**National Collegiate Athletic Association Ethics and Compliance Program**[**\***](https://jigsaw.vitalsource.com/books/9781305840850/epub/OEBPS/case6.xhtml#fn1a)

**INTRODUCTION**

Perhaps no sport at American colleges is as popular, or as lucrative, as college football. College football often has a significant impact on the school’s culture. This is especially true for the more successful and prolific football programs, such as Texas A&M or Notre Dame. Football has increasingly become a big money maker for many colleges, with a significant amount of sports revenue coming from their football programs. Within the past two years, the sports channel *ESPN* made deals with certain teams to gain rights to air more games than usual. Because of this influx of revenue, the duties of coaches have evolved beyond just coaching. In many ways, they became the face of the team. Programs that show positive returns have coaches working hard to fill seats on game day and encourage college alumni to donate to the school. The more successful the football team, the more visibility it is given in the media. This visibility leads to greater awareness of the college or university among the public, and schools with the best football programs can see a greater influx of applications.

The collegiate football programs have an intangible influence within and outside their immediate surroundings. This is mainly seen in their fan base, composed of current students, alumni, staff, faculty, and local businesses. For example, when the University of Alabama won its 15 th national championship, the victory was celebrated by an enormous crowd, fireworks, and a parade. Texas A&M University is one example of a football program that generates not only profits but also a sense of loyalty among its fans. Approximately 70,000 football fans pile into Texas A&M’s Kyle Field stadium at every home game to show their support for the team and the university. [Table 1](https://jigsaw.vitalsource.com/books/9781305840850/epub/OEBPS/case6.xhtml#table1) shows the value of some of the most successful college-football programs. These games also help local businesses generate more revenues.

Because of the financial support and widespread influence of the football program, the players, coaches, and football administrators have to deal with a lot of pressure to fundraise, sell tickets, and win games. These pressures open up opportunities for misconduct to occur, and it is increasingly important that university administrators and football program officials directly acknowledge opportunities for misconduct. While the university is ultimately responsible for the operation of each department and the behavior of its employees, it can be difficult for the administrators to have an objective view of incidents that occur, especially when it involves a successful football program that benefits the entire university. The university administrators are often subject to the same pressures as those in the football program to increase the level of revenue and reputation. This led to the development of a more objective institution to set and enforce rules and standards: the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). The NCAA views ethical conduct as a crucial component to a college football program and works to promote leadership and excellence among student–athletes and the universities to which they belong. It also serves to protect the interests of student–athletes, ensure academic excellence, and encourage fair play.

**TABLE 1 Value of major-conference college-football programs, plus Notre Dame and BYU (in millions)**

Source: Ryan Brewer, Indiana University-Purdue University Columbus

Note: Excludes Wake Forest

In this case, we provide a brief history of the NCAA and examples of the rules they have regarding college football. We then view how these rules relate to ethics. The next section covers some of the major college football scandals within the past few years, how these scandals were handled by the schools and the NCAA, and the impact of these scandals upon the colleges’ communities. It is crucial to note, however, that these scandals are not common to college football as a whole. The majority of football teams receive no NCAA infractions during the year, and those reported are usually minor in nature. Universities have their own set of expectations for student–athletes, including showing up on time to practice and behaving responsibly that go above and beyond NCAA rules. However, when NCAA violations occur, universities have a responsibility to report them in a timely manner. Therefore, the next section covers examples of ways universities addressed unethical behavior in their football programs through self-imposed sanctions, which signifies that they consider compliance to be an important component of their football programs. We conclude by analyzing how effective the NCAA appears to be in curbing misconduct and preventing future unethical behavior from occurring. This case should demonstrate that ethics and compliance is just as important to nonprofit organizations and educational institutions as they are for the business world.

**OVERVIEW OF NCAA**

The NCAA was formed in 1906 under the premise of protecting student–athletes from being endangered and exploited. The Association was established with a constitution and a set of bylaws with the ability to be amended as issues arise. As the number of competitive college sports grew, the NCAA was divided into three Divisions, I, II, and III, to deal with the rising complexity of the programs. Universities are given the freedom to decide which division they want to belong to based on their desired level of competitiveness in collegiate sports.

Each Division is equipped with the power to establish a group of presidents or other university officials with the authority to write and enact policies, rules, and regulations for their Divisions. Each Division is ultimately governed by the President of the NCAA and the Executive Committee. Under the Executive Committee are groups formed in each Division, such as the Legislative Committee, as well as Cabinets and Boards of Directors.

In the early 1980s, questions began to arise concerning the level of education student–athletes received. Some thought these students were held to a lower academic standard so they could focus on their sport, which could lead to negative consequences for their futures. As a result, the NCAA strengthened the academic requirements of student–athletes to ensure they took academics just as seriously as athletics. It also established the Presidents Commission, composed of presidents of universities in each Division that collaboratively set agendas with the NCAA. [Table 2](https://jigsaw.vitalsource.com/books/9781305840850/epub/OEBPS/case6.xhtml#table2) provides a list of six of the Principles for Conduct of Intercollegiate Athletics that can be found in Article 2 of the Constitution.

Throughout the Constitution, the NCAA emphasizes the responsibility each university has in overseeing its athletics department and being compliant with the terms established by its conferences. The NCAA establishes principles, rules, and enforcement guidelines to both guide the universities in their oversight of the athletics department as well as penalize those failing to regulate their own misconduct. In article ten of the bylaws, a description of ethical and unethical conduct among student–athletes is provided, along with corresponding disciplinary actions taken if any of these conditions are violated. Honesty and sportsmanship are emphasized as the basis of ethical conduct, while wagering, withholding information, and fraud are among the unethical behaviors listed. Article 11 describes the appropriate behavior for athletics personnel. Honesty and sportsmanship is again the basis for ethical behavior, but with an added emphasis on responsibility for NCAA regulations. Article 11 cites the Head Coach as responsible for creating an atmosphere of compliance and monitoring the behavior of his or her subordinates, including assistant coaches and players.

The NCAA takes the enforcement of rules seriously and tries to ensure the penalties fit the violation if misconduct does occur. The organization also makes sure the penalties are handed down in a timely manner, not only to indicate the seriousness of the infraction but also to maintain a credible and effective enforcement program. This method tries to correct or eliminate deviant behavior while maintaining fairness to those members of the Association not involved in violations. Employees (coaches and other administrative staff) are exhorted to have high ethical standards since they work among and influence young people. The NCAA makes it a requirement that each employee engage in exemplary conduct so as not to cause harm to the student–athletes in any way. They are also given a responsibility to cooperate with the NCAA.

**TABLE 2 Principles for Conduct of Intercollegiate Athletics**

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| **The Principle of Institutional Control and Responsibility**•Puts the responsibility for the operations and behaviors of staff on the president of the university |
| **The Principle of Student-Athlete Well-Being**•Requires integration of athletics and education, maintaining a culturally diverse and gender equitable environment, protection of student-athlete’s health and safety, creating an environment that is conducive to positive coach/student-athlete relationships, coaches and administrative staff show honesty, fairness, and openness in their relationships with student–athletes, and student-athlete involvement in decisions that will affect them |
| **The Principle of Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct**•Maintains that respect, fairness, civility, honesty, and responsibility are values that need to be adhered to through the establishment of policies for sportsmanship and ethical conduct in the athletics program which must be consistent with the mission and goals of the university. Everyone must be continuously educated about the policies. |
| **The Principle of Sound Academic Standards**•Maintains that student–athletes need to be held to the same academic standards as all other students |
| **The Principle of Rules Compliance**•Requires compliance with NCAA rules. Notes that the NCAA will help institutions in developing their compliance program and explains the penalty for noncompliance |
| **The Principle Governing Recruiting**•Promotes equity among prospective students and protects them from exorbitant pressures |

Source: National Collegiate Athletic Association, *2011–2012 NCAA® Division III Manual* (Indianapolis, IN: National Collegiate Athletics Association, 2011).

The NCAA lays out three types of violations and corresponding penalties, depending on the nature and scope of the violation. Secondary violations are the least severe and can result in fines, suspensions for games, and reduction in scholarships. For major violations, some of the penalties are the same as secondary violations, but the scope is far more severe. For example, suspensions will be longer and fines larger. However, some penalties are specific only to major violations, such as a public reprimand, a probationary period for up to five years, and limits on recruiting. The last type involves repeat violations that occur within a five-year period from the start date of the initial violation. The penalties for repeat violations are the most severe, including elimination of all financial aid and recruiting activities and resignation of institutional staff members who serve on boards, committees, or in cabinets. [Table 3](https://jigsaw.vitalsource.com/books/9781305840850/epub/OEBPS/case6.xhtml#table3) lists some of the more prominent unethical practices the NCAA lists specifically concerning college football.

The NCAA incorporates a compliance approach to ethics by developing and enforcing rules to keep the games fair and respectful of student–athletes’ rights. The NCAA Committee on Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct identified respect and integrity as two critical elements in the NCAA 2011 and 2012 Football Rules and Interpretations. The NCAA strives to keep football games fun and entertaining without sacrificing the health and safety of the student–athletes participating. As previously mentioned, the NCAA places emphasis on the level of education student–athletes receive and encourages athletes to focus on their grades to ensure they have career opportunities post-athletics. The core of the NCAA concerns ethics. This organization takes not only key players into consideration, but also other stakeholders, such as the college community and the sports society as a whole.

**TABLE 3 Unethical Practices Prohibited by the NCAA**

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| •Use of the helmet as a weapon. |
| •Targeting and initiating contact. Players, coaches and officials should emphasize the elimination of targeting and initiating contact against a defenseless opponent and/or with the crown of the helmet. |
| •Using nontherapeutic drugs in the game of football. |
| •Unfair use of a starting signal, called “Beating the ball.” This involves deliberately stealing an advantage from the opponent. An honest starting signal is needed, but a signal that has for its purpose starting the team a fraction of a second before the ball is put in play, in the hope that it will not be detected by the officials, is illegal. |
| •Feigning an injury. An injured player must be given full protection under the rules, but feigning injury is dishonest, unsportsmanlike and contrary to the spirit of the rules. |
| •Talking to an opponent in any manner that is demeaning, vulgar, or abusive, intended to incite a physical response or verbally put an opponent down. |
| •For a coach to address, or permit anyone on his bench to address, uncomplimentary remarks to any official during the progress of a game, or to indulge in conduct that might incite players or spectators against the officials., is a violation of the rules of the game and must likewise be considered conduct unworthy of a member of the coaching profession. |

Source: Adapted from National Collegiate Athletics Association, *Football 2011 and 2012 Rules and Interpretations* (Indianapolis, IN: National Collegiate Athletics Association, 2011).

Aside from its involvement with student–athlete academics, the NCAA is likewise involved with other off-the-field activities to protect the best interests of student–athletes. According to NCAA guidelines, college football coaches are not permitted to actively begin recruiting prospective players to their school until the prospective player is at least a junior in high school. These coaches have a limit on the number of phone calls and off-campus visits they are permitted to make to prospective students. These rules are in place to ensure student–athletes do not feel pressured by these colleges. Once the student–athletes are in college, a set of rules made between the NCAA and the individual college limit the types of gifts a student–athlete can accept. Parents of student–athletes, for example, are able to give any number and type of gifts to their own children, but must be wary when it comes to other members of the team. Student–athletes generally cannot accept gifts at reduced prices (e.g., a free iPod) and other gifts, such as practice uniforms for the team, must be cleared by the school first.

Despite the NCAA’s wide array of rules and regulations, there have been many criticisms of the organization’s practices. One of these criticisms has to do with a former investigator of the NCAA, Ameen Najjar, who worked on investigating reports of rule violations from the University of Miami. Najjar was promptly dismissed from the NCAA when it was found he was going outside the NCAA’s rules of investigation in order to collect more evidence for the case. Not only was this a major embarrassment for the NCAA, but critics state Najjar followed orders from others within the organization and was put up as a scapegoat when the rule-breaking investigative techniques came to light. The NCAA also faces a lawsuit wherein they are accused of allowing the video game company EA to use the likeness of NCAA basketball players in their video games without giving the players any compensation.

Additionally, misconduct in college sports continues to be a challenge for the NCAA. Often other stakeholders are involved in the misconduct. For instance, college sports games that have been “rigged” (managed fraudulently) have often been traced to wealthy sports boosters with inside knowledge of the sports in which they heavily invest. A majority of the time, this rigging is done to benefit gambling outcomes among these boosters. In addition, as mentioned earlier, college sports often bring in significant amounts of revenue for the university that creates pressure to overlook misconduct. Authority figures in the sports program can be tempted to cheat when recruiting players and cover up misconduct to avoid penalties.

When a college sports program is accused of misconduct that violates NCAA rules, the NCAA conducts an investigation to determine whether the allegations are true. If these schools are found to be in violation, the NCAA levies penalties against the team. However, the NCAA also received criticism from those who disapprove of the severity and effectiveness of the sanctions meant to discourage sports programs from misconduct. On the one hand, some stakeholders believe the NCAA sanctions are too tough. On the other hand, others feel they are not strict enough. They state some of the major college football programs hit by NCAA sanctions were able to recover from these penalties quickly and did not suffer much during the course of the sanctions. This argument implies that avoiding the risks of punishment is less costly to the team than the benefits of bending the rules. Whether NCAA sanctions are too harsh or not harsh enough, pressure to maintain the sports programs provides the opportunity for misconduct in the college sports community, as well as creates significant challenges for the NCAA.

**CHALLENGES FOR ETHICS AND COMPLIANCE IN COLLEGE FOOTBALL**

College football is far more than just a sport. For many universities, it is a business that brings millions of dollars to colleges all over the United States. Being a business, there are always ethical and compliance issues that take place. The question is whether schools ignore issues taking place because of the amount of money a football program generates for the school. If so, this creates a significant conflict of interest. In the past few years, a number of highly publicized scandals have rocked the college football industry and led to heavy criticism of the schools where the scandals occurred. The actions of the NCAA in response to these scandals received mixed reactions from stakeholders. However, a more serious concern for the NCAA is how to ensure college sports teams comply with ethical policies as well as combating the tendency for colleges to remain complacent because of the success of the sports team. The following examples describe three major college football scandals, how the schools reacted to the scandals, and the sanctions, if any, the NCAA took against the team.

**Penn State Scandal**

In 2011 accusations arose alleging that a former assistant coach of the Penn State football team sexually assaulted at least eight young boys over the course of many years. It was not long before the school itself was implicated in suspecting or knowing about the crime but not taking adequate steps to stop it. Two university officials turned themselves in to authorities for being accused of covering up the crimes.

According to investigations, the first report of potential misconduct between the former assistant coach Jerry Sandusky and an underage boy came in 1998. The report came to University police and the Senior Vice President for Finance and Business, Gary Schultz. This matter was investigated internally and resulted in no criminal charges based on a lack of evidence. In 2001 a graduate assistant allegedly witnessed the perpetrator sexually assaulting a young boy in the Penn State football team’s practice center. The graduate assistant reported the incident to Head Coach Joe Paterno, who staked his reputation on running a program known for ethics and integrity. While Paterno appeared to have notified campus officials, the officials did not report to police, allowing the crime to continue. A later report conducted by former director of the FBI Louis Freeah indicated the coach and school officials covered up the crimes. This led to accusations that the school cared more about its reputation and the success of its football program than it did about the young victims. This case is even more serious as such misconduct does not just constitute an NCAA violation; it is a criminal act that harmed many people. Although Joe Paterno did report the crime to campus officials, some felt it was his responsibility to do more to ensure the crimes were reported to the proper authorities. The assistant coach continued to interact with young boys and be around the college campus after the reports were made.

The negligent behavior of Penn State officials, both within the administration and the football department, might be explained through the strength of the football program and the complacency of the university culture. Head Coach Joe Paterno had been at Penn State’s football department for more than 60 years at the time of the scandal. The way he ran the department indicated a reliance on old football standards and an inability or unwillingness to adapt to new ones. Unfortunately, this culture had pitfalls that did not hold up to modern ethical standards. Some reports claim that on different occasions he advocated for football players not to be held to the same standards as regular students, implying football players should be treated differently than other students by the university. When football players got in trouble with the law, Paterno felt the university should not take action but rather let the police deal with it. Although he butted heads with many people when it came to these views, school directors were on his side of the argument. This is likely because of the large amount of revenue the program brought into the school. According to one accusation, Coach Paterno used this revenue as a threat to stop all fund raising if a certain director he disagreed with was not fired. If these allegations are true, then Paterno created a culture within the football department wherein members did not need to be held accountable according to school regulations. This in turn indicates a complacent university culture when it came to the football program.

The NCAA agreed the misconduct was partially the fault of the football program’s and Penn State’s complacency. In addition to the negative impact on the victims, Penn State suffered reputational damage and received a major blow to its football program. The NCAA imposed sanctions against Penn State costing $ 60 million in fines, a four-year post-season ban prohibiting the school from being eligible for any post games until 2016, and a four-year reduction in scholarships amounting to ten scholarships per year for the football program. The football team’s wins from between 1998 and 2011 were vacated. These penalties drastically hurt the football program’s ability to compete against other teams. In total, there were seven penalties placed on the university and athletics program combined. The NCAA is taking steps to make sure the activities that took place at Penn State do not happen again. As an aside, the Paterno family announced they were filing a lawsuit against the NCAA and its President on behalf of Penn State, citing the investigation conducted by former director of the FBI Louis Freeah—a report the NCAA relied heavily upon in imposing sanctions against Penn State—was seriously flawed in its conclusions of blame.

The NCAA also put ten corrective sanctions on Penn State formulated specifically for them. The main corrective measure was that the university must sign an Athletic Integrity Agreement. In doing so, this allowed the NCAA to require Penn State to take eight corrective steps. These steps include the addition of a compliance officer for the athletics department, the creation of a compliance council and a full disclosure program, adding internal accountability and certifications for this accountability, implementation of an external compliance review/certification process, drafting an athletics code of conduct, conducting training and education, and appointing an independent athletics integrity monitor. All of the steps will be continuously updated to ensure their internal and external controls stay relevant. The NCAA’s goal for the corrective sanctions is to find and stop unethical behavior before it becomes a problem.

**Ohio State**

The Ohio State scandal was a result of rule violations from student–athletes and a subsequent cover-up of the violations by the coach. In December 2010 five players on Ohio State’s football team were suspended for using the gear the football team supplied to barter for cash and tattoos. Under the NCAA rules, it is illegal for a Division I football player to receive any benefit from anyone that is not offered to the public. Head Coach Jim Tressel became aware of the violation and failed to report it to the school for a period of nine months. This enabled the team to continue to play in games they otherwise would have been ineligible to play. In addition to the suspensions, the NCAA also banned Ohio State from a bowl game for one year, took five scholarships away for the following three years, and put the team on a one-year probation. When it was discovered Tressel had prior knowledge of the violation, the NCAA issued a five-year show-cause order on him, forcing him to resign and virtually ending his career as a coach in collegiate athletics. A college can hire a coach who has an outstanding show-cause order, but they may be penalized simply for hiring him. In addition, if a coach with a show-cause order does in fact get hired and makes a subsequent violation, the consequences will be far more severe on both the coach and the university. Most colleges will not take the risk of hiring a coach with this kind of label.

This was not the only violation to be found among members of the Ohio State football team. After the bartering scandal, the NCAA suspended three other players for accepting money from a booster. A booster is a fan who has a significant amount of money and invests in the team to build better facilities, contribute to scholarships, and sometimes have a choice in who the coaching staff will be. However, student–athletes are not to take any money or gifts from boosters directly. It is a direct violation of the rules of the NCAA. Additionally, other players were suspended for being overpaid by the same booster for work in a summer job.

The NCAA placed these sanctions on Ohio State for failure to properly oversee their athletics program. Many of the administrators commented if they knew of the football players’ conduct, they would have taken corrective action against it. Ohio State took responsibility for its actions and cooperated with the NCAA investigation. Ohio State imposed its own penalties against the football program, including vacating the 2010 season. Yet the NCAA made it a point to show the administrators it is their responsibility to know what is going on within their organization. Additionally, the NCAA also noted Tressel withheld information multiple times from NCAA investigators. In total, the sanctions cost Ohio State an estimated $ 8 million.

**University of Arkansas**

Head Coach Bobby Petrino was respected and admired for his coaching abilities by everyone, even those who did not have a high opinion of him personally. Before coaching at University of Arkansas in 2007, Petrino left bitter feelings at the football organizations where he previously worked. For example, he secretly tried to get one of his former bosses fired, he pressured a student to go to practice rather than attend a funeral where he was to be a pallbearer, and he left his job with the Atlanta Falcons by leaving a short note in the lockers of each player before the season ended. Petrino’s questionable behavior continued while he coached for the University of Arkansas. He had been with the university since 2007 and transformed the team into championship material. However, a motorcycle accident in early 2012 revealed a latent scandal brewing for several months.

At the time of the accident Petrino claimed he was riding alone, but changed his story as the police report was about to become public. He admitted he rode with Jessica Dorrell, a 25-year-old former student who Petrino hired as the Student Athlete Development Coordinator just a week prior. He further admitted he initially lied about the details of the accident because he and Dorrell were involved in an inappropriate relationship. Petrino hoped to keep this information secret as is evidenced by the fact he filed the report with a state trooper who worked as his personal security after he parted ways with Dorrell.

This incident was a scandal for two reasons. First, Petrino was married with four children, and second, he had hired Dorrell without stating to the university there was a conflict of interest due to their personal relationship. Because she was hired as a state employee, not disclosing the conflict of interest was illegal. Additionally, the position she was given reported directly to Petrino himself. Upon investigation, it was found that Petrino also gave Dorrell gifts amounting to $ 20,000.

All of these things taken together caused the Athletic Director of the University of Arkansas Jeff Long to fire Petrino. However, the decision was not easy for him to make. Petrino’s contributions to the success of the football team were no small matter, and the consequences of letting him go would affect the team’s performance. However, keeping Petrino as Head Coach would demonstrate that the university condoned the misconduct. Dorrell resigned a few days after Petrino was fired.

In less than a year after the University of Arkansas scandal, Petrino was hired as Head Coach of the Hilltoppers of Western Kentucky University. Some say this arrangement is good for both of the parties involved. Petrino gets to coach football for a lower ranking football program while waiting for the scandal to blow over, and Western Kentucky University gets to take advantage of Petrino’s coaching for a few years. The arrangement drew some criticism to the school. Some say the hiring of a coach recently fired for a scandal speaks to the fact that the school values winning games over ethical behavior.

Fortunately for the University of Arkansas and Bobby Petrino, NCAA rules had not been violated, so sanctions were avoided. Jeff Long showed ethical leadership in the way he handled the Petrino scandal even without pressure from the NCAA. Long refused to be complacent when the misconduct became apparent even when, in the short term, it did not seem like it would benefit the university. The football team suffered from the loss of Coach Petrino, but the university’s actions express it expects high ethical standards from its football program and will accept no less. Because it creates a culture of ethics and compliance, schools like the University of Arkansas step up to the plate and make the right decision even when misconduct does not constitute an NCAA violation.

**SELF-REPORTING AND MONITORING STUDENT ATHLETES**

Minor violations become scandals when they are covered up for long periods of time by the university, the football program authorities, or both. No matter where the cover up begins or ends, the ultimate responsibility lies with the university to monitor the actions of the football program. If the culture of the university fosters misconduct, minor violations will inevitably become scandals. On the other hand, universities that monitor their athletics programs so minor violations are caught immediately and reported to the NCAA are less likely to be involved in major scandals. This act of self-reporting demonstrates a concern with ethical behavior and accountability for their actions. Furthermore, the NCAA takes these measures into account when deciding on the appropriate level of penalties for violations.

In 2011 the NCAA approached Boise State with 22 allegations of misconduct within its athletics department. Becoming aware of this misconduct, the university as well as the head coaches acted immediately and in collaboration with the NCAA. During the university’s investigation, they found other violations the NCAA was unaware of and reported them to the Association. Violations included incidents when assistant coaches arranged low-cost housing and transportation for prospective football players. While the monetary value of these accommodations was under $ 5,000, the duration of time these activities had gone on was five years. Boise State developed and submitted a set of self-imposed sanctions against the athletic department that included three fewer preseason practices for the current and upcoming year and three fewer scholarships for the next two years. After reviewing the incidents and the proposed sanctions, the NCAA eliminated three more scholarships for an additional year and placed the university on probation for three years. The NCAA imposed harsher sanctions due to what it perceived to be a lack of institutional control and the fact that the infractions had gone on for so long. The university admitted it lost control over compliance because of the rate of growth of the football program. It claims it has taken steps to strengthen its compliance department by hiring a new director and adding new language to its student handbook to clarify its expectations.

The University of New Mexico also received sanctions for misconduct in its football program. The case involved academic fraud that occurred in 2004 and was not discovered by the university until 2007. Two former assistant coaches helped three recruits and one currently enrolled student receive academic credit through an online course for which the students did not complete work. Despite the fact the incident occurred three years prior, the university took the matter seriously and imposed heavy sanctions. It reduced the number of scholarship offers by one, the overall number of scholarships by two, the number of coaches allowed to recruit by one for the next two years, and the number of official visits to recruits by four for one year. It also imposed a two-year probation period on the football program and reduced the number of academic non-qualifiers by half for two years. Because of the seriousness of academic fraud, the NCAA accepted most of the self-imposed sanctions offered by the university but reduced the number of scholarships by five rather than two for a period of two years rather than one year.

Many of these issues involve providing college athletes with special favors. For decades a pressing issue has been one of paying college athletes. There are various rules that must be followed to avoid the appearance of paying college athletes or providing them with special treatment. At Ohio State University, student athletes disobeyed the rules by trading athletic equipment for tattoos. The main argument against athletes receiving compensation is that if the players were paid, then college sports would lose its appeal. In 2013-14 the courts will make a decision about whether a lawsuit arguing that players be compensated for use of their likeness goes forward. However, the major issue still remains over whether student athletes be paid a salary or reimbursed for expenses caused by sports-related activities and medical care.

The integrity of the NCAA and collegiate athletics depends on transparency and a level playing field. The NCAA and universities are mindful that most collegiate athletes do not enter professional sports and will have to find a career outside of athletics. Therefore, any attempt to treat collegiate athletics like professional sports could be detrimental. The goal of all stakeholders should be to help young men and women develop the ability to have a career and contribute to society.

**CONCLUSION**

The NCAA strives to prevent unethical behavior in collegiate athletics by objectively setting and enforcing standards of conduct. They also encourage and help universities establish their own system of compliance and control, since the ultimate responsibility lies with the universities and the cultures they create. Even when colleges impose sanctions on their football programs, the NCAA examines the sanctions objectively and either accepts the sanctions as sufficient or supplements them with more penalties that better match the misconduct. This should not discourage universities from self-reporting, however. While there is no guarantee a football program will not be penalized for reporting misconduct or adopting self-imposed sanctions, the more proactive a football program appears to be, the more consideration it may receive when the NCAA examines the situation. Additionally, a proactive ethical culture creates a reputation for ethics and compliance that may help the program bounce back quicker after a misconduct incident.

The NCAA stands as a compliance-oriented organization. At the same time, it promotes certain values the universities should adopt when developing sports programs. The NCAA rules should not be accepted as totally sufficient but used as a minimum benchmark for ethical conduct. NCAA guidelines serve as a framework for how collegiate sports programs should behave and offers consequences for non-compliance. Universities involved in both minor and major violations have come to realize the importance of emphasizing ethics and compliance in their sports programs.

QUESTIONS