, the University Judicial System covered all non-financial student-athlete grievances.

- 2. For the three most recent academic years for which the information is available, attach a copy of the institution's completed Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act survey form and work-sheets. Analyze, explain and address discrepancies in the data between male and female student-athletes, and comment on any trends or significant changes.**

Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act surveys for the three most recent years for which the information is available, 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002, can be found in Appendix IV-C and key items are summarized in a table below.

Female student-athletes increased by 12 students (16%) over the period. In 1999-00 females made up 40% of the student-athlete population; in 2001-2002, female participation was 44% of the student-athlete population. The percentage of the undergraduate population that is female has remained fairly constant at approximately 55%. In 2002-03, the deficit was

12.7% (42.4% of student-athlete population female versus 55.1% of total enrollment). According to NCAA statistics, women comprise 53% of the undergraduate student population at NCAA member schools, but only 41% of the student-athlete population.

The percentage of athletic aid received by females has exceeded their rate of participation over the period. The amount of aid awarded increased by 19% over the period; aid distributed to female student-athletes increased by 26%; aid distributed to males increased by 12%. Sixty-eight percent of the additional aid dollars distributed was awarded to female athletes. The disproportionate distribution of aid is an important element of the University's plan to increase female participation through financial incentives.

The percentage of dollars spent on recruitment for women's programs has exceeded their rate of participation over the period. The dollars budgeted for recruitment for women's programs have exceeded that budgeted for men's programs. Coaches, however, may move funds among line items at their discretion.

Operating expenditures for men's and women's teams increased by 22% over the period. Over half (54%) of the increase in expenditures was spent on women's teams.

Summary of Key Items in the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act Surveys
For 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002

	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
Percent Student-Athlete Population Female*	40% (77/192)	39% (80/203)	44% (89/204)
Percent Athletic Aid Awarded to Female Student-Athletes	50% \$812,590	48% \$814,818	53% \$1,019,846
Percent Total Operating Expenses for Women's Teams	50% \$1,222,269	48% \$1,330,206	50% \$1,508,367
Percent Total Recruiting Expenditures for Women's Teams	52% \$26,376	45% \$28,159	49% \$28,486

* Unduplicated count of athletes

- 3. Using the program area checklist for gender issues, provided as Attachment No. 2, please:**
- (a) Describe how the institution has ensured a complete study of each of the areas;**
 - (b) Provide data demonstrating the institution's status/commitment, including resource allocation, across each of the areas;**
 - (c) Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends; and**
 - (d) Explain how the institution's future plan for gender issues addresses each of the areas.**

General Comments

Mercer ensures a complete study of each program area on the NCAA checklist through its annual gender equity planning process described in 4.1.1. Each year elements related to all 13 program areas are assessed. What follows is a review of the thirteen program areas as

conducted by the Equity, Welfare and Sportsmanship subcommittee as part of the self-study process. For this analysis, Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act reports for the three most recent years available, 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002, the 2001-2002 gender equity assessment complied as part of the gender equity planning process, and a Title IX compliance report prepared by Lamar Daniel, Incorporated were utilized by the subcommittee. The Title IX compliance report covered the period 2002-03.

1. Athletic Scholarships – Scholarship dollars are to be awarded to women and men at same proportion as their respective rate of participation in the intercollegiate athletics program.

Provide data demonstrating the institution’s status/commitment, including resource allocation.

	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
Percent Student-Athlete Population Female*	40% (77/192)	39% (80/203)	44% (89/204)
Percent Athletic Aid Awarded to Female Student-Athletes	50% \$812,590	48% \$814,818	53% \$1,019,846

Source: Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act reports

* Unduplicated count of athletes per year

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends.

The amount of athletic aid awarded increased by 19% over the period; aid distributed to female student-athletes increased by 26% and aid distributed to males increased by 12%. Sixty-eight percent of the additional aid dollars distributed was awarded to female athletes. The percentage of athletics aid received by females has exceeded their rate of participation over the period. The disproportionate distribution of aid is an important element of the University’s plan to increase female participation through financial incentives.

Explain how the institution’s future plan for gender issues addresses the area.

Distribution of athletics aid by gender will continue to be monitored through the annual gender equity planning process. Scholarship dollars will continue to be offered in a greater proportion to females as efforts are made to increase the number of female student-athletes.

2. Accommodation of interests and abilities – Participation proportionate to enrollment; or history of continuing practice of program expansion of underrepresented sex; or fully and effectively accommodate underrepresented sex; equivalent levels of competition.

Provide data demonstrating the institution’s status/commitment, including resource allocation.

In 2002-03, 42% of the student-athlete population was female and 55% of the total undergraduate population was female. Mercer fields seven women’s, six men’s and one co-ed (counted in men’s) intercollegiate teams.

	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
Percent Student-Athlete Population Female*	40% (77/192)	39% (80/203)	44% (89/204)
Percent Undergraduate Population Female **	57% (1,265/2,236)	55% (1,242/2,261)	56% (1,282/2,310)

Source: Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act reports

* Unduplicated count of athletes

** Fall, full-time, degree seeking undergraduates in Macon campus undergraduate program. Source: Office of Planning, Budgeting and Institutional Research

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends.

Mercer has experienced steady growth in the number of female student-athletes. Participation, however, is not proportionate to Mercer's full-time, Macon campus, undergraduate female enrollment. In 1999-00, the undergraduate population was 57% female and the student-athlete population was 40% female, a 17 percentage point deficit. In 2002-03, the deficit was 12.7% (42.4% of student-athlete population female versus 55.1% of total enrollment).

The men's basketball team is larger than the women's basketball team, and there are a larger number of male walk-on players – especially for men's basketball, men's soccer, and baseball. In addition, in response to a request from the University's Office of Admissions as related to its goal of attracting more male students, the University established a junior varsity men's basketball team in 1995-96 and a junior varsity baseball team in 2002-03. These additions served to increase the number of male participants.

With the exception of a short-lived swimming program, the array of programs available has not changed since 1991. In 1995-96 swimming was added, but was discontinued after one season due to low student interest and participation. There have been no specific student requests for additional sports. Surveys assessing interest have not been conducted in recent years.

Explain how the institution's future plan for gender issues addresses the area.

The current Gender Equity Plan includes the following to address the area of accommodation of interest:

- The Office of Undergraduate Admissions will put greater emphasis on walk-on opportunities for female high school athletes that are admitted to Mercer.
- Coaches will encourage walk-on opportunities for female students.
- The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics and the Division of Student Life will assess athletic interest and abilities of the student body in the fall of 2003. If the results of the survey indicate sufficient interest and ability, a women's team will be added. If there is a lack of interest, Mercer will continue to assess annually.

3. Equipment and Supplies – Quality; amount; suitability; maintenance and replacement; availability of equipment and supplies.

Provide data demonstrating the institution's status/commitment, including resource allocation.

Annual assessments compiled by the Faculty Athletic Representative as part of equity planning process and the Title IX compliance report indicate equipment is suitable and of the same quality for males and females.

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends.

While the equipment supplied is suitable for the various sports, storage has been a challenge. Further, both men and women in sports other than basketball must personally furnish some equipment items. Sports bras, an essential item of equipment for women, are not currently furnished for all female athletes.

Explain how the institution's future plan for gender issues addresses the area.

Equivalent male and female teams will continue to budget equal amounts for supplies and equipment. The quality, quantity, availability, and maintenance of equipment and supplies for male and female teams continue to be monitored through the annual gender equity planning process.

The current Gender Equity Plan calls for centralizing equipment storage in the new University Center, hiring an Operations/Equipment Manager, and further evaluation by the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics with regard to the quality, quantity, availability, and maintenance of equipment and supplies for male and female teams with special emphasis on the amount and type of equipment being furnished by student-athletes.

4. Scheduling of games and practice times – Number of games; number, length, and time of day of practices; time of day of games; preseason and postseason opportunities.

Provide data demonstrating the institution's status/commitment, including resource allocation.

In 2000-2001, there were 138 scheduled contests for all male teams, 163 scheduled contests for all female teams, and 9 scheduled contests for mixed teams. For the Academic Years 2000-2001 and 2001-2002, competitive events for men's and men's basketball, women's volleyball, and men's and women's soccer rotated between afternoon and evening times. There was no difference between the number of evening or afternoon competitions. Men's and women's tennis and golf played at scheduled tournaments on roughly the same days.

The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics strives to schedule equal practice time for men's and women's teams in the same sport, and, for dissimilar sports, schedule time that is approximately equal based on the nature of the sport. As an example, for 2000-2001, men's and women's basketball teams had equal amounts of court time per day; the time was determined by coach preference. The men's basketball team practiced approximately 160 hours during their playing season and 120 hours off-season. Women's basketball practiced 120 hours during the season and 120 hours off-season. Men's and women's golf teams practiced the same amount of time, while the women's tennis team practiced an average of 10

hours more than the men's team. The men's and women's soccer teams had equal amounts of field time scheduled each week; the men's team spent approximately 100 hours practicing and the women's team spent 70 hours. The women's volleyball team had the same amount of court time scheduled as the men's and women's basketball teams; they practiced approximately 75 hours during the season and 30 hours off-season. The women's softball team practiced approximately 65 hours during the season and 105 hours off-season. Men's baseball practiced 85 hours in-season and approximately 140 hours off-season.

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends.

In 2002-03, women's teams were provided fewer regular season competitive events.

Explain how the institution's future plan for gender issues addresses the area.

The institution will continue to monitor the number of male and female competitive events both during the traditional and nontraditional seasons, the convenience of competition times, and the amount of practice time allocated on an annual basis through the gender equity planning process. The current Gender Equity Plan calls for ensuring equivalent competitive events for men's and women's sports.

5. Travel and Per Diem Allowance – Modes of transportation; housing furnished during travel; length of stay before and after competitive events; dining arrangements and per diem.

Provide data demonstrating the institution's status/commitment, including resource allocation.

All teams use one of two buses (one MCI coach and one Bluebird bus), or one of three eight-passenger vans for transportation. All large teams use the MCI coach or a charter coach for all trips over five hours. Men's and women's basketball teams use air transportation on occasion. In the 2000-2001 season, the men's basketball team flew to Campbell, Florida Atlantic University/University of Central Florida and Utah State. The women's basketball team flew to Louisiana State/Louisiana Lafayette, Campbell University, Florida Atlantic/University of Central Florida.

In 2002-03, men's teams traveled by air four times, by bus 27 times and by van 21 times; women's teams traveled by air 3.5 times, by bus 36.5 times, and by van 16 times. (Women's basketball traveled by air to Boca Raton, secured a rental vehicle to travel from there to Orlando and was returned to Mercer by bus.) Men's and women's cross country participants traveled together and are not included in the above.

For men's and women's tennis trips over five hours, both teams travel the night before competition and leave immediately after the contest. Men's and women's basketball teams travel the night before a competition and leave immediately after the game if traveling by bus or coach, or the following morning if traveling by air. All teams receive the same meal allowance.

When overnight travel is required, teams stay in good lodging establishments selected by a member of the coaching staff. Coaches handle room assignments and participants share rooms. The Title IX compliance report found that student-athletes, in some cases, share a bed while traveling and female participants were more likely to be doubled up. Teams eat as a group with one of the coaches or an administrator paying the full bill, or participants are given money for the meal. The per diem is \$21.00 for three meals.

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends.

Overall, women participants are more overcrowded than men participants when overnight travel is required.

Explain how the institution's future plan for gender issues addresses the area.

The institution will continue to monitor on an annual basis the travel modes used by male and female student-athletes, the accommodations and food during travel, and meal per diems through the gender equity planning process.

The current Gender Equity Plan calls for a travel mandate stating that each student-athlete is to be provided his/her own bed while traveling. An Operations/Equipment Manager position has been created and filled. This person will assist coaches in travel that complies with the policy. The sleeping accommodations mandate along with a policy outlining travel modes are now included in the department's policy manual. The policy on travel modes states that team sports will travel by bus, and individual sports will travel by van unless special circumstances necessitate a deviation. These will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Air travel will be utilized when it can be demonstrated that it is less expensive than bus or van or is needed to avoid missing classes.

6. Tutors – Availability – procedures and criteria for obtaining assistance; Assignment – qualifications, training, experience, etc.; Compensation – rate of pay, pupil loads, qualifications, experience, other terms and conditions of employment.

Provide data demonstrating the institution's status/commitment, including resource allocation.

Tutoring is done by the Academic Resource Center for all student-athletes.

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends.

While there was equality in tutoring services available, the quality and number of tutors was not deemed adequate, and reporting of usage by athletes was not consistent. The Center for Student Athlete Academic Support Services was established and provides additional tutoring, monitored study hours, and advising support for all student-athletes. Starting in 2002-03, records to monitor male and female use of the Center for Student Athlete Academic Support Services began.

Explain how the institution's future plan for gender issues addresses the area.

The institution will continue to monitor on an annual basis the tutoring available and used by male and female student-athletes through the gender equity planning process. The

University's Academic Resource Center now has software available to generate accurate reports on usage by specific populations.

- 7. Coaching – Availability – full-time, part-time, assistant and graduate assistants; Assignment – training, experience, professional standing, and other professional qualifications; Compensation – rate of compensation, duration of contracts, conditions relating to contract renewal, experience, nature of coaching duties, working conditions, and other terms and conditions of employment.**

Provide data demonstrating the institution's status/commitment, including resource allocation.

All head coaches are full-time employees of the University with the exception of the air rifle coach. The head coach for air rifle is a law enforcement official who works for Mercer on a part-time basis. Coaches may have responsibilities for more than one team, and/or have additional duties.

	1999-00		2000-01		2001-02	
	Women's	Men's	Women's	Men's	Women's	Men's
Head Coaches						
Positions	7	7	7	7	7	7
FTE	5.25	4.40	5.25	4.40	5.25	4.40
Salary Dollars	\$163,560	\$162,656	\$169,643	\$181,113	\$196,030	\$206,021
Salary Per FTE	\$31,154	\$36,967	\$32,313	\$41,162	\$37,339	\$46,823
Salary Per Position	\$23,366	\$23,367	\$24,295	\$25,873	\$28,044	\$29,431
Assistant Coaches						
Positions	7	7	7	9	8	8
FTE	2.30	2.65	2.16	2.95	3.28	2.90
Salary Dollars	\$37,404	\$29,427	\$51,601	\$73,154	\$67,053	\$75,043
Salary Per FTE	\$16,263	\$16,067	\$23,889	\$24,798	\$20,443	\$25,877
Salary Per Position	\$5,343	\$4,204	\$7,372	\$8,128	\$8,382	\$9,380

Source: EADA Reports

As of 2001-2002, coaches for both men's and women's basketball had multi-year contracts. All other coaches were on a one-year appointment. For additional duties, the Men's Basketball Assistant Coach was also the head cross country coach; the Women's Basketball Assistant Coach also served as Promotions Director; and the Assistant Baseball Coach served as an Advancement Officer.

In 2002-03, per the Title IX compliance report, there were seven full-time coaches for men and two graduate assistants. Women's teams had six full-time coaches and four graduate assistants. Two men's teams (baseball and basketball) were at the NCAA maximum for coaches allowed. Only one women's team (basketball) was at the maximum. All coaches were qualified; most having participated at both the high school or club and college levels in

the sport they coach. Some have competed on national teams and played and coached professionally. The average number of years of experience at the college level for coaches of men's sports is 6.8 years and the average for women's sports is 5.5 years.

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends.

The difference in coaching experience is not deemed significant.

Coaches of men's sports are more available than coaches of women's sports. In 2002-03, there were seven full-time coaches for men and two graduate assistants. Women's teams had six full-time coaches and four graduate assistants. Two men's teams (baseball and basketball) are at the NCAA coach maximum; only one women's team (basketball) is at the maximum. The head golf coach coaches both men's and women's teams. The men's and women's teams compete in different tournaments and have different travel schedules that often conflict.

For 2000-01 and 2001-02, total salary allocations of men's teams have exceeded that of women's teams. When analyzed by FTE or by position, salary allocations for men's teams exceeds that of women's teams. Most of the discrepancy is explained by the disparity in salaries between the head coaches for baseball and softball, and men's and women's basketball. The differences are due to factors such as experience, success, and market demand. Similar differences in head coach salaries for these sports exist at other institutions. Per a survey conducted by A-Sun for 2002-03, the difference in the median head coach salary of the eight private A-Sun institutions for men's and women's basketball was \$27,155. The difference in median salary for baseball and softball was \$16,037.

Explain how the institution's future plan for gender issues addresses each of the areas.

The institution will continue to monitor on an annual basis through the gender equity planning process the equality of the coaching provided to men's and women's teams. The current Gender Equity Plan calls for the addition of two full-time coaches; one coach for a woman's program and an additional head golf coach will be hired. The men's and women's golf teams will each have a head coach.

8. Locker rooms, practice and competitive facilities – Quality, availability, and exclusivity of practice and competitive facilities; quality and availability of locker rooms; maintenance and preparation of practice and competitive facilities.

Provide data demonstrating the institution's status/commitment, including resource allocation.

A sample of male and female teams in 2001-2002 indicated the following. Neither the men's or women's tennis teams have locker rooms. The men's basketball locker room seats 17, has showers that were renovated 3 years ago and the locker rooms are cleaned five times per week by a service. The women's basketball locker room seats 17, has showers that were renovated 2 years ago and are cleaned five times per week by a service. For basketball, men and women each get 2 1/2 hours per day of afternoon practice court time. Head coaches work out practice schedules based on student class schedules. Men use the weight room after

practice or 7 a.m.; women use the weight room at 3 p.m. The baseball and softball coaches both prep their fields prior to competition. Both have groundskeepers that maintain the field.

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends.

Current athletic facilities are below standards for an NCAA Division I institution. Coaches' offices are spread among three different buildings and dressing room facilities are sub par. There are no dressing facilities for baseball, softball, men's/women's cross country, or a designated visitor's locker room. Visiting teams utilize one small dressing room or take advantage of dressing rooms of teams not in their playing season. This is disruptive because most teams utilize their dressing rooms year round.

Baseball was without a batting cage for the 2002-2003 season. There was a drainage problem on the baseball field that has forced cancellation of numerous practices and games over the last three years. The softball facility is inferior to the baseball facility.

Explain how the institution's future plan for gender issues addresses the area.

The institution will continue to monitor on an annual basis through the gender equity planning process, the equality of the locker rooms and facilities provided to male and female student-athletes. A new indoor batting cage, between the baseball and softball field, has been completed that will be used by both softball and baseball. The drainage problem on the baseball field has been addressed. Mercer has also made major improvements in the soccer field, the softball field, and the tennis center.

The current Gender Equity Plan calls for the completion and utilization of the new University Center. The new University Center, which will be operational spring 2004, provides dressing rooms for all seven team sports (men-basketball, baseball, soccer) (women-basketball, softball, volleyball, soccer). Each includes team meeting rooms, shower facilities and toilet facilities. There are two locker rooms, designated for visitors that will be utilized for individual sports. Lockers, with security latches, will be provided for those teams.

The new facility provides new locker rooms of the same size for men's and women's basketball, men's and women's soccer, baseball, volleyball, and softball. The men's and women's tennis teams use space in the tennis center. The men's and women's visitor locker room in the University Center is available for use by men's and women's cross country teams (and men's and women's golf and tennis teams, if needed). The men's and women's basketball, soccer, and baseball locker rooms will have meeting rooms adjacent to each locker room. The volleyball and softball teams will share a meeting room located between the locker rooms for these sports.

The University Center has a basketball arena seating 3,200 and a practice court. Men's and women's basketball and volleyball will use the facility. A rifle range is also included in the new facility. A new softball facility will be constructed in 2004.

9. Medical and Training Facilities and Services – Availability of medical personnel; availability and quality of weight training, and conditioning facilities; availability and qualifications of athletics trainers; health, accident, and injury insurance coverage.

Provide data demonstrating the institution's status/commitment, including resource allocation.

Female and male student-athletes have access to all aspects of the medical staff including certified athletic trainers, physicians, physical therapists, nurses, and other allied health professionals. Referral and access to these professionals is made on an as needed and medically indicated basis regardless of gender.

The medical training staff is nationally certified and comprised of two full-time trainers and four graduate assistants. The head trainer has nine years experience, the assistant trainer has five years experience, and the four graduate assistants each have one year experience since their certification. In 2002-03, the head trainer covered men's basketball home and away. The assistant trainer was assigned baseball both home and away, and men's and women's cross country. One graduate assistant covered women's basketball (home and away) and was also assigned cheerleaders and the dance team. Another was assigned volleyball and softball. The third graduate assistant covered women's soccer home and away and oversaw men's and women's tennis. The last graduate assistant covered men's soccer home and away, men's and women's golf, and rifle.

All student-athletes use one athletic training facility and have access to the training room during normal business hours 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday to Friday. Access to the facility is also available by scheduling an appointment at any time other than the posted hours of operation. Student-athletes who work with weight have access to the weight room in Porter Gym. In addition, all students have access to the weight room operated by the University's Recreational Sports Department.

Primary insurance coverage on all student-athletes is through their parents' or student health insurance. At whatever point the primary coverage stops, the Athletic Department's secondary coverage begins. If a student-athlete has no coverage, the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics pays the entire cost through its own insurance. No student-athlete pays any costs. All student-athletes are covered under a group policy through Mercer's Health Plan administered by Core Management Resources Group for all athletic related health problems including gynecological care resulting from participation in athletics.

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends.

Training and conditioning facilities are inadequate and assignment of trainers is not equitable.

Explain how the institution's future plan for gender issues addresses the area.

The institution will continue to monitor medical and training facilities and services on an annual basis through the gender equity planning process.

The current Gender Equity Plan calls for the completion and utilization of the new University Center. The new University Center, which will be operational spring 2004, will house an athletic weight room, an athletics training room, and the offices of the athletics trainers.

In order to cover women's sports equivalently, the assistant full-time trainer will be reassigned from baseball to a high-risk women's sport, and trainer assignments for travel will be based on injury rates as determined by the National Athletic Trainers Association.

10. Housing and Dining Facilities and Services – Housing provided; special services as part of housing; dining arrangements.

Provide data demonstrating the institution's status/commitment, including resource allocation.

Students-athletes live in residence halls or on-campus apartments, and off campus in apartments, houses or at home. During pre-season, semester breaks, extended holiday periods, and after classes, campus housing is available. Those in residence halls may be required to move to a residence hall that remains open. Those in apartments off campus generally have annual leases and are not affected.

There are no separate residence halls for athletes. Freshman student-athletes are in traditional residence halls and upper class members have the opportunity for campus apartments.

Participants whose grants-in-aid include room and board are provided a meal card to eat on campus or receive a check to obtain food on their own; most have meal cards. When the campus dining facility is closed, coaches provide food for the participants on their teams. The same campus meal plan is available to male and female athletes. Equal meal per diems are provided for male and female athletes for any pre- or post-game meals.

Men's and women's soccer are on campus for pre-season; both teams have housing and meals provided. Men's and women's basketball teams are housed during winter break; equal meal per diems are provided for off campus dining.

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends.

No significant trends or areas of deficiency were noted.

Explain how the institution's future plan for gender issues addresses the area.

The institution will continue to monitor on an annual basis the housing and meals provided to male and female student-athletes through the gender equity planning process.

11. Publicity – Availability and quality of sports information personnel; access to other publicity resources; quantity and quality of publications and other promotional devices.

Provide data demonstrating the institution's status/commitment, including resource allocation.

Sports information is under the supervision of the Sports Information Director. In 2002-03 the Sports Information Director had two graduate assistants assisting him and a part-time graduate assistant who worked in game promotions. The Sports Information Director and the graduate assistants are all involved in game management as well as sports information.

The Sports Information Director has eight years experience and covers men's basketball, home and away, and does the play-by-play for games broadcast on radio. The director also covers baseball at home and travels to selected games.

One graduate assistant has two years experience, and covers women's basketball at home; he did not travel to away games. The other graduate assistant has no experience, and is not assigned to cover a team. The second graduate assistant is primarily involved in event management and compiling game statistics for various teams.

Media guides are provided for the three men's team sports (baseball, basketball and soccer) and four women's team sports (basketball, soccer, softball and volleyball). The media guides for baseball and men's basketball are full-size (8 ½" X 11") and the remaining ones are smaller (5 ½" X 8").

Combined schedule magnets were provided for men's and women's basketball and men's and women's soccer. Men's and women's basketball and baseball and softball each received combined schedule cards and combined posters. A fall sport poster was also provided for men's and women's soccer, volleyball and men's and women's cross country. Finally, a combined program for home games was provided for men's and women's basketball. Inserts were used to identify participants on the visiting teams.

Promotions have been under the direction of a graduate assistant who also assists the Sports Information Director with game operations. In-game promotions occurred at half time for all men's and women's basketball games, and at some men's and women's soccer games. One softball game was also promoted. All men's basketball games are broadcast on radio. Tickets are sold for all men's and women's basketball, men's and women's soccer and baseball games. The Director of Intercollegiate Athletics sells corporate tickets for men's and women's basketball.

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends.

The availability of the sports information staff favors men's programs as do promotional services. Men's basketball is the only sport broadcast on a local radio station.

Explain how the institution's future plan for gender issues addresses each of the areas.

The institution will continue to monitor on an annual basis the publicity and provided for male and female teams through the gender equity planning process.

The current Gender Equity Plan calls for the addition of a full-time sports information assistant position in 2005 with primary responsibility for women's sports. The new coaching position for women's sports called for in the plan will be assigned duties related to promotion of women's programs. Efforts will be made to find a radio station to broadcast women's basketball, and the feasibility of selling tickets for softball once the new softball facility is complete will be explored.

12. Support Services – Administrative, secretarial, and clerical support; office space.

Provide data demonstrating the institution's status/commitment, including resource allocation.

A Director of Intercollegiate Athletics oversees the entire intercollegiate athletics program for men and women. The Director reports to the President of the University.

All sports have at least one computer, except air rifle, and coaches do most of their own work, minimizing the need for additional secretarial/clerical staff. Administrative work is done for all coaches on an as needed basis. No priorities are set unless dictated by time frame needed. Men and women's basketball offices and volleyball offices are located in Porter Gym and are of approximately the same size and quality. All other offices are located adjacent to the gym, with the exception of baseball and tennis. The baseball office is adjacent to the locker room at the baseball field, and the tennis office is in the Peddy Tennis Center near the tennis courts.

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends.

Mercer is currently constructing a 230,000 square foot University Center, which will house the Intercollegiate Athletics program. Approximately half of the building is dedicated to athletics. Office space will be the same square footage for male and female sports; any current deficiencies will be rectified with the new University Center.

Explain how the institution's future plan for gender issues addresses the area.

The institution will continue to monitor on an annual basis the administrative, secretarial and clerical support provided for men's and women's teams through the gender equity planning process.

13. Recruitment of Student-Athletes – Equal opportunities for professional personnel to recruit; availability of financial and other resources for recruitment; equivalent benefits, opportunities, and treatment of prospective athletes.

Provide data demonstrating the institution's status/commitment, including resource allocation.

Coaches for all teams adhere to the guidelines established by the NCAA and have the opportunity to recruit according to those standards. There are no additional restrictions. More money is budgeted for recruiting for women's teams, but coaches may move funds among line items at their discretion.

In 1999-2000, male teams spent \$23,874 (48% of total) on recruiting, and female teams spent \$26,376 (52% of total). In 2000-2001 male teams spent \$34,056 (55% of total), and female teams spent \$28,159 (45% of total). In 2001-2002, male teams spent \$29,191 (51%) on recruiting, and female teams spent \$28,486 (49% of total).

Official and unofficial visits are offered to student-athletes according to NCAA standards. In 2001-2002, men's sports had 39 official visits, women's sports had 46 official visits.

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends.

The opportunity to recruit is virtually synonymous with the opportunity to receive coaching. The women's program, with one fewer coach, is at a recruiting disadvantage.

Explain how the institution's future plan for gender issues addresses the area.

The institution will continue to monitor on an annual basis the recruiting opportunities provided for male and female teams through the gender equity planning process.

The current Gender Equity Plan calls for the addition of two full-time coaches; one coach for a woman's program and an additional head golf coach will be hired. The men's and women's golf teams will each have a head coach.

- 4. Please provide a written, stand-alone institutional plan for addressing gender equity for the future in the intercollegiate athletics program. Also, describe the institution's efforts to ensure the plan was developed through a process involving broad-based participation. The plan must clearly identify all issues or problems and must include measurable goals the institution intends to achieve, steps the institution will take to achieve those goals, persons responsible, timetables and a clear indication of institutional approval of the plan. The plan must address all 13 program areas for gender issues as listed in Attachment No. 2; however, an evaluation mechanism to monitor the institution's status in those program areas without deficiencies is acceptable, provided the identification of such a mechanism is included in the institution's gender-issue plan. Further, the plan must extend at least five years into the future and be active at all times.**

The Gender Equity Plan for the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics can be found in Appendix IV-D.

The NCAA Certification Subcommittee on Equity, Welfare and Sportsmanship, the Faculty Athletic Representative and the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics participated in the development of the current plan. The Mercer Athletic Council and the President of the University have approved the plan.

The 2002-03 Mercer Athletic Council composition: the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics (non-voting), six faculty representatives (4 male, 2 female), two student-athlete representatives (1 male, 1 female) and two student government representatives (1 male, 1 female). The 16-member NCAA Certification Subcommittee on Equity, Welfare is 56%

female (9 women and 7 male), and includes faculty, staff, student-athlete, and coach representation.

The current plan calls for improving the annual gender equity planning process to broaden participation by expanding the role of coaches and staff of the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics. The annual process will consist of an assessment of elements related to gender equity, development and/or updates of action plans, and attainment of institutional approval. The elements assessed cover all thirteen gender equity program areas identified by the NCAA. Broad-based participation is achieved through the involvement of the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, the Faculty Athletic Representative, and the Mercer Athletic Council.

The Faculty Athletic Representative will coordinate the annual assessment efforts and report the results to the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics. If areas of concern are identified in the assessment process, action plans will be developed by Director of Intercollegiate Athletics and the Faculty Athletic Representative. Action plans include measurable goals, the identification of responsible individuals or offices, and timetables. If aspects of the action plans involve areas outside the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics will obtain consent and commitment from those areas. Progress on any action plans from prior years will be noted and prior year action plans will be updated as applicable. The Director of Intercollegiate Athletics will discuss the assessment results and action plans with the coaches and staff of the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics and refine the plan based on coach and staff input.

The Director of Intercollegiate Athletics and the Faculty Athletic Representative will present the Gender Equity Plan to the Mercer Athletic Council no later than September 30 of each year. The Mercer Athletic Council reviews the plan and approves the plan as is, or returns the plan with recommendations for changes to the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics and the Faculty Athletic Representative. Once the plan is approved by the Mercer Athletic Council, it is forwarded to the President with recommendation for institutional approval. Institutional approval is signified by the signature of the President.

Operating Principle

4.2. Minority Issues. It is a principle of the Association to promote respect for and sensitivity to the dignity of every person and to refrain from discrimination prohibited by federal and state law. Consistent with this fundamental philosophy, the institution shall:

- a. Have implemented its approved minority-opportunities plan from the previous self-study. If modified or if not carried out fully, the institution shall provide an explanation from appropriate institutional authorities.**
- b. Demonstrate that it is committed to, and has progressed toward, fair and equitable treatment of all minority student-athletes and athletics department personnel.**

- c. **Formally adopt a written plan for the future for the intercollegiate athletics program that ensures the institution maintains a program, or continues progress toward a program, which expands opportunities and support for minority student-athletes and athletics personnel. The plan shall include measurable goals the institution intends to achieve, steps the institution will take to achieve those goals, persons responsible and timetables.**

Self-Study Items

1. **Explain how the institution is organized to further its efforts related to the minority-issues operating principle above for both staff and students and provide evidence that matters concerning minority issues are monitored, evaluated and addressed on a continuing basis.**

Staff

Mercer University is committed to equal opportunity in employment without regard to race, color, national origin, disability, sex, or age. Equal opportunity applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including but not limited to hiring, placement, promotion, termination, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training.

In addition, as a federal contractor, the University has adopted affirmative action plans for minorities and women, individuals with disabilities, Vietnam-era veterans, special disabled veterans, and veterans who have served on active duty during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized. These plans are reviewed and updated annually by Human Resources.

Mercer University expressly prohibits any form of unlawful employee harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age or disability. The Associate Vice President for Human Resources is the Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Officer and is responsible for monitoring and coordinating compliance with the policy and applicable laws and regulations, including Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Executive Order 11246, and other federal and state laws. As an EEO/AA employer, Mercer conducts a utilization analysis to determine job groups where minorities are underutilized and annually reports this data in the University's Affirmative Action Plan.

Mercer University Department of Intercollegiate Athletics strictly adheres to Mercer University's policy of equal opportunity and publishes Mercer's equal opportunity policies in all job advertisements. Human Resources works closely with members of the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics to monitor compliance with this policy and insure that recruitment is done in such a manner as to actively recruit and consider qualified minority staff members for existing vacancies. These efforts have resulted in the hiring of three minority assistant coaches since 1999-00.

Students

Mercer University is committed to provide educational opportunities to all student applicants and enrolled students without regard to race, color, sex, age, national origin, or disabilities. This commitment to equal opportunity includes recruitment, admissions, access to and usage of facilities, counseling and testing, financial assistance, placement, and co-curricular programs and activities. The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics rigorously adheres to and promotes these policies.

Matters concerning minority equity for both students and staff are monitored, evaluated, and addressed on a continuing basis through the minority equity planning process. The minority equity planning process will be expanded in 2003-04 to mirror that of the gender equity planning process. The process is outlined in the response to 4.1.4 and 4.2.6.

In addition, the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics presents a report annually in the spring to the Mercer Athletic Council detailing the current year's minority distribution of student-athletes and staff. As a result of the self-study process, the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics will augment future reports, starting spring 2004, to include trend data and an evaluation. The Mercer Athletic Council will review and evaluate the data and submit an evaluative report to the President. Further, the report will be shared and discussed by the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics with coaches and departmental staff and the Student Athletic Advisory Committee (SAAC).

The Mercer Athletic Council is an external standing committee that reports to the President and is charged with the oversight of athletic programs. The Mercer Athletic Council assists in the monitoring and evaluation of minority equity issues by approving the Minority Equity Plan and assessments, reviewing minority distribution reports presented by the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, and addressing minority equity issues as they are brought before them or identified by the membership. The President has the option to communicate Mercer Athletic Council concerns to the University Board of Trustees.

The Mercer Athletic Council is currently (2002-2003) comprised of the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics (non-voting), six faculty representatives (0 minority), two student-athlete representatives (1 minority) and two student government representatives (1 minority). Currently, faculty Athletic Council members are appointed by the President for three years and are eligible for reappointment, and student members are appointed for a term of one year and are eligible for reappointment. As a result of the self-study process, in an effort to diversify faculty membership a new appointment process with staggered terms for the Athletic Council will start in spring 2003. Further, a Minority Equity Committee has been added to the Mercer Athletic Council.

Other channels besides the Mercer Athletic Council are available for students to voice concerns regarding minority equity. Specifically, student concerns may be directed to the Student Athletic Advisory Committee (SAAC). SAAC is comprised of representatives from each intercollegiate sport, meets bi-weekly, and acts as a sounding board for student-athletes on a myriad of issues including equity. This 24-member committee is currently (2002-2003)

38% non-white; 21% (5) nonresident alien and 17% (4) African American. Student-athletes can also voice concerns through an anonymous student-athlete survey and exit interviews conducted annually. Additionally, the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics and Faculty Athletic Representative maintain an open-door policy regarding athletic concerns.

The Office of Student Financial Planning handles student-athlete financial aid grievances. Grievance procedures for other student-athlete concerns were implemented in 2002-03 and are outlined in Appendix IV-H. Prior to this, the University Judicial System covered all non-financial student-athlete grievances.

- 2. For the three most recent academic years, provide the racial or ethnic composition for full-time senior administrative athletics department staff members (i.e., assistant athletics directors up through the athletics director level); other full- and part-time professional (i.e., non-clerical) athletics department staff members (such as trainers, ticket managers, academic support staff, and facility managers, even if the position is not funded by or does not report to the athletics department); full- and part-time head coaches; full- and part-time assistant coaches (including graduate assistant and volunteer coaches); faculty-based athletics board or committee (e.g., faculty senate subcommittee on athletics, faculty athletics committee) members, and other advisory or policy-making group (e.g., governing board for athletics, student-athlete advisory committee) members (if any). [Note: Use Attachment No. 1, Part A, to compile the data requested in this self-study item.]**

Attachment 1, Part A

- 3. For the three most recent academic years, provide the racial or ethnic composition for student-athletes who received athletics aid and for students generally. [Note: Use Attachment No. 1, Part B, to compile the data requested in this self-study item.]**

Attachment 1, Part B

- 4. For the three most recent academic years, provide the racial or ethnic composition of student-athletes who received athletics aid by the eight sport groups listed in the graduation-rates disclosure form. Also, for those sports not at the varsity level for three years, indicate the year in which the sport was recognized by the institution as a varsity sport. [Note: Use Attachment No. 1, Part C, to compile the data requested in this self-study item.]**

Attachment 1, Part C

- 5. Using the program area checklist for minority issues, provided as Attachment No. 3, please:**
 - (a) Describe how the institution has ensured a complete study of each of these areas;**
 - (b) Provide data demonstrating the institution's commitment across each of the areas;**
 - (c) Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends; and**

(d) Explain how the institution's future plan for minority issues addresses each of the areas.

General Comments

Mercer ensures a complete study of each program area on the NCAA checklist through its minority equity planning process. The minority equity planning process will be expanded in 2003-04 to mirror that of the gender equity planning process. The process is outlined in the response to 4.1.4. The Mercer Athletic Council and the President have approved the elements related to all eight program areas that will be assessed annually. What follows is a review of the eight program areas as conducted by the Equity, Welfare and Sportsmanship Subcommittee as part of the self-study process.

1. Institutional and Athletics Department Commitment – Development and maintenance of written statements that address the issues of diversity.

Provide data demonstrating the institution's status/commitment, including resource allocation.

Mercer University is an equal opportunity employer and personnel policies and procedures applicable to all University programs mandate fair and equitable treatment for all applicants, employees, and students without regard to race, color, sex, age, national origin, or disabilities in compliance with all federal and state statutes and regulations that pertain to nondiscrimination. The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics strictly adheres to these policies and publishes them in all job advertisements. Statements supporting diversity and equal opportunity are included in the *Mercer University Bulletin*, *Athletics Department Policy Manual*, and the *Student-Athlete Handbook*. A diversity statement is also posted in the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics and is distributed to the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics staff each year.

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends.

There are currently no significant trends or areas of deficiency noted for this program area.

Explain how the institution's future plan for minority issues addresses this area.

Commitment to diversity is monitored and reviewed on an annual basis as part of the department's minority equity planning process.

2. Evaluation – Periodic review of athletics department activities for consistency with goals and objectives set forth in the institution's and athletics department's written commitments to diversity.

Provide data demonstrating the institution's status/commitment, including resource allocation.

The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics encourages diversity and is committed to providing equal opportunity for employment and participation in intercollegiate athletics, free from discrimination based on race, color, sex, age, national origin, or disabilities. The

minority equity planning process is designed to provide systematic review of the department's activities for consistency with their commitment to diversity.

A cultural diversity plan was developed and implemented during the first-cycle certification process. The plan was updated in 2002-03 during the self-study process to better address the evolving minority equity standards of the NCAA. The planning process will be expanded in 2003-04 to mirror that of gender equity planning process. The process is outlined in the response to 4.1.4 and 4.2.6.

The Director of Intercollegiate Athletics Director annually submits reports to the Mercer Athletic Council on the minority distribution of staff and student-athletes.

Confidential student-athlete opinion surveys and exit interviews are administered annually to assess the student-athletes' academic and athletic experience and to ask for suggestions on how to improve the athletic program in the future.

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends.

The self-study subcommittee suggested, and the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics agreed, that annual reports to the Mercer Athletic Council on minority and gender distribution of student-athletes and staff be augmented to include trend data and an evaluation by the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, and that the Mercer Athletic Council review and evaluate the data and submit an evaluative report the President. Further, the report will be shared and discussed by the Athletics Director with coaches and departmental staff and the Student Athletic Advisory Committee (SAAC).

No diversity issues have surfaced via the student-athlete opinion survey in recent years. The Faculty Athletic Representative revises the survey instrument annually with input from the coaches, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, Senior Women Administrator, and SAAC. In 2002-03, the survey was expanded to include questions that might better identify possible minority concerns, and student-athletes are given the opportunity for open-ended comments on any subject.

Explain how the institution's future plan for minority issues addresses this area.

The current Minority Equity Plan calls for expanding the planning process in 2003-04 to mirror that of gender equity, and augmenting the annual report on minority diversity submitted to the Mercer Athletic Council by the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics.

3. Organization and Structure – Policies, and/or organization, and/or activities of the athletics program and its activities to help enhance diversity.

Provide data demonstrating the institution's status/commitment, including resource allocation.

The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics reports to the President of the University and is governed by all University-wide rules and regulations including University affirmative action plans. Human Resources works closely with members of the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics to monitor compliance with the University's Equal Opportunity and Affirmative

Action policy and to insure that recruitment is done in such a manner as to actively recruit and consider qualified minority staff members for existing vacancies.

The Mercer Athletic Council is an external standing committee that reports to the President and is charged with the oversight of athletic programs. The Mercer Athletic Council assists in the monitoring and evaluation of minority equity issues by approving the Minority Equity Plan and assessments, reviewing minority distribution reports presented by the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, and addressing minority equity issues as they are brought before them or identified by the membership. The Mercer Athletic Council is currently (2002-2003) comprised of the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics (non-voting), six faculty representatives (0 minority), two student-athlete representatives (1 minority) and two student government representatives (1 minority).

The Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) acts as a sounding board for student-athlete issues and has the potential for identifying minority equity concerns. No minority concerns have surfaced via SAAC.

The Office of Student Financial Planning handles student-athlete financial aid grievances. Grievance procedures for other student-athlete concerns were implemented in 2002-03 and are outlined in Appendix IV-H. Prior to this, the University Judicial System covered all non-financial student-athlete grievances.

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends.

There is a lack of diversity on the Mercer Athletic Council. No student-athlete minority concerns have surfaced via grievance procedures or the SAAC. A student-athlete specific grievance and appeal process became active in 2003-04.

Explain how the institution's future plan for minority issues addresses this area.

Organization and structure issues will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis as part of the department's minority equity planning process. Funds for a Mercer representative to attend the NCAA Minority Issues Conference have been budgeted for 2003-04.

The current Minority Equity Plan calls for a new appointment process for the Mercer Athletic Council in an effort to diversify faculty membership and the creation of a minority equity committee to provide greater emphasis on minority issues.

4. Enrollment – Goals of the institution for enrollment of minority students and minority student-athletes.

Provide data demonstrating the institution's status/commitment, including resource allocation.

Mercer University admitted its first black students in 1963, making it a pioneer among institutions of higher education in the South, a legacy of which Mercer is justifiably proud. Mercer University is committed to provide educational opportunities to all student applicants and enrolled students without regard to race, color, sex, age, national origin, or disabilities.

This commitment to equal opportunity includes recruitment, admissions, access to and usage of facilities, counseling and testing, financial assistance, placement, and co-curricular programs and activities. The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics rigorously adheres to and promotes these policies. The University does not set specific goals for minority enrollment, nor does the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics set specific goals for minority participation.

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends

There are currently no significant trends or areas of deficiency noted for this program area.

Explain how the institution's future plan for minority issues addresses this area.

The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics minority equity planning process calls for continual monitoring of the percentage of minority student-athletes in comparison to the total Macon campus undergraduate population in order to identify trends and identify deficiencies. There are no plans to set specific goals for minority enrollment or participation in intercollegiate athletics.

5. Comparison of Populations – Examination of the student population and comparison of the percentage of minority student-athletes in all sports, by sport, to ensure that there are no signs of discrimination revealed through the recruitment practices of the institution.

Provide data demonstrating the institution's status/commitment, including resource allocation.

The racial or ethnic composition for student athletes in total and by sport for 1999-00, 2000-01 and 2001-02 can be found in Attachment No. 1, parts B and C.

The Macon campus undergraduate population at Mercer is diverse. The percentage of the population that is non-white in 2002-03 was 30%. The largest minority group was black non-Hispanic (18%), followed by Asian/Pacific Islander (6%), nonresident alien (2%), Hispanic (2%), and American Indian/Alaskan Native (.3%).

The population of student-athletes receiving athletically related financial aid is also diverse. The nonwhite percentage for 2002-03 was 30%, which compares favorably to Mercer's general population and to the NCAA Division I as a whole (38% for women, and 30% for males according to a NCAA research report for 2000-01). The nonwhite, student-athlete population in 2002-03 was primarily comprised of nonresident aliens and black non-Hispanic students. As with the general population, participation by American Indians/Alaskan Natives, Asian/Pacific Islanders, and Hispanics is minimal. If the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), racial/ethnic category of nonresident alien is not counted and minority is defined as only residents and citizens who define themselves as Asian American/Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Hispanic, or Black Non-Hispanic, the percentage minority of the student body was 26% in 2002-2003. The percent minority for the student-athlete population was 15%.

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends.

The institution has experienced a decline in the percentage of the Macon campus undergraduate population that is nonwhite from 34% in 1999-00 to 30% in 2003-03. The number of nonwhite student-athletes has fallen from 57 in 1999-00 (41%) to 43 in 2002-03 (30%). The drop in percentage of nonwhite student-athletes was fueled by a drop in nonresident aliens (29 to 22), black non-Hispanic students (20 to 14), and Hispanic students (5 to 1), and an increase in white non-Hispanic student-athletes (82 to 100).

The percentages by sport must be interpreted with care. As the figures are disaggregated by sport, the denominator gets smaller and modest changes can greatly impact participation rates. The number of nonwhite student-athletes receiving athletics aid on the baseball team fell from two in 1999-00 to one in 2002-03. Diversity on the men's basketball team has come primarily from black non-Hispanic students; their numbers have declined over the period from ten to six. In 2002-03 there were no minority students receiving athletically related financial aid on the men's cross country team; during the period 1999-00 through 2001-02, there were one to two black non-Hispanic participants. Diversity on other men's sports has been relatively stable. Approximately a third of the athletes receiving athletics aid on the women's basketball team were nonwhite during the period 1999-00 through 2001-02. In 2002-03, 50% of the athletes receiving athletics aid on the team were nonwhite. Diversity on the women's cross-country team has remained stable over the period with one minority on the team receiving athletically related financial aid. Declines in the number of nonresident alien women on other women's sports has meant a decline in the percentage nonwhite student-athletes receiving athletically related aid from 35% to 23%, or from 14 to 12 participants.

Explain how the institution's future plan for minority issues addresses this area.

The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics minority equity planning process calls for continual monitoring of the percentage of minority student-athletes in comparison to the total Macon campus undergraduate population in order to identify trends and identify deficiencies. The current Minority Equity Plan calls for the annual reports on minority participation submitted to the Mercer Athletic Council to be augmented to include trend data (at least three years) and an evaluative report. Further, the diversity of the Mercer Athletic Council will be improved and a minority equity subcommittee formed.

6. Participation in Governance and Decision-Making – Involvement of minority student-athletes in the governance and decision-making processes of the athletics department, and provision of leadership opportunities (e.g., participation on student-athlete advisory committee) for minority student-athletes.**Provide data demonstrating the institution's status/commitment, including resource allocation.**

The Student Athletic Advisory Committee is made up of two representatives each from men's basketball, women's basketball, men's soccer, women's soccer, baseball, and softball, and one representative from volleyball, air rifle, men's cross country, women's cross country, men's tennis, women's tennis, men's golf, and women's golf. Representatives are chosen

each year by the team coaches. Currently, (2002-2003) there are nine non-white members of the SAAC (38%); 5 (21%) nonresident aliens and 4 (17%) black non-Hispanic.

Two student-athletes serve on the Mercer Athletic Council. In 2002-2003, one was a minority.

Half of the nominees each year to the NCAA Leadership Conference for 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003 were minority student-athletes.

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends.

There are currently no significant trends or areas of deficiency noted for this program area.

Explain how the institution's future plan for minority issues addresses this area.

The number and percentage of minority student-athletes nominated for the NCAA Leadership Conference, and on SAAC and the Mercer Athletic Council will continue to be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis as part of the minority equity planning process.

7. Employment Opportunities – Establishment of goals for minority employment opportunities in the athletics department and encouragement of promotion and hiring of minority coaches and administrators.

Provide data demonstrating the institution's status/commitment, including resource allocation.

As an EEO/AA employer, Mercer conducts a utilization analysis to determine job groups where minorities are underutilized and annually reports this data in the University's Affirmative Action Plan. Human Resources works very closely with members of the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics to monitor compliance with this policy and insure that recruitment is done in such a manner as to actively recruit and consider qualified minority staff members for existing vacancies.

The racial or ethnic composition for athletics and selected institutional personnel can be found for 1999-00, 2000-01 and 2001-02 can be found in Attachment No. 1, part A. In 2002-03, 13% of the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics was minority (4 of 31); the percentage of minority coaches was 17% (4 out of 24).

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends.

Diversity statistics for the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics are similar to that of the University. The percentage of the personnel in the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics that are minority has increased from 4% (1 of 25) in 1999-00 to 13% (4 of 31) in 2002-03. The increase in minority personnel has been within the coaching staff. The percentage of the coaching staff that is minority increased from 5% (1 of 19) in 1999-00 to 17% (4 of 24) in 2002-03. For the University as a whole in fall 2002, 23% of the full-time staff was minority and 11% of full-time faculty.

Explain how the institution's future plan for minority issues addresses this area.

The minority equity planning process calls for annual monitoring of the number of minority coaches, compensation for minority coaches, and additional duties for coaches. Compensation for minority coaches should mirror non-minority coaches taking into consideration skill and experience levels, and additional duties for both minority and non-minority coaches should be equal. Efforts are being made to attract qualified minority candidates as positions become available. The current Minority Equity Plan includes a goal of increasing the minority applicant pool by advertising in publications that target minority populations and augmentation of the annual report to the Mercer Athletic Council on the number of minority employees.

8. Programs and Activities – Establishment of programs that address the needs and issues affecting minority student-athletes.

Provide data demonstrating the institution's status/commitment, including resource allocation.

The University has a full array of programs and services to support the needs of students regardless of race, color, sex, age, national origin, or disabilities. Support programs geared toward minority, low income, first generation, and students with disabilities include Minority Mentors, the Educational Opportunity Center, and Student Support Services. Student organizations geared to minority students include the Organization of Black Students, National Society of Black Engineers, Hispanic and Latino Student Union, Mercer International Student Organization, Mercer Chapter of NAACP, and four traditionally African-American fraternities and sororities.

Identify areas of deficiency and comment on any trends.

There are currently no significant trends or areas of deficiency noted for this program area. There are an adequate number of programs and activities to support needs and issues of minority student-athletes.

Explain how the institution's future plan for minority issues addresses this area.

Student-athlete opinion surveys will continue to be administered, and exit interviews will begin again in 2003-04. Issues or needs relating to minority student-athletes will be addressed as they are identified.

- 6. Please provide a written, stand-alone institutional plan for addressing minority opportunities for the future in the intercollegiate athletics program. Also, describe the institution's efforts to ensure the plan was developed through a process involving broad-based participation. The plan must clearly identify all issues or problems and must include measurable goals the institution intends to achieve, steps the institution will take to achieve those goals, persons responsible, timetables and a clear indication of institutional approval of the plan. The plan must address all eight program areas of minority issues as listed in Attachment No. 3; however, an evaluation mechanism to monitor the institution's status in those program areas without deficiencies is acceptable, provided the identification of such a mechanism is included in the institution's minority-opportunities plan. Further, the plan must extend at least five**

years into the future and be active at all times. [Note: Please see Appendix C, Page 63 for an example for-mat outlining all required elements of a plan.]

The Minority Equity Plan for the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics can be found in Appendix IV-E.

The NCAA Certification Subcommittee on Equity, Welfare and Sportsmanship, the Faculty Athletic Representative, and the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics participated in the development of the current plan. The Mercer Athletic Council and the President of the University have approved the plan.

The 2002-03 Mercer Athletic Council composition: the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics (non-voting), six faculty representatives (0 minority), two student-athlete representatives (1 minority), and two student government representatives (1 minority). The 16-member NCAA Certification Subcommittee on Equity, Welfare included representative from the faculty, staff, coaching, and student-athlete populations and had three minority members (two African American and one Asian/Pacific Islander).

The current plan calls for the expansion of the minority planning process to mirror that of the gender equity planning process. The annual process will consist of an assessment of elements related to gender equity, development and/or updates of action plans, and attainment of institutional approval. The elements assessed cover all eight minority equity program areas identified by the NCAA. Broad-based participation is achieved through the involvement of the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, the Faculty Athletic Representative, and the Mercer Athletic Council.

The Faculty Athletic Representative will coordinate the annual assessment efforts and report the results to the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics. If areas of concern are identified in the assessment process, action plans will be developed by Director of Intercollegiate Athletics and the Faculty Athletic Representative. Action plans include measurable goals, the identification of responsible individuals or offices, and timetables. If aspects of the action plans involve areas outside the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics will obtain consent and commitment from those areas. Progress on any action plans from prior years will be noted and prior year action plans will be updated as applicable. The Director of Intercollegiate Athletics will discuss the assessment results and action plans with the coaches and staff of the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics and refine the plan based on coach and staff input.

The Director of Intercollegiate Athletics and the Faculty Athletic Representative will present the Minority Equity Plan to the Mercer Athletic Council no later than September 30 of each year. The Mercer Athletic Council reviews the plan and approves the plan as is, or returns the plan with recommendations for changes to the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics and the Faculty Athletic Representative. Once the plan is approved by the Mercer Athletic Council, it is forwarded to the President with recommendation for institutional approval. Institutional approval is signified by the signature of the President.

Operating Principle

4.3 Student-Athlete Welfare. Conducting the intercollegiate athletics program in a manner designed to protect and enhance the physical and educational welfare of student-athletes is a basic principle of the Association. Consistent with this fundamental principle, the institution shall:

- a. Demonstrate a commitment to the fair treatment of student-athletes, particularly in their academic role as students.**
- b. Provide evidence that the welfare of student-athletes and the fairness of their treatment is monitored, evaluated and addressed on a continuing basis.**
- c. Have established grievance or appeal procedures available to student-athletes in appropriate areas.**
- d. Provide evidence that the institution has in place programs that protect the health of and provide a safe environment for each of its student-athletes.**

Self-Study Items

- 1. Explain how the institution is organized to further its efforts related to the student-athlete welfare operating principle above and provide evidence that matters concerning student-athlete welfare are monitored, evaluated and addressed on a continuing basis.**

Mercer University and the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics provide a wide range of services designed to enhance student and student-athlete welfare. All institutional services are available to every Mercer student and student-athlete. These services include academic enhancement, student advising, career services, health and wellness, grievance policies, and personal counseling.

Services provided specifically to student-athletes include the services of the Office of Student Athlete Support Services, the Athletic Academic Advisors Council, the Student Athletic Advisory Committee (SAAC), CHAMPS/Life Skills program, student-athlete specific grievance policies, athletic training policies, emergency medical plans, and medical services. Student-athletes are made aware of institutional and student-athlete specific services via the student handbook, *LAIR*, the *Student-Athlete Handbook*, initial team meetings and student orientation sessions.

All services of the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics are specifically designed to protect and enhance the physical and educational welfare of student-athletes. The services provided by the Office of Student Athlete Support Services are a prime example of commitment to the fair treatment of student-athletes, particularly in their academic role as students. The Office of Student Athlete Services assists student-athletes with registration, provides academic counseling, monitors academic progress, designs academic intervention strategies, and operates the Study Table program which gives students an opportunity to do individualized study, work with tutors, and learn how to manage their time. Further, to improve the academic advisement of student-athletes, the Senior Woman Administrator/Assistant Athletic Director heads the Athletic Academic Advisors Council. The charge of the council is to promote and encourage communication between academic advisors and the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics. The council aims to improve the academic advisement of student-

athletes by providing a forum for advisors and the staff of the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics to discuss issues pertaining to the advising of student-athletes. The council consists of academic advisors from the College of Liberal Arts, the Stetson School of Business and Economics, and School of Engineering, and the Tift College of Education, Office of First Year Experience, the Faculty Athletics Representative, and the Director of Student Athlete Support Services. The council meets twice a year. Members of the council are available during priority registration to assist student-athletes.

Services of the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics are monitored and evaluated by departmental staff. Issues related to student welfare may be addressed at any department, coaches, or all-staff meetings, and are formally evaluated during annual performance evaluations of the coaches and the department's annual report to the University President. The Director of Sports Medicine/Athletic Training is charged with monitoring and evaluating a comprehensive program addressing health and safety issues of the student-athlete. This program addresses the specifics of how to handle potentially dangerous situations. Additionally, it helps insure the physical well-being of the student-athlete and includes support provided by the University Counseling and Psychological Services Department as appropriate.

Services of the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics are also monitored and evaluated by the Mercer Athletic Council. The Mercer Athletic Council is charged with reviewing student-athlete issues that include, but are not limited to the following areas: health and safety, academics, and fair treatment in general.

Students can provide feedback on welfare issues in a number of ways. Specifically, student concerns may be directed to the Student Athletic Advisory Committee (SAAC). SAAC is comprised of representatives from each intercollegiate sport, meets bi-weekly, and acts as a sounding board for student-athletes on a myriad of issues. Student-athletes can also voice concerns through an anonymous student-athlete survey conducted annually and exit interviews. Additionally, the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics and the Faculty Athletic Representative maintain an open-door policy regarding athletic concerns. Further, formal grievance procedures are available for student-athletes.

- 2. Describe the institution's educational enhancement programs (e.g., education regarding career guidance counseling; personal counseling; health and safety; alcohol and other drug guidelines [see the NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook, Guideline No.1-E]; non-academic components of life skills programs) available to student-athletes. Describe practices/procedures in place to encourage and assure student-athletes' access to these programs.**

The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics collaborates with various departments throughout the University to support the mental, social, and physical development of student-athletes. The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, in accordance with the philosophy of the University, embraces fully the integration the student-athlete population into the general student body and campus life. The Center for Teaching and Learning which includes the

Academic Resource Center, the Media Center, and the Instructional Technology Center, and the Division of Student Life offer educational enhancement programs for all students. Information regarding these services is in the student handbook, *LAIR*. The services are discussed at orientation and the department responsible for each of the educational enhancement programs disseminates information concerning that program to the general student body on a regular basis. To further encourage and assure student-athlete awareness of these programs, Student Life staff members discuss the availability of services with coaches and the Senior Woman Administrator/Assistant Athletic Director and coaches disseminate information at initial team meetings. Information on educational enhancement services is also included in the *Student-Athlete Handbook*. End of season surveys suggest that student-athletes are aware of these services.

Career Guidance Counseling

The Office of Career Services provides career counseling and current information about the world of work and graduate/professional schools. A service called SuccessTrak is available which links students, alumni, employers, and Career Services in a Web-based system that allows for easy access to career information, recruitment schedules, resumes, student co-ops/internships, and more.

Career Services offers student employment training sessions and job fairs campus-wide. Other programs offered on a regular basis include:

- Applying to Graduate School
- Using Your Collegiate Leadership Experience In Your Job Search
- Job Search Strategies For Liberal Arts Majors
- Why You Need An Internship

Career Services also offers programs based on requests from student groups (Greek organizations, student professional organizations, etc.). The services offered on demand include:

- Career guidance (choosing a major, or what to do with that major)
- Job search assistance (finding a full-time or part-time job; resume and cover letter design; interview preparation)
- Internships and co-operative education
- Student employment (on-campus jobs)
- Graduate school search (how to locate graduate schools and application assistance)

Personal Counseling

Mercer's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers individual counseling and psychological services to Mercer students. Professional staff and Peer Educators provide numerous outreach programs to students, and assist in the training of Orientation Assistants, Resident Directors, and Resident Assistants. Outreach programs, offered typically in conjunction with other Student Life departments, have included such topics as Healthy Dating Relationships, Overcoming Loneliness, Sexual Assault, Stress Management, Decreasing Procrastination, Body Image, Time Management, Goal Setting, Values

Clarification, Assertiveness Skills, Grieving Losses, Warning Signs of Psychological Problems, and Making Referrals for Counseling. Awareness Days, sponsored or cosponsored by CAPS, have included The Great American Smoke Out, Alcohol Awareness Week, Sexual Responsibility Day, Eating Disorders Awareness Day, Safe Spring Break Week, and Stress Busters. CAPS has also served as a field placement site for psychology students in conjunction with the Mercer Psychology Department, and a practicum site in conjunction with the Mercer Family Therapy Program

In service to the Mercer Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, the Director of CAPS is available to provide programming, consultation to coaching staff, performance enhancement, and counseling to student-athletes.

Health and Safety

All students at Mercer University have direct access to Student Health Services, Mercer Health Systems, and Marriage and Family Therapy (which includes psychological counseling). These on-campus facilities provide qualified medical personal and services in a confidential manner. The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics has developed a professional relationship with these groups in an effort to address the global health concerns of our student-athletes. In addition, relationships have been forged with off-campus facilities such as Forsyth Street Orthopedics, Graves Pharmacy, and many others to provide our student-athletes with the best comprehensive health care possible.

The Department of Recreational Sports and Wellness provides workshops and works one-on-one with students in the areas of fitness, nutrition, personal training, sexuality, and alcohol/tobacco use upon request.

Alcohol and Other Drug Guidelines

Growing out of the University's historic mission and character, and in keeping with applicable Federal and State laws, Mercer has adopted a drug-free workplace and campus policy for all its students and employees. The unlawful possession, use, distribution, dispensing or manufacture of illicit drugs or alcohol at any time on any University property or as part of any University-sponsored activity is prohibited. The policy, including standards of conduct and sanctions and procedures, are outlined in the student handbook, *LAIR*. Student-athletes are bound by these drug and alcohol guidelines and University policies are reviewed at annual drug education seminars presented by the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics.

Smoking is prohibited in all indoor locations including residence hall rooms, apartments and public areas. Smoking is prohibited within 15 feet of building entrances, air intakes, and windows. The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics has a tobacco policy specifically for student-athletes which follows NCAA guidelines. The tobacco policy is outlined in the *Student-Athlete Handbook* and discussed at annual drug education seminars.

In compliance with NCAA Guideline 1-E, the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics provides a yearly drug education seminar to all student-athletes at the beginning of the fall

semester (usually the first week of classes). This seminar is video taped and maintained in the Sports Medicine Department. Athletes unable to participate in the live presentation, such as late walk-ons and mid-year transfers, are required to view the taped seminar and prepare a written report. Following the seminar and prior to participation, each student-athlete is asked to sign a NCAA drug-testing consent form (form 8), which informs the student of the penalties and appeals process associated with a positive drug test.

The drug education seminar is presented by the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, the Director of Sports Medicine, the Compliance Coordinator, and the Faculty Athletic Representative, and includes a guest speaker. Guest speakers have included alcohol and drug counselors, recovering drug and alcohol abusers, and professional athletes. Coaching personnel are also present at the seminar. Agenda items for the seminar include:

- Review/develop individual team drug and alcohol policies.
- Review the athletics department's drug and alcohol policy.
- Review institutional drug and alcohol policy.
- Review conference drug and alcohol policy.
- Review institutional or conference drug-testing programs.
- Review NCAA alcohol, tobacco, and drug policy including tobacco ban, list of banned drug classes, and testing protocol.
- View the NCAA drug-education and drug-testing video.
- Discuss nutritional supplements and their inherent risks.
- Allow time for questions from student-athletes.

Attached as Appendix IV-F is the NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook Guideline I-E and Mercer University's compliance with that guideline. Also included in Appendix IV-F are Mercer University's Drug Testing, Education, and Counseling Policies and Procedures.

Non-academic Components of Life Skills Programs

CHAMPS/Life Skills Program

Mercer University operates a CHAMPS/Life Skills Program. CHAMPS stands for **CH**allenging Athletes' **M**inds for **P**ersonal **S**uccess. Created in 1991 by the NCAA to better prepare student-athletes for any challenge they might encounter during and after college, this program assists with the intellectual development of student-athletes while increasing awareness of their environment. This assistance is designed to enhance the student-athletes' performance in any walk of life as well as to increase their ability to cope with demands that arise during the collegiate experience. In doing so, the goal of the program is to help student-athletes succeed not only on the athletic field, but also in their specific academic field and ultimately in their future career.

Academic Resource Center Workshops

The Academic Resource Center conducts workshops open to all students. The workshops are designed to help students identify life skills and strategies for improved academic performance in the following targeted areas:

- Goal Setting and Time Management

- Defusing Stress and Test Anxiety
- Active Learning In and Out of Class
- Thinking Critically
- Exam Preparation and Performance
- Writing Basics
- Professional Interaction: Working with Professors and "On the Job"

College Study Skills Courses

College study skills courses conducted by the Academic Resource Center help students develop life skills and strategies for improved academic performance. The courses are designed to expand the student's academic skill set and thereby increase their ability to retain, comprehend, and demonstrate mastery of college level course material. Topics covered include the following:

- Time Management
- Goals, Motivation, and Procrastination
- Taking Classroom Notes
- Reading Textbooks
- Improving Concentration and Memory
- Developing Conceptual Frameworks
- Studying for Exams and Test Taking Strategies
- Essay Writing
- Individualized Study Methods

Supplemental Instruction

Supplemental Instruction (SI) is a non-remedial, academic enrichment program that utilizes peer assisted study sessions. SI targets historically difficult academic courses – those with a high percentage of D's, F's, and W's – and offers regularly scheduled, out-of-class, review sessions. At Mercer, SI is offered in MAT 133, MAT 191, CHM 111, CHM 112. In 2003, SI will also be offered in two Physics courses. SI review sessions are informal gatherings in which students form a learning community to compare notes, work challenging problems, develop study strategies, and predict test items. SI sessions are directed by "SI Leaders," generally students who have successfully completed the course. In addition to receiving intensive training in the theories and techniques of teaching/learning, SI Leaders attend all classes, take notes, read all assigned material, and conduct 3.5 hours of review sessions each week.

University 101

University 101 is an introductory freshman class exploring the structure of higher education and specific Mercer policies. Issues such as successful study skills, cultural diversity, critical thinking, ethics, personal relationships, health, safety, management of personal finances, and career planning and vocation are discussed. Group activities outside the classroom address social responsibility and expose students to "good practices" role models from the local community and abroad.

TRIO Programs/Student Support Services

Student Support Services provide services to first-generation, low-income students, and students who are physically and/or learning disabled. Services include personal counseling, mentoring, academic advising, tutorial services, cultural activities, financial counseling, and career planning. The Minority Mentor program is designed to give minority students an academic and social support system. Academic and financial counseling is available.

Office of Campus Life

The Office of Campus Life offers a Leadership Education and Programming Series (LEAPS) to foster student leadership. The Leadership Success Series consists of workshops and seminars designed to further student development as leaders. Workshops offered throughout the year are designed to expand educational experiences and address a wide variety of leadership topics beneficial to student leaders and the student organizations on campus. The LEAPS program hosts a Leadership Week during which students have an Involvement Fair, seminars, dinner with local community leaders, and an opportunity to attend the Georgia Collegiate Leadership Conference.

- 3. Describe the institution's process for conducting the student-athlete exit interviews required by NCAA Constitution 6.3.2 and the means by which this information is used to better the student-athlete experience. Describe other avenues available to student-athletes to provide input. Attach written materials (e.g., forms) used to document student-athlete exit interviews.**

Traditional exit interviews were conducted until 1999. However, these tended to be superficial and did not yield useful information. As a way to increase communication between the student-athletes and the athletic department, the institution implemented a two-step process. The first step was to strengthen the Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) and to encourage the presentation of team issues during each bi-weekly meeting. The SAAC president and vice president then meet with the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics to discuss any team issues. This information is noted in SAAC minutes and presented at the next SAAC meeting.

The second step was to begin conducting anonymous student-athlete surveys. Items from the original exit interview process were incorporated into the new exit survey. The student surveys are used in coaching evaluations. The survey is developed annually by the Faculty Athletic Representative with input from the coaches, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, Senior Woman Administrator/Assistant Athletic Director, and SAAC. The survey is administered by SAAC representatives and analyzed by the Faculty Athletic Representative who submits the results to the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics and the Mercer Athletic Council.

Survey results are used to better the student-athlete experience. Among issues identified by the surveys and addressed by the department are increased academic support and more recognition for academic achievement. Further, the current letterman awards process is

being reviewed as a result of survey results. A copy of the 2002-03 survey instrument is attached as Appendix IV-G.

In addition to the anonymous student-athlete surveys, starting in 2003-04 the Faculty Athletic Representative will conduct annual exit interviews in each sport with a sample of student-athletes whose eligibility has expired. Student-athletes will be questioned about the value of their athletics experiences, the extent of the athletics time demands they encountered, concerns related to the administration of their sport, and any changes they would like to see with regard to intercollegiate programs.

4. Attach the grievance and or appeals process available to student-athletes (hazing, harassment, abusive behavior, sexual orientation). Who oversees the administration of the grievance and or appeals? How do we communicate the process?

Appeals related to the cancellation or reduction of athletic financial are handled by a committee outside the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics. Student-athletes with financial aid grievances are directed to the Office of Student Financial Planning. Grievance procedures for other student-athlete concerns were implemented in 2002-03 and are outlined in Appendix IV-H. (Prior to this, the University Judicial System covered all non-financial student-athlete grievances.) The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics administers the grievance policy for student-athletes and information regarding grievance policies is communicated via the *Student-Athlete Handbook*.

5. Describe the institution's educational and support programs in the area of sexual orientation. Also, provide a description of the institution's structure and/or policies that ensure the provision of a safe environment for all students, including student-athletes with diverse sexual orientation.

Mercer strives to be a community of respect and as such each student takes responsibility for the consideration of the rights of others. Any conduct of a student, group of students, or student organization which violates the rights of other individuals, groups or organizations, both on or off campus, shall be prohibited. These provisions are part of the student code of conduct included in the student handbook.

Student organizations that offer support programs for sexual orientation include the TRIANGLE PROJECT, an educational forum that fosters awareness of sexuality and sexuality issues. The Office of Counseling and Psychological Services offers programming and counseling services related to sexual orientation.

6. Identify the mechanisms in place to ensure the health and safety of student-athletes and the administrator(s) responsible for the institutional awareness of health, safety (including travel) and sports medicine policies. Describe the process by which these policies and guidelines are disseminated within the athletics department, who receives this information and how these issues are addressed within the athletics department. [Note: The institution may want to refer to the equitable medical care section of the

NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook Guideline No. 1-A as a guide in responding to this self-study item.]

The Director of Sports Medicine reports directly to the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics and is responsible for ensuring departmental policy regarding health and safety. Policy is disseminated to the athletic department through monthly staff meetings and intradepartmental memos. It is also available in the *Mercer Sports Medicine Policy and Procedure Manual*, maintained in the athletic training room. Policy is disseminated to student-athletes through an introduction meeting at the beginning of each year and an abbreviated version is printed in the *Student-Athlete Handbook*.

Attached in Appendix IV-I is the NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook Guideline No. 1-A and Mercer University's compliance with that guideline. Also included in Appendix IV-I is a copy of the athletic training policies outlined in the *Student-Athlete Handbook*.

- 7. Attach a copy of the institution's emergency medical plan for practices and games, including its written emergency plan for the athletics program and specific coverage for out-of-season workouts, strength training and skills sessions. [Note: The institution may want to refer to the emergency care section of the NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook Guideline No. 1-A as a guide in responding to this self-study item.]**

Appendix IV-J contains a copy of the NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook Guideline No.1-A which includes Mercer University's compliance with that guideline. Also included in Appendix IV-J are Mercer's emergency policies and procedures.

- 8. Using the program area checklist for student-athlete welfare issues, provided as Attachment No. 4, please:**
 - a. Describe how the institution studies these topics as they apply to all student-athletes;**
 - b. Provide data demonstrating the institution's commitment to these issues for all student-athletes; and**
 - c. Explain how the institution will address these topics in the future for the welfare of all student-athletes.**

The student-athlete welfare program areas are addressed and reviewed on an ongoing or annual basis by three constituencies: student-athletes, the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, and the Mercer Athletic Council. Athletic department activities that pertain to student welfare are evaluated annually by the student-athletes in the student athlete opinion survey and on an ongoing basis by the Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC). The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics evaluates and reviews welfare issues during annual performance evaluations of the coaches and in its annual report to the University President. The Mercer Athletic Council also reviews these activities on an annual basis and makes recommendations to the University President.

Student-athletes are involved in the governance and decision-making process of the athletics department. Representatives from SAAC are encouraged to attend monthly department staff

meetings. Student-athletes are also represented on formal selection committees for the athletic department and related University positions (i.e. University Center Director).

Particular attention is given to the Sports Medicine Department and its policies and procedures that pertain to the health and safety of student-athletes. Specific items are included in every annual student-athlete opinion survey to measure the perception of student-athletes in regard to the effort being made to ensure their health and safety. Specific health related policies are reviewed on an annual basis by the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, the Senior Woman Administrator/Assistant Athletic Director, and the Faculty Athletic Representative. In an effort to better serve student-athletes and enhance the ability to properly recognize medical conditions and treat them appropriately, an additional full-time athletic trainer was added to the Sports Medicine Department in July of 2002.

The establishment of new programs and review of existing programs that support the University's commitment to the welfare of its student-athletes will continue to be a primary area of attention.

- 9. Please attach a copy of the institution's student-athlete handbook or, if no such handbook exists, identify method(s) for conveying athletics policies and procedures to student-athletes.**

See Appendix IV-K.

Operating Principle

- 4.4. Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct. It is a principle of the Association that student-athletes, coaches and all others associated with intercollegiate athletics adhere to such fundamental values as respect, fairness, civility, honesty and responsibility. Consistent with this principle, the institution shall:**
- a. Demonstrate that in the area of intercollegiate athletics, it is committed to these fundamental values of sportsmanship and ethical conduct.**
 - b. Have established a set of written policies and procedures for this area.**
 - c. Demonstrate that educational activities related to sportsmanship and ethical conduct exist for individuals and groups associated with the intercollegiate athletics experience.**
 - d. Provide evidence that the effectiveness of activities in this area are monitored, evaluated and addressed on a continuing basis.**

[Note: The NCAA Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct Committee has developed and adopted the following definitions for sportsmanship and ethical conduct:

- "Sportsmanship" is a set of behaviors to be exhibited by student-athletes, coaches, game officials, administrators and fans in athletics competition. These behaviors are based upon values, including respect, civility, fairness, honesty and responsibility.**
- "Ethical conduct" is a set of guiding principles with which each person follows the letter and spirit of the rules. Such conduct reflects a higher standard than law**

because it includes, among other principles, fundamental values that define sportsmanship.]

Self-Study Items

- 1. Explain how the institution is organized to further its efforts related to the sportsmanship and ethical conduct and provide evidence that matters concerning sportsmanship and ethical conduct are monitored, evaluated and addressed on a continuing basis.**

Mercer's Athletic Department is committed to integrity and sportsmanship and emphasizes such in its mission statement.

The mission of the Mercer University Athletic Department is to develop well-rounded student-athletes academically, athletically and socially. The program is committed to integrity, sportsmanship and equal opportunity for all students and staff.

Sportsmanship and ethical conduct are top priorities at Mercer University and are monitored by the University President. Mercer University follows the sportsmanship policy adopted by the Atlantic Sun Conference. This policy is outlined in the department's policy manual and discussed with all staff members at the start of their employment; they are provided a copy of the policy for their records. Additionally, sportsmanship is discussed on a continuing basis at almost every staff meeting. As a result of the self-study process, expectations regarding sportsmanship and ethical conduct are now addressed in all coaching contracts, appointment letters, and performance evaluations.

The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics staff members monitor coaching behavior. Administrators speak with athletes on a regular basis and department staff members attend as many events as possible. The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics is organized so that student-athletes are monitored by, and have a reporting channel through, their assistant and head coaches. The head coaches report directly to the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics and Assistant Athletic Director/Senior Woman Administrator.

All Mercer University students are expected to conform to the standards of moral and ethical behavior that are outlined in the student handbook, *LAIR*, in the section entitled University Regulations and Judicial Programs (pp. 42-75 in the 2002-2003 edition). For student-athletes, standards of behavior are also outlined in the *Student-Athlete Handbook*. The sportsmanship policies (as found in the *Student-Athlete Handbook* and Atlantic Sun Conference Manual) are reviewed with all student-athletes at the initial team meeting. In addition, student-athletes are required to sign a Student Athlete Statement each year, which outlines proper sportsmanlike conduct. Continuing discussions regarding sportsmanship and ethical conduct occur at the regular meetings of the Student Athletic Advisory Counsel.

All coaches at Mercer monitor their student-athletes on and off the fields. Student-athletes are encouraged to develop close relationships with their coaches and to consult with them concerning problems of any kind. In addition to reporting on time for every practice and

every game, Mercer athletes are expected to conduct themselves with the highest integrity at all times as outlined in the *Student-Athlete Handbook*.

The conference policy regarding sportsmanship is communicated to athletic fans via the University's public address system at all athletic events. In addition, Mercer University Athletics is committed to insuring proper crowd control by providing adequate security staff. To insure additional control and security, a member of the athletic staff is designated to monitor crowd control at each athletic event. These individuals are listed with the Atlantic Sun Conference.

All acts of un-sportsmanlike conduct are to be reported to the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics within 36 hours of the incident. The Director of Intercollegiate Athletics informs the Athletic Sun Conference of the infraction. The Conference office issues a letter of reprimand, if one is called for, to the individuals involved with copies to the University President and the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics. If warranted, the President issues a letter of reprimand that becomes a part of the individual's permanent file. This procedure applies equally to athletic staff and student-athletes.

- 2. Attach a copy of the institution's written policies and procedures on sportsmanship and ethical conduct, including sanctions that may be levied for inappropriate behavior and describe the institution's method(s) for communicating these policies and procedures to all individuals associated with the intercollegiate athletics program.**

Written policies and procedures on sportsmanship and ethical conduct are outlined in the *Student-Athlete Handbook* (see Appendix IV-K), and in the department's policy manual (see Appendix III-F). As outlined in the *Student-Athlete Handbook*, sanctions that may be levied for inappropriate behavior range from suspension from play to non-renewal of athletic aid.

The sportsmanship policies (as found in the *Student-Athlete Handbook* and Atlantic Sun Conference Manual) are reviewed by coaches with all student-athletes annually at a required team meeting. In addition, student-athletes are required to sign a Student Athlete Statement each year, which outlines proper sportsmanlike conduct.

- 3. Describe the institution's educational activities/programs in the area of violence, abuse and harassment committed by student-athletes.**

These issues are discussed by coaches in team meetings and by University personnel during orientation and at other events that are designed for the benefit of all University students. Mercer University's policy, with definitions and sanctions specified, is published in the Student Handbook, *LAIR* (pp. 45-46 of 202-03 handbook). The handbook is distributed to all students at the beginning of the academic year.

Mercer University offers a number of student support programs designed to ensure student well-being and appropriate campus behaviors. These include the programs conducted by Residence Life, assistance from the Counseling and Psychological Services, and oversight by

Judicial Programs. Student-athletes are encouraged to avail themselves of these programs as part of their overall development.

The CHAMPS/Lifeskills program provides education relevant to successful adjustment and growth of student-athletes in such areas as:

- Support efforts of the student-athlete in intellectual development and graduation
- Use athletics as preparation for success in life
- Meet the changing needs of student-athletes
- Promote respect for diversity among student-athletes
- Enhance interpersonal relationships in the lives of student-athletes
- Assist student-athletes in building positive self-esteem
- Enable student-athletes to make meaningful contributions to their communities
- Promote ownership by the student-athletes of their academic, athletic, personal and social responsibilities
- Enhance partnerships between the NCAA, member institutions and their communities for the purpose of education
- Encourage the development of leadership skills

4. Describe educational activities related to sportsmanship and ethical conduct for student-athletes, coaches, institutional staff members, boosters, support groups (e.g., alumni, cheer-leaders) and all others associated with the intercollegiate athletics program.

All Mercer University students are expected to conform to the standards of moral and ethical behavior that are outlined in the student handbook, *LAIR*, in the section entitled University Regulations and Judicial Programs (pp. 42-75 in the 2002-2003 edition). Students are briefed at University orientation about the expectation that Mercer University has for its students. Standards of behavior are published in the *Student-Athlete Handbook* and student-athletes are briefed and encouraged by their coaches regarding sportsmanship and ethical behavior. A mandatory squad meeting is held at the beginning of the year, and sportsmanship and ethical conduct issues are discussed throughout the year among coaches, administrators, and student-athletes. In addition, student-athletes are required to sign a Student Athlete Statement each year which outlines proper sportsmanlike conduct. Continuing discussions regarding sportsmanship and ethical conduct occur at the regular meetings of the Student Athletic Advisory Counsel.

The sportsmanship policy is outlined in the *Athletics Department Policy Manual*. The manual is provided to all coaches and staff in the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics and discussed at the start of employment and at a staff retreat each year. For coaches, sportsmanship is addressed in all contracts, appointment letters, and performance evaluations. Additionally, sportsmanship is discussed on a continuing basis at almost every staff meeting and during performance evaluations.

The conference policy regarding sportsmanship is communicated to athletic fans via the University's public address system at all athletic events. In addition, the monthly Athletic Department newsletter, *Bearbacker News*, includes a feature, "Compliance Corner", designed to inform and advise Mercer sports fans and athletes on issues related to sportsmanship and general compliance with school, conference, and national standards of behavior.

5. Describe mechanisms the institution has in place to review and monitor the effectiveness of its sportsmanship and ethical conduct policies and procedures. Also, provide a brief description of incidents that have been reviewed through these mechanisms in the last three years.

The Director of Intercollegiate Athletics routinely communicates the expectation that coaches are responsible for controlling situations that may lead to unsportsmanlike conduct and sanction. Coaches and administrators are in contact about issues and incidents throughout the year.

All acts of un-sportsmanlike conduct are reported to the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics within 36 hours of the incident. The Director of Intercollegiate Athletics informs the Athletic Sun Conference of the infraction. The Conference office issues a letter of reprimand, if one is called for, to the individuals involved with copies to the University President and the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics. If warranted, the President of the University issues a letter of reprimand that becomes a part of the individual's permanent file. This procedure applies equally to athletic staff and student-athletes. The Director of Intercollegiate Athletics speaks with coaches about every incident that has been reported to his office and the Conference Office. An accumulation of offenses by an individual, player or coach, may result in appropriate disciplinary action in the form of a reprimand or suspension.

The following incidents occurred during the last three years:

- Two baseball players were ejected from a game for their behavior
- The head baseball coach was twice ejected from a game for his behavior
- The assistant baseball coach was ejected from a game for his behavior.

6. Describe specific incidents over the last three years that shed light on the institution's commitment to the values of sportsmanship and ethical conduct (e.g., citations or sanctions from the conference office, sanctions or reprimands from the NCAA for conduct during its championships, awards received by the institution or its athletes for exemplary behavior in this area).

The following incident demonstrates the athletics department's commitment to ethical behavior and promotion of life skills without regard for the impact on wins and losses. In April of 2000, a baseball player was removed from all athletic participation following an incident with an administrator. The student-athlete in question made inappropriate comments to a representative of the athletic department during a routine drug test. The incident was reported to the student-athlete's coaches and the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics. The situation was investigated and the student-athlete was found to be in violation of the

department's ethical conduct and sportsmanship policies. Despite the student-athlete's prominence on the baseball field and his all-conference status, the decision was made to remove him from the team for the remainder of the season. This decision has had a lasting and positive impact on former and current athletes.

One of the criteria for lettering in intercollegiate athletics is exhibiting good sportsmanship and conduct, and the Leadership Award in baseball is based partially on sportsmanship. To highlight the importance of sportsmanship, a student-athlete award based totally on sportsmanship was instituted in 2002-03.

What follows are some examples of sportsmanship:

- The Mercer softball team on its senior recognition day recognized seniors from the visiting team by presenting them with a flower.
- During a Mercer vs. Harvard University basketball contest in December of 2000, Harvard's center, Brian Sigafoos, was accidentally hit with an elbow to the head by Mercer's center, Justin Howard. Brian was temporarily knocked unconscious. Mercer's head trainer attended to Sigafoos, and he was taken to the Medical Center of Central Georgia's emergency room. Brian's father was in attendance at the game and followed Brian to the hospital. After the game, a victory by Harvard University, head men's basketball coach Mark Slonaker and his wife, Kathy, were concerned about Brian's injury and decided to go to the hospital. Kathy Slonaker is a brain injury nurse and was very helpful to the Sigafoos. A few weeks after the injury, Mr. Sigafoos sent a thank you note for everyone's concern and comfort.
- In January of 1999, Campbell University was on a road trip when North Carolina was hit by a blizzard. They were scheduled to play Mercer University five days later and were unable to return to North Carolina. Mercer helped them arrange practice sites, laundry, meals, housing, and money while they were in Macon.

Citations from the Atlantic Sun Conference in the past three years include the public reprimand and probation for two baseball players, public reprimand and probation for the assistant baseball coach, and a one game suspension for the head baseball coach.

Evaluation

4.1. Gender Issues.

	Currently Yes	Found of Page(s)	Currently No	If Currently No, if deficiencies exist, or if an enhancement has been identified, indicate Plan for Improvement Number
Has the institution:				
a. Implemented its approved gender-equity plan from the previous self-study?	X	IV 1-4		
b. Provided an explanation from appropriate institutional authorities if its gender-equity plan was modified or not fully carried out?	X	IV 1-4		
c. Demonstrated that it is committed to, and has progressed toward, fair and equitable treatment of both male and female student-athletes and athletics department personnel?	X	IV 1-4 IV 7-22		
d. Formally adopted a written plan for the future for the intercollegiate athletics program that ensures the institution maintains a program, or continues progress toward a program, which is equitable for both genders?	X	IV-23		
e. Developed a plan that includes measurable goals the institution intends to achieve, steps the institution will take to achieve those goals, persons responsible and timetables?	X	IV-23		

On the basis of the yes/no answers above, is the institution in substantial conformity with Operating Principle 4.1 (Gender Issues)? X Yes No

4.2. Minority Issues

	Currently Yes	Found of Page(s)	Currently No	If Currently No, if deficiencies exist, or if an enhancement has been identified, indicate Plan for Improvement Number
Has the institution:				
a. Implemented its approved minority-opportunities plan from the previous self-study?	X	IV 4-5		
b. Provided an explanation from appropriate institutional authorities if its minority-opportunities plan was modified or not carried out fully?	X	IV 4-5		
c. Demonstrated that it is committed to, and has progressed toward fair and equitable treatment of all minority student-athletes and athletics department personnel?	X	IV 24-33		
d. Formally adopted a written plan for the future for the intercollegiate athletics program that ensures the institution maintains a program, or continues progress toward a program, which expands opportunities and support for minority student-athletes and athletics personnel?	X	IV 34-35		
e. Developed a plan that includes measurable goals the institution intends to achieve, steps the institution will take to achieve those goals, persons responsible and timetables?	X	IV 34-35		

On the basis of the yes/no answers above, is the institution in substantial conformity with Operating Principle 4.2 (Minority Issues)? X Yes _____ No

4.3. Student-Athlete Welfare

	Currently Yes	Found of Page(s)	Currently No	If Currently No, if deficiencies exist, or if an enhancement has been identified, indicate Plan for Improvement Number
Does the institution:				
a. Demonstrate a commitment to the fair treatment of student-athletes, particularly in their academic role as students?	X	IV 35-41		
b. Provide evidence that the welfare of student-athletes and the fairness of their treatment is monitored, evaluated and addressed on a continuing basis?	X	IV 41-44		
c. Have established grievance or appeal procedures available to student-athletes in appropriate areas?	X	IV-42		
d. Provide evidence that the institution has in place programs that protect the health of and provide a safe environment for its student-athletes?	X	IV-43		

On the basis of the yes/no answers above, is the institution in substantial conformity with Operating Principle 4.3 (Student-Athlete Welfare)? X Yes No

4.4. Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct

	Currently Yes	Found of Page(s)	Currently No	If Currently No, if deficiencies exist, or if an enhancement has been identified, indicate Plan for Improvement Number
Does the institution:				
a. Demonstrate that in the area of intercollegiate athletics, it is committed to these fundamental values of sportsmanship and ethical conduct?	X	IV 45-46		
b. Have established a set of written policies and procedures for this area?	X	IV-46		
c. Demonstrate that educational activities related to sportsmanship and ethical conduct exist for individuals and groups associated with the intercollegiate athletics experience?	X	IV 47-48		
d. Provide evidence that the effectiveness of activities in this area are monitored, evaluated and addressed on a continuing basis?	X	IV 48-49		

On the basis of the yes/no answers above, is the institution in substantial conformity with Operating Principle 4.4 (Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct)? X Yes No

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