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Moving the University's football Division 1-AA to Division 1-A

Submitted by Bill Levernier

9/19/2003

Question:

Is there currently, or has there been in the recent past, a university-level committee to study the interest in, and feasibility of, moving the university's football Division I-AA to Division I-A?.

Response:

Report from Richard Rogers, NCAA Faculty Athletic Representative

Richard Rogers (NCAA Representative) read the information request received by the SEC and forwarded to him: "Is there currently or has there been in the recent past a University-level committee to study the interest in and feasibility of moving the University's football program from Division IAA to Division IA? If not, are there any plans to create a committee to evaluate whether or not Georgia Southern can meet the NCAA requirements to participate at the Division IA level, especially the requirements pertaining to minimum average attendance for home games and the minimum number of teams that must be sponsored by the school, and decide whether or not it would be in the University's best interest to move to Division IA?" Rogers noted that the short answer to all of these questions was "No", and explained that this was always "on the radar", but due to new NCAA criteria, it was not considered feasible. Those criteria are:

- Handout at least 90 percent of the 85 football scholarships allotted to major college programs in a given season. (That would be about 76.5 scholarships, we currently give 63 in football.)
- Sponsor a minimum 16 sports overall, including at least six mens' and eight womens' sports. (Currently we have 14 sports: six mens' and eight womens', but we would still need two more sports.)

- Offer at least 200 scholarships or spend at least \$4 million on scholarships in those sports. (We currently have about 164 full-scholarships at a cost of about \$1.55 million.)
- Average no less than 15,000 in actual, not merely paid, home football attendance. (The attendance figures heard over the loud speaker and seen in the paper are paid, but are not, as the current jargon among the inside people is, 'butts in seats'. It is not clear whether 'butts on grass' would count. However, the current seating capacity of Paulson Stadium is 14,400.)
- Play at least five regular season home games vs. IA schools each season. (To entice IA programs to come to Statesboro, to comfortably meet the attendance requirements we would need a bigger stadium. If we add two more sports, we would need facilities to support those sports, the specifics of which would depend on what sports were chosen. Those athletes need locker rooms, uniforms, equipment, and a venue to compete on. So, the current attitude/opinion of the people that do study this issue periodically is that the cost would not worth the benefits.)

Rogers (NCAA Rep) noted that he would be happy to discuss the issue with anyone who wants to talk about it.

Links (links no longer work)

<http://www.georgiasouthern.edu/athleticstudy/>

<http://www.georgiasouthern.edu/athleticstudy/pdf/GSUExecSummary728.pdf>

https://mygeorgiasouthern.edu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=221:football-subdivision-feasibility-study