

THE ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTING STRUCTURE OF ATHLETICS DIRECTORS
IN NCAA DIVISIONS I, II AND III INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

by

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ABSTRACT

Differences in administrative reporting structures for NCAA Division I, II and III athletics directors were reported and analyzed. Reasons for different reporting structures and athletics director satisfaction with reporting structures were studied, and athletics directors' perceptions of their structures, particularly when organizational change had recently occurred, were analyzed.

Athletics directors at all 977 NCAA Division I, II and III institutions were asked to complete a questionnaire indicating to whom they report in the administrative structure of their institution, what organizational structure changes had occurred during the previous five-year period, and their satisfaction level with their campus reporting structure. Fifteen NCAA athletics directors were asked in a telephone interview to respond to questions about their current and previous organizational structures. Results were cross tabulated and frequencies were calculated. A content analysis of themes from the written survey and telephone interview was conducted.

The two most common administrative reporting structures were a direct report to the university president and to the student affairs division. A direct report to the president was the most common in Divisions I-A, I-AA, I-AAA and II, whereas student affairs was the most common structure in Division III. The vast majority of athletics directors were satisfied with their reporting structure. Those reporting directly to the president cited the direct contact with the president as the primary reason for their satisfaction. Athletics directors who reported to student affairs indicated the natural fit with student services was the primary reason for their structure. Satisfaction levels generally decreased when moving from larger to smaller athletics programs.

Athletics directors, particularly in Division I, felt that it was critical to report directly to the university president due to the high visibility of their programs, NCAA institutional control issues, and the impact of the athletics program on the institution as a whole. Respondents also indicated that communication efficiency necessitated this direct involvement. Directors of lower division athletics programs were generally satisfied reporting through student affairs. However, among these directors there were some who expressed interest in a direct report to the president.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Intercollegiate athletics is not just another department on the college campus. It has deep roots in the university setting, but its place in academia is frequently challenged (Bailey & Littleton, 1991; Duderstadt, 2000; Flawn, 1990; Gerdy, 1997; Hardy & Berryman, 1982; Rose, 1985; Sack, 2001; Shulman & Bowen, 2001). It offers venues for students and community members to come together for a common goal as spectators; however, it is often criticized for having newer and better quality stadiums, arenas and offices than the university has classrooms. Some argue that universities promote athletics to the detriment of undergraduate education (Sperber, 2000). Proponents advocate for intercollegiate athletics as a useful marketing tool to encourage students to come to a particular institution, despite scandals that can adversely affect the entire image of the academic community (Gerdy, 1997; Rose, 1985; Sperber, 2000; Wolff & Keteyian, 1990). Intercollegiate athletics can be a vibrant part of the campus community, promoting loyalty among its boosters and alumni, attracting friends and financial contributions (Chu, 1989). Critics say its supporters are overzealous and the costs of maintaining intercollegiate athletics on campus are escalating beyond control (Bailey & Littleton, 1991; Sperber, 2000).

The relationship between athletics and other campus entities and the apparent dichotomy between the two has fueled much discussion about the place of sports in higher education (Bailey & Littleton, 1991; Duderstadt, 2000; Flawn, 1990; Gerdy, 1997;

Hardy & Berryman, 1982; Shulman & Bowen, 2001). Experts debate the appropriate governance structure for intercollegiate athletics (Chu, 1989; Duderstadt, 2000; Millett, 1980; Patberg, 2002) on the campus, conference and national level, given the public scrutiny the athletics department invites.

Presidents and chancellors are accountable for all activities on their campuses and for establishing an organizational structure appropriate for their institution (Cohen & March, 1974; Corson, 1960; Gilley & Hickey, 1986; Millett, 1980). This, of course, includes the responsibility for determining the organizational structure of the department of intercollegiate athletics and the reporting relationship the athletics director has with the university administration (Duderstadt, 2000; Miller, 1982).

Most units on college campuses are managed or directed by individuals who are closely associated with the educational mission of the institutions, e.g. faculty members; however, this has not typically been the case with some athletics programs. Duderstadt asserted, "...big-time athletics is quite different, conducted largely as an independent, highly commercial entertainment business, administered by professionals with little relationship to the academic programs of the university..."(2000, p. 12).

Each NCAA institution is unique in its structure, philosophy, mission, and level of commitment to intercollegiate athletics. Therefore, institutions differ in where they place their athletics departments in their campus organizational structures (Sanders, 2001). Many college presidents desire a hands-on approach with their athletics programs and therefore assign the athletics director to a position with a direct reporting line to the president. This structure would ideally ensure that the president is directly and regularly

informed and can give the necessary guidance on the many issues that arise involving the athletics program (Duderstadt, 2000; Patberg, 2002; Suggs, 2001).

However, college presidents often lack the time to devote the necessary effort to their athletics department. Others may simply want to distance themselves from potential scandal involving their athletics programs (Duderstadt, 2000; Miller, 1982). These presidents may choose to assign the supervision of the intercollegiate athletics program to a designated vice president or other administrative staff member (Miller, 1982). These individuals may be professionally qualified or suited to fulfill this role. Or, because of current issues involving the intercollegiate athletics program, a specific vice president may be a logical choice (Sanders, 2001).

The outcome of this organizational decision can greatly impact the athletics department and the level of satisfaction the athletics director has with his or her supervisor (Sanders, 2001). Colleges and universities invest a great deal of money in athletics directors whose salaries, in some cases, exceed that of the college president (Bennett, 2003). In lean financial times, institutions of higher learning must be increasingly conscientious about establishing organizationally sound structures that provide an effective and efficient operation (Karol, 1980). This may include ensuring the appointment of a competent supervisor, whether the university president or a designee, who is aware of the magnitude of the responsibility of intercollegiate athletics (Duderstadt, 2000). And, it should involve a director of athletics who works closely with his or her supervisor, not one who chooses to operate independently and without close communication with the rest of the institution (Duderstadt, 2000; Miller, 1982).

Universities are complex organizations that serve many constituencies and must adjust with changing times and organizational dynamics. Presidents usually progress through the ranks of the academic community and therefore are likely to be more familiar with educational policies and structures (Cohen & March, 1974; Duderstadt, 2000) than they would intercollegiate athletics. Nevertheless, the public interest in and examination of intercollegiate athletics as well as NCAA regulations force presidents into active roles with their sports programs (Gerdy, 1992; NCAA, 2003a). However, the level of direct presidential involvement on campus varies (Duderstadt, 2000; Miller, 1982; Patberg, 2002).

Those who oversee athletics may experience many of the wonderful moments that are part of having a successful college athletics program, but as with any position that involves high finance and unusual media and public scrutiny, the supervisor assumes many risks. Efforts to minimize those risks should be paramount.

Problem

In a preliminary study conducted by Sanders (2001), NCAA Division I, II and III athletics directors revealed information about their institution's athletics director reporting structure, the director's level of satisfaction with that structure, and whether or not their department had undergone any changes in that reporting structure in the previous five-year period (1996-2001). Raw data indicated that many institutions made changes in their athletics department organizational structure, directors had strong

opinions about where their units reported, and satisfaction levels among athletics directors varied among NCAA divisions.

College and university administrators determine where their athletics programs reside within the context of the campus organizational structure. Other than the preliminary study cited above, there is little information currently available regarding the administrative positions to whom athletics directors report. Nor is there much information about the effectiveness of any given structure for the athletics director or the institution. Neither senior-level university/college administrators nor athletics directors know if their structure is appropriate for their type of institution and level of competition. Nor do they readily have information available about organizational structures at other institutions.

The problem addressed in this study is that reporting structures of athletics directors at colleges and universities belonging to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) have not been systematically collected and analyzed. In addition, it is not clear what impact changes in reporting structures have had on sitting athletics directors and their athletics programs.

Purpose

The purpose of this descriptive study was twofold. The first was to report the findings from a preliminary study conducted by the researcher that a) identified and then compared the reporting structures for college and university athletics directors at institutions that are members of the NCAA and are categorized as Division I, II, or III;

and b) explored and reported the level of satisfaction the athletics directors had with their respective reporting structures.

The second phase of the study was to a) explore the perceptions of select athletics directors about their reporting structure in instances where change in the reporting structure occurred during the period 1996-2001 and b) analyze the perceptions of athletics directors about what characteristics are important in the person charged with supervising the athletics director at institutions where change in the reporting structure has occurred.

Research Questions

The following questions were addressed:

- 1) What are the differences in reporting structures for intercollegiate athletics departments within NCAA Divisions I, II, and III;
- 2) What are the relationships between the types of reporting structures of NCAA Division I, II, and III athletics departments and the satisfaction level of the directors of athletics;
- 3) In cases where reporting structures have changed on campuses during recent years (1996-2001), what are the perceptions of the athletics directors about their structure;
- 4) How have changes in athletics director reporting structures impacted athletics programs;

- 5) What are the preferred characteristics of the athletics director's immediate supervisor.

Methodology

The findings from a preliminary study conducted by the researcher regarding the athletics director reporting structure and the satisfaction level of those athletics directors with their reporting structure are reported in this study. A 2001 study involved collecting data through a survey in order to answer questions concerning the current status of the athletics director reporting structure and the respondent's level of satisfaction with that structure (Appendix B). All 977 athletics directors at member institutions of the NCAA were asked to respond to survey questions about themselves and the demographics of their institutions. They were also asked to indicate to whom they report in the administrative structure of their college or university, to provide information on changes in the organizational structure during the previous five years, and to indicate whether they were extremely satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or extremely dissatisfied with the current reporting structure on campus. Athletics directors were also asked to comment on why they thought their organization was structured the way it was and to give reasons for their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

Using the results from the preliminary study, the researcher then contacted institutions that had made changes in their athletic director reporting structure within the previous five years (1996-2001). The athletics directors of those institutions were asked in a telephone interview to respond to a series of questions related to their organizational structure, to whom they report and to whom they previously reported, why they perceive

the change was made, and whether the athletics director was involved in the decision-making regarding the change. The athletics director was also asked to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the structure and whether the change in reporting structure made a difference in their level of satisfaction with the structure (Appendix C).

In order to examine the responses from the preliminary and follow-up surveys, an analysis consisting of descriptive statistics, including cross-tabulations and frequency distributions, was conducted. Some qualitative data gathered from open-ended questions from the survey and the follow-up interview were categorized and converted into quantitative scales for statistical analysis. A content analysis of the qualitative data was also conducted to identify patterns or themes in responses.

Additional data were collected by means of a 20-item, five-point Likert scale questionnaire that was administered to the same athletics directors targeted in the follow-up study (Appendix D). The subjects were asked to rate the level of importance that they placed on certain characteristics that might be inherent in their direct supervisors or the person assigned by the institution to oversee the director of athletics and the athletics program. The list of characteristics in the survey was developed by the researcher and was based upon themes that emerged in the preliminary study. Upon review of all descriptive statistics, appropriate statistical tests were applied, if necessary.

Theoretical Context

The governance of college and universities involves complex relationships in complex social institutions (Duderstadt, 2001; Karol, 1980). It is generally the

responsibility of presidents and chancellors to establish appropriate organizational structures for their institutions (Cohen & March, 1974; Corson, 1960; Millett, 1980).

These structures are often described in the form of an organizational chart. This formal structure outlines how work and communication flow through an organization and clarifies areas of responsibility within and among various departments (Birnbaum, 1988; Blackwell, 1966; Karol, 1980; Lorsch, 1970; Mintzberg, 1983; Obel, 1981). However, there is a very important human aspect to any organizational structure (Millett, 1980).

“Clearly, every organization has important power and communication relationships that are not put down on paper” (Mintzberg, 1983, p. 19).

Karol (1980) defined organizing as “the process of grouping activities and responsibilities and establishing relationships, formal and informal, that will enable people to work together most effectively and efficiently in determining and accomplishing the objectives of the enterprise” (p. 92). Like Karol, Millett believed that organizational structures are descriptions of relationships among people (Millett, 1980). According to Millett, no two organizations can ever be identical. “The varied leadership styles, the varied kinds of people brought together in an enterprise, the varied work technologies, the varied time factors and location environments – all such factors and others as well mean that every organized enterprise is different from any other enterprise” (Millett, 1980, p. 23).

Millett (1980) defined an organization as “a structure of relationships among people joined together for a common purpose at a particular time and in a particular place” (p. 1). To best accomplish these purposes, universities generally divide into three

major groups – academic affairs, student affairs, and business affairs (Karol, 1980). Variances in these groupings might occur from one institution to the next as may individual titles and responsibilities (Karol, 1980). Regardless of the formal groupings, though, college and university officials should ask many questions when determining where departments fit in the overall university scheme. For instance, “Should the individuals concerned with affirmative action and compliance with various governmental programs be assistants to high ranking officials...or Directors of small units, reporting to a senior administrative official?” (Karol, 1980, p. 100). Or, “Should the Alumni Relations Director report to the president, the Chief Development Officer, or the Chief Administrative Officer” (Karol, 1980, p. 101)?

With many complicated questions and decisions to be made, it is inevitable that new leadership may have different ideas about how an organization should be structured (Karol, 1980). Organizational structures within higher education change for a variety of reasons and are often arranged to meet the styles and personalities of particular individuals (Karol, 1980). An examination of these changes and the individuals involved may help organizations learn from the efforts of others and help decision-makers have more confidence in their leadership decisions surrounding the structure of intercollegiate athletics.

Significance of the Study

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) was formed in 1906 to regulate the rules in the game of football following a number of injuries and deaths of

players during the 1905 season (Byers, 1995). But the NCAA has evolved over the past century into a governing body that deals with all issues surrounding the administration of an intercollegiate athletics program. Academic institutions that have intercollegiate athletics programs on their campuses can choose to be members, and approximately 1200 colleges, universities, athletics conferences and related sports organizations currently make up the NCAA (NCAA, 2003b). Membership affords colleges and universities the opportunity to be a part of an organization that regulates the activities of the intercollegiate program, including, but not limited to its contests, its personnel, and its student participants (student-athletes).

Member institutions of the NCAA are designated as Division I, II or III. Division I institutions require the largest financial commitment from the institution and are the most visible of all NCAA members. Division I member institutions are divided into three subgroups: Division I-A, Division I-AA and Division I-AAA (NCAA, 2003b).

Division I-A institutions compete at the highest national level and are afforded the highest status in terms of representation on NCAA committees and issues. They are generally members of athletics conferences that have strong collective voices and authority in NCAA governance. They have minimum attendance requirements at their home football contests and rely on television and ticket revenue; therefore, the programs cater more to spectators than to other constituents (NCAA, 2003b).

Division I-AA institutions are not required to make the same financial commitment and do not have minimum attendance requirements as Division I-A programs do. They normally expend far fewer dollars on their athletics programs and do

not bring in the television or ticket revenue that a Division I-A institution would; however, their programs are still highly visible on the national scene (NCAA, 2003b). Institutions that are members of Division I but do not sponsor varsity football programs are classified as I-AAA (NCAA, 2003b).

Division II institutions are required to make even less of a financial commitment, operate under slightly less rigorous rules and regulations and have fewer revenue opportunities than members of Division I. Their competition is more regional in nature and rosters feature more local or in-state student-athletes (NCAA, 2003b).

Division III institutions are required to have minimum numbers of contests and participants but do not offer student-athletes financial aid related to athletics ability. The emphasis in Division III is more on the student-athlete's experience as a participant and less about the spectator aspect of sports (NCAA, 2003b).

This paper emphasizes Division I programs because of their high profile nature, complex NCAA compliance issues, extreme fan interest and high financial stakes; however, other Divisions are examined as part of the study.

The NCAA requires presidents to be involved in their athletic programs but does not specify how active they should be or how best this should be accomplished. The 2003-04 NCAA Manual states in Bylaw 6.1.1, "A member institution's chief executive officer has ultimate responsibility and final authority for the conduct of the intercollegiate athletics program and the actions of any board in control of that program" (NCAA, 2003a, p. 49). Bylaw 2.1, also known as "The Principle of Institutional Control and Responsibility," indicates, "It is the responsibility of each member institution to control

its intercollegiate athletics program in compliance with the rules and regulations of the Association. The institution's chief executive officer is responsible for the administration of all aspects of the athletics program, including approval of the budget and audit of all expenditures" (NCAA, 2003a, p. 3).

Results from a preliminary study in which data were collected to develop a profile of the reporting structures of athletics directors at NCAA Divisions I, II and III institutions and to analyze structures that have recently changed are reported in this study. Athletics directors were asked to rate the importance of certain characteristics that might be desirable in their direct supervisors. The list of characteristics in the survey was developed based upon themes that emerged in the preliminary study, and results of the survey were evaluated on a Likert-scale. These analyses are intended to provide a context for institutional decisions about appropriate reporting lines for athletics directors and inform university administrators and athletics directors of current trends. The results of the study shall provide university and college administrators with data from different and like institutions so they can choose a model for their particular institutional needs.

The study will help colleges and university administrators understand the benefits and detriments of each model. This is important information for officials to have when deciding on a structure for a given institution. When hired as a new athletics director, the individual should have a complete understanding of the hiring entity's model including the priority that is placed on its intercollegiate program. The study will also educate those involved about the impact that reporting structures have on the department's successes or failures. The place of the athletics department in the overall campus

organizational structure may be indicative of the level of importance the university places on intercollegiate athletics. This study will help inform athletics and university administrators of the impact of those administrative decisions.

While there has been much debate about the relationship between athletics and academics, there has been little discussion regarding the reporting structures that exist on campuses today. Campus administrators will find that their peers at other institutions also supervise athletics and may then join together in developing strategies and practices to effectively oversee the area. More detailed information about reporting lines for athletics directors will enable researchers and campus administrators to evaluate the best use of human resources while still maintaining strong institutional control over their athletics programs. This should reduce the potential for incidents that may negatively affect the reputation of the institution.

Definition of Terms

The following are terms defined for the purpose of this study:

Athletics/Intercollegiate Athletics - A university or college program that oversees sports programs for students who compete against students from other universities or colleges (NCAA, 2003a).

Governance - “The structures and processes through which institutional participants interact with and influence each other and communicate with the larger environment” (Birnbaum, 1988, p. 4) In this study, governance will be defined primarily as the oversight and regulation of an intercollegiate athletics program.

Institution - Also referred to as member institution, an institution refers to a college or university that is a member of the NCAA (NCAA, 2003a).

Institutional Control - The responsibility of each NCAA member institution to control its intercollegiate athletics program in compliance with the rules and regulations of the Association (NCAA, 2003a).

Knight Commission Report – A March 1991 report proposing a new “model for intercollegiate athletics – presidential control directed toward academic integrity, financial integrity, and independent certification of athletics programs” (Knight, 2001, p. 1). A new report was issued in June 2001 with a goal status report, which stated that “problems of big-time college sports have grown rather than diminished” Knight, 2001, p. 1).

National Collegiate Athletic Association/NCAA- An organization through which the nation’s colleges and universities speak and act on athletics matters at the national level. It is a voluntary association of 1,265 institutions, conferences, organizations and individuals devoted to the sound administration of intercollegiate athletics (NCAA, 2003b).

Academic Dean/Department Chair – Typically, faculty members hold administrative positions to manage the activities of their academic departments or colleges. Chairs hold mid-level academic positions in a department or comparable unit (Creswell, 1990).

Athletics Director - Also referred to as AD, Director of Athletics, Athletic Director. The AD is the highest-ranking administrator of intercollegiate athletics on the college or university campus whose responsibilities include the supervision of the intercollegiate sports program and its personnel (Miller, 1982).

Executive Vice President/Provost - At some institutions, the Provost also serves as the chief academic affairs officer, but for purposes of this study, the provost is the senior member of the President’s staff who serves as a second in command to the Chief Executive Officer (Flawn, 1990).

Legal Counsel - The institution or college administrator responsible for providing legal advice and representation to agents of the University who have legal concerns arising out of their official University responsibilities. “Counsel’s role is to identify and define actual or potential legal problems and provide options for resolving or preventing them” (Kaplin & Lee, 1997, p. 56).

President/Chancellor/Chief Executive Officer/CEO – The person who serves as “the principal administrative officer and is directly responsible to the Board of Regents for the operation of the university” (Iowa State, 2002, 4). These terms are used interchangeably for purposes of this study.

Vice President for Academic Affairs - The vice president for academic affairs is the chief academic officer, “administering the academic, outreach, and research programs and the personnel policies of the university” (Iowa State, 2002, p. 4).

Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students - The chief student affairs officer of the college/university that “coordinates all non-academic student services” (Iowa State, 2002, p. 4).

Vice President for Administration/Finance - The chief financial officer of the college/university who “manages the fiscal operation of the university...also responsible for the general supervision of business operations of all university activities” (Iowa State 2002, p. 4).

Division I – Colleges and universities in Division I are more spectator-oriented than other divisions and sponsor at the highest feasible level of intercollegiate competition one or both of the spectator-oriented, income-producing sports of football and basketball. Division I institutions recognize the dual objective in its athletics program of serving both the university or college community and the general public (NCAA, 2003b).

Division I-A - Division I-A institutions must meet all Division I criteria, sponsor the highest level of intercollegiate football and meet minimum paid football attendance criteria (NCAA, 2003a).

Division I-AA - Division I-AA institutions must meet all the Division I criteria but with less restrictive scheduling requirements and fewer scholarships than Division I-A (NCAA, 2003a).

Division I-AAA - Division I-AAA institutions are Division I institutions that do not sponsor Division I football programs (NCAA, 2003a).

Division II - Institutions classified as Division II vary in their sizes and educational missions. They value traditional rivalries with regional institutions and require fewer scholarships and less of a financial commitment than Division I institutions (NCAA, 2003b).

Division III - Colleges and universities in Division III place highest priority on the overall quality of the educational experience and on the successful completion of all students’ academic programs in an environment in which a student-athlete’s athletics activities are conducted as an integral part of the student-athlete’s educational experience. Division III athletes may not be awarded athletically related financial aid (NCAA, 2003b).

Direct Supervision – “Having one person take responsibility for the work of others, issuing instructions to them and monitoring their actions” (Mintzberg, 1983, p. 4).

Organization - An organization is “a structure of relationships among people joined together for a common purpose at a particular time and in a particular place (Millett, 1980, p. 1).

Organizing – Organizing is defined as “the process of grouping activities and responsibilities and establishing relationships, formal and informal, that will enable people to work together most effectively and efficiently in determining and accomplishing the objectives of the enterprise “ (Karol, 1980, p. 92).

The Researcher’s Role

The researcher is currently employed as Senior Associate Director of Athletics at Iowa State University, a Division I-A institution, with supervisory responsibilities over twelve intercollegiate sports, the department of media relations and event management. The researcher serves on the senior administrative staff of the athletics director and is involved in the day-to-day operations of the athletics department. She has extensive experience working with NCAA rules and regulations, student-athlete services, Title IX and gender equity regulations, other compliance-related issues, and serves as a peer reviewer for the NCAA Certification Program. She currently serves on Iowa State and Big 12 Conference committees, and was a member of the NCAA Division I Women’s Basketball Committee.

Prior to the Iowa State appointment, the researcher served as Associate Dean of Students at The University of Maine and Associate Director of Athletics at Montana State University-Bozeman, both NCAA Division I-AA institutions. She also held various positions in The University of Alabama at Birmingham’s (UAB) Division I athletics

department, including Associate Sports Information Director, Assistant Athletics Director, Head Women's Golf Coach, and Associate Athletics Director. She was involved in the growth of UAB's football program as it ascended from NCAA Division III to Division I-AA to its current I-A status.

Chapter Summary

The relationship between athletics and academics has often been studied, yet little has been written regarding the administrative structure of intercollegiate athletics on campus. There has also been much discussion about the role of the campus president as it relates to intercollegiate sports, but little attention has been devoted to how this involvement is achieved or is not achieved via the campus administrative structure. This study analyzes the campus administrative structure of NCAA Division I, II and III athletics programs so that institutional officials may better understand the benefits and detriments of various models, and will better understand the impact that this organizational decision has on their athletics programs.

The administrative structure of intercollegiate athletics departments has not been reported or analyzed nor has the impact of the organizational structure on the athletics director been studied. This study may provide information to assist campus leaders in ensuring the proper campus unit is charged with oversight of their intercollegiate athletics program.

The purpose of the study was to analyze and report the findings from a preliminary study conducted by the researcher that a) identified and then compared the

reporting structures for college and university athletics directors at institutions that are members of the NCAA, and b) explored and reported the level of satisfaction the athletics directors had with their reporting structures. The study also a) explored the perceptions of athletics directors about their reporting structure in instances where change occurred in the previous five year period and b) analyzed the perceptions of athletics directors about what characteristics were important in the person changed with their supervision.

NCAA member institutions are designated as Division I, II or III depending on a number of factors, including the level of institutional financial commitment and the institution's philosophy regarding the desired level of competition for its student-athletes. Athletics directors at all 977 NCAA institutions were surveyed about their campus organizational structures. Based on emerging themes from 395 respondents, a series of more detailed questions were posed to 15 of those athletics directors that had indicated a change had occurred in their reporting structure within the previous five-year period.

A synthesis of the literature related to the athletics director reporting structure is outlined in chapter two. Chapter three follows with a focus on the methodology used in this descriptive study. The results of the study and conclusions are detailed in chapters four and five.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

General information about intercollegiate athletics and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) is included in Chapter 1. However, the literature review includes more comprehensive information about the history of athletics and the NCAA as well as the current configuration of this major governing body that regulates intercollegiate athletics. In order to best understand the significance of the athletic director reporting structure, one must know when and how intercollegiate athletics became integrated into the campus culture. While this study will analyze all reporting structures, the review emphasizes literature that relates to the role of the university president in intercollegiate athletics. This is the most commonly studied model, and the president serves as a key campus position in determining institutional control.

Brief History of American Intercollegiate Sports

The escalating costs of maintaining a quality intercollegiate athletics program threaten its very existence in the 21st century; a tremendous irony when one considers the reasons for the growth of college sports in the early 1900s. Colleges and universities of the late 19th and early 20th century decided to emphasize their sports programs because of the revenue potential and the enhancements provided to campus recruiting at a time when enrollments were down. Today, many colleges and universities are imposing double-digit tuition increases to compensate for reduced state appropriations (Farrell, 2003).

These economic factors force universities to reassess their athletics departments, sometimes resulting in the elimination of programs (Suggs, 2003).

Revenue sources were few for colleges and universities in the early 1900s (Chu, 1985; Chu, 1989; Gardner, 1960; Shea & Wieman, 1967). Then, the realization that people would pay money to see their athletics teams play prompted presidents and other university administrators to build large stadiums and arenas to house their intercollegiate programs. They even had enough money left over to construct academic buildings and fund intramural sports (Gardner, 1960).

This growth also came at a time when there was little consensus on the structure of higher education. In the late 1800s, the early British beginnings of American higher education were influenced by the Germans' emphasis on new learning (Chu, 1985; Chu, 1989). This time of transition was further altered by the establishment of the Morrill Act of 1862, one of the most significant occurrences in the development of higher education. This act established the land-grant college, giving each institution 150,000 acres of land for agricultural and mechanical purposes. The two purposes of the land-grant school were: 1) to meet the educational needs of any student, and 2) to directly contribute to the community (Chu, 1989). In part, it was to make the missions of colleges and universities more practical (Chu, 1985). As the mission and purpose of higher education were being redefined, intercollegiate athletics provided a sense of unity and spirit for fragmented campuses while also serving as a means for raising money and increasing enrollments (Chu, 1989; Rudolph, 1962; Shea & Wieman, 1967; Shulman & Bowen, 2001; Chu, 1989).

The first intercollegiate contest was a boat race between Harvard and Yale in 1852. Harvard University in Boston, Massachusetts was founded in 1636, the first college established in the United States, and fittingly, was involved in this first piece of intercollegiate athletics history (Cohen & March, 1974; Smith, 1988). Soon after, other sports began to emerge in American culture. A chronological listing of the introduction of these other “college sports” follows:

Baseball	1859	Amherst, Williams
Football	1869	Rutgers, Princeton (This game resembled what we now know as the game of “soccer”) Later, Rugby, resembling football as we know it today, was played between Harvard and Yale in 1875
Soccer		See Football Above
Track and Field	1874	Columbia, Cornell, Princeton, Yale
Lacrosse	1881	Johns Hopkins, Lehigh, Stevens Institute of Technology
Tennis	1883	Harvard, Amherst, Yale, Brown, Trinity
Cross Country	1890	University of Pennsylvania, Cornell
Basketball	1892	at Springfield College
Fencing	1894	Columbia, Harvard
Hockey	1896	Harvard, Brown
Golf	1896	Yale, Columbia
Swimming	1897	Columbia, Pennsylvania, Yale
Wrestling	1900	Yale, Columbia
Boxing	1919	Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania State College

(Shea & Wieman, 1967, p. 9)

Intercollegiate athletics was far more complex than simply putting two teams together in competition. Determining eligibility requirements for competition and developing rules of play were two early issues facing college sports (Hardy & Berryman, 1982). In its early stages, intercollegiate athletics was administered by students and student-run associations (Chu, 1985; Hardy & Berryman, 1982; Renick, 1974; Thelin & Wiseman, 1992). However, by the turn of the century, athletics grew beyond the

administrative capacities of college students. As a result of the changing composition of the student body and the students' lack of time to devote to the athletics enterprise, intercollegiate programs lacked continuity and uniform eligibility rules (Hardy & Berryman, 1982; Shea & Wieman, 1967). This led to the formalization of administrative controls of intercollegiate programs (Gerdy, 1997; Shea & Wieman, 1967).

In addition to the evolution of the "athletics director," other constituencies became involved in intercollegiate athletics, resulting in an athletics culture that resembles today's model. University officials encouraged alumni participation due to the revenue source these graduates brought to campus and because of their ability to provide support to other campus areas beyond athletics. Faculty members were thus persuaded to allow alumni to exert influence in campus affairs (Shea & Wieman, 1967). Because the alumni and boards of trustees were comprised of businessmen who did not typically have the same educational viewpoint as the faculty (Chu, 1989; Shea & Wieman, 1967; Shulman & Bowen, 2001), intercollegiate athletics grew into big business with a commercial influence.

As this structure grew, so did the unrest of the faculty, prompting an increase in faculty involvement in the governance of athletics programs (Chu, 1989). Because the faculty maintained a primary interest in teaching and research, campus administrators relied heavily on the guidance of the athletics personnel, making the role of the athletics director a very important one (Shulman & Bowen, 2001).

Today, faculty involvement in intercollegiate athletics varies by institution. But, more than one hundred years after intercollegiate athletics' initial growth spurt, faculty

influence and governance over intercollegiate athletics continues to elicit much discussion and debate. An early analysis of the shift in the governance of intercollegiate athletics programs from student to faculty to athletic director was conducted in 1929 in a report issued by the Carnegie Foundation. This particular segment focuses on the role of faculty members in intercollegiate athletics:

The final tests for the presence or absence of true faculty control would seem to be these: First, is the guiding influence that of a man whose chief activities and interests lie in academic fields, or one to whose income athletics contribute directly or indirectly? Secondly, are the coaches immediately responsible to a faculty representative whose principal concerns are academic, or are they subordinate to another or former coach now elevated to faculty status, or to a former business manager or an alumni secretary who is under academic appointment for the sake of the good that may accrue to athletics from his connection with them? Certainly, in the institutions where faculty control exists at its best there appears to be little trickling to special interests or privileged groups, because the director is not in any way dependent upon athletics for success in his professional career. (Savage, 1929, p.102)

While each college and university struggled with its own governance issues, administrators were concerned about regulating athletics as a whole. The early football contests were dangerous and rough, prompting the formation of the Intercollegiate Football Association, whose purpose was to bring order to the chaos that surrounded the game (Falla, 1981). The organization that evolved into the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) was formed initially in 1906 as a way to regulate the rules in the game of football after a player died during an intercollegiate contest the previous year (Falla, 1981). Over the past century, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) has grown into a body that governs many aspects of the administration of its member institutions' intercollegiate athletics programs. Some of these issues include

recruiting regulations, player eligibility, financial aid, playing and practice time, sportsmanship and ethical conduct, sports championships, and institutional control (NCAA, 2003a).

Despite the complex evolution of intercollegiate athletics and the changes in its governance, many of the same issues that have affected intercollegiate athletics continue to plague institutional administrators (Duderstadt, 2000; Gerdy, 1997; Scott, 1982). Students, faculty, administrators, boosters, and other interested constituents continue to struggle over the control and influence of this billion-dollar industry residing on the local college campus. Individual institutions as well as the collective group of colleges and universities of the NCAA continue to define their athletics image and fit within the mission of the university as a whole (Duderstadt, 2000).

The Role of Intercollegiate Athletics in Higher Education

Player eligibility involves many factors, but one of those relates to amateurism. The NCAA distinguishes an amateur from a professional in that “a professional athlete is one who receives any kind of payment, directly or indirectly, for athletics participation except as permitted by the governing legislation of the Association” (NCAA, 2003a, p. 69). This, along with the fact that athletes must be full-time college students and the sports programs are units of a college or university, sets intercollegiate athletics apart from professional sports.

Intercollegiate athletics has become an integral part of the culture of higher education in the United States (Chu, 1989; Duderstadt, 2000; Gerdy, 1997). In fact,

according to Ronald Smith, “nearly every important institution of higher education in America has at some point in its history emphasized big-time intercollegiate athletics” (Smith, 1988, pp. vii-viii). Athletics events offer venues for students to come together for a common goal as spectators and can further engage students into the life of the campus by helping them develop an allegiance to their school’s sports team. Its place has been justified because proponents say athletics enhances a student’s education. Gerdy outlined the benefits of student participation in athletics:

Therefore, it was argued that participation in athletics supplemented the educational process because lessons that could not be learned from a textbook could be learned on the playing fields. Sports could be used as a vehicle to instill in participants an appreciation for concepts such as teamwork, discipline, and perseverance, which directly related to the teaching component of higher education’s mission. The claim that coaches were teachers and educators served to solidify further the link between athletics and education. The assertion that participation in athletics was educational in that it helped build the character of those involved was perpetuated by coaches and athletic administrators and embraced by higher education leaders, state politicians, the public, and most of the media, faculty, and students. (1997, p. 33)

However, the athletics department is not just another department on the college campus, and it is difficult to determine its place in academia. Critics of intercollegiate athletics believe that the educational component of athletics participation is overrated (Shulman & Bowen, 2001) and that universities have different standards for their athletics programs than they do for their academic programs (Cosell, 1991), resulting in a loss of control by university presidents. Athletics departments tend to be more independent than other campus departments and “this is largely due to the ability of athletics departments to forge linkages with significant external constituencies to an extent beyond what other subunits have been able to do” (Frey, 1985, p. 184).

The ability to attract such supporters, donors, and recruits has been enhanced by the addition of television exposure to athletics programs and their respective campuses (Gerdy, 1997). Television was the thrust behind the marketing growth of intercollegiate athletics in the 1960s and 1970s and continues to drive the commercial aspect and sensationalism of college sports today (Duderstadt, 2000; Eitzen, 1996; Gerdy, 1997; Sperber, 2000). This increase in exposure has not always been positive. Despite capacity crowds in giant stadiums and billion-dollar television deals, few athletics departments are able to balance their budgets (Frey, 1985; Gerdy, 1997). Gerdy questioned whether athletics makes a positive contribution to the university's public relations efforts, using this example of a turn of events following Florida State's 1994 national football championship victory:

Shortly after the Orange Bowl victory, allegations that student-athletes were provided clothes and cash by agents while coaches "looked the other way" quickly changed the type of exposure the football program was generating. If winning a national football championship meant that Florida State University was a winner, what did the allegations that the football program won the national championship while breaking NCAA rules mean? (1997, p. 50)

With the help of additional media exposure, the image of the NCAA and intercollegiate athletics has been highly scrutinized and criticized. The integrity of prominent institutions of higher learning has been questioned because of athletics department actions such as those by Florida State. More subtle issues surrounding intercollegiate athletics, however, further divide them from their academic counterparts. Faculty members and other critics of sports programs feel that money spent on athletics can be better used in the academic arena (Funk, 1991). Lengthy playing seasons, travel

for competition, and excessive practices distract student-athletes from their academic work (Funk, 1991).

Gerdy declared that “the biggest future challenge facing college athletics is the need for the leaders of the athletic department and of higher education in general to demonstrate to an increasingly skeptical public that athletic programs do in fact contribute to the purpose of American higher education in relevant and timely ways” (1997, p. 9). Whether that contribution is demonstrated has significant implications for those who lead intercollegiate athletics programs. Duderstadt discussed the place intercollegiate athletics has within the university, calling it “miniscule” compared to the rest of the university in terms of numbers of student participants and dollars spent (2000, pp. 8-9). However, the negative publicity potential for higher education as demonstrated by the Florida State example is far from miniscule and demands that university leaders be knowledgeable and involved in the day-to-day affairs of their athletics programs.

As long as intercollegiate athletics coexists with academia, campus leaders must make every effort to ensure it is operated with integrity and with a commitment to support the mission of the university. The NCAA exists to assist its members with this endeavor.

The Current NCAA Structure

Colleges and universities in the United States that offer intercollegiate athletics typically belong to an organization that governs the activities of its sports program. Two-year and community-college athletics programs belong to the National Junior College

Athletic Association (NJCAA) (NJCAA, 2003). The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) is a governing body composed of 306 four-year institutions from the United States and Canada (NAIA, 2003). Finally, the largest and most visible organization that governs intercollegiate athletics is the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). At the time of this writing, the NCAA is composed of 1,265 members with approximately 361,175 student-athletes in Divisions I, II and III (NCAA, 2003b). Institutions belonging to this association are the focus of this study.

The NCAA is headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana and employs 350 full-time staff in the national office (NCAA Human Resources, personal communication, December 9, 2003). These individuals work in areas that include the administration of 87 annual NCAA championships in 22 sports, interpretation of NCAA rules and regulations, education services, rules enforcement, promotions, public affairs and legal services (NCAA, 2003b).

The number of active member institutions totals 1025, and they are divided into Division I (I-A, I-AA and I-AAA), Division II, and Division III (NCAA, 2003a). Active NCAA members are defined as follows:

An active member is a four-year college or university or a two-year upper-level collegiate institution accredited by the appropriate regional accrediting agency and duly elected to active membership under the provisions of the Association bylaws. Active members have the right to compete in NCAA championships, to vote on legislation and other issues before the Association, and to enjoy other privileges of membership designated in the constitution and bylaws of the Association. (NCAA, 2003a, p. 7).

Prior to 1973, there was no divisional separation among member institutions. In 1973, the membership was divided into three legislative and competitive divisions—

Divisions I, II and III. Five years later, Division I members voted to create subdivisions I-A and I-AA in the sport of football. Division I-AAA institutions are those classified as Division I but which do not sponsor intercollegiate football.

There are a total of 326 active Division I members. Division I-A institutions (117 active) compete at the highest national level and are afforded the most prominent status in terms of representation on NCAA committees and issues. They are generally members of athletics conferences made up of similar institutions and collectively have a strong voice and authority in NCAA governance. They have minimum attendance requirements at their home football contests and rely on television and ticket revenue to balance multimillion-dollar budgets, necessitating a spectator-friendly philosophy. To be a member of Division I in general, institutions must sponsor at least seven sports for men and seven for women (or six for men and eight for women) with two team sports for each gender. Athletics programs in this classification also have minimum contest, participant and scholarship requirements, forcing institutions to make a strong financial commitment to play at this level. Division I-A receives most of the media and fan attention and typically has higher revenues and expenses than other Division I members (NCAA, 2003b).

Division I-AA institutions (121 members) are not required to make the same financial commitment nor must they have minimum attendance requirements like their Division I-A counterparts. They must meet all of the above-stated criteria of Division I membership, but they normally expend far fewer dollars on their athletics programs and do not typically bring in as much television or ticket revenue. Nonetheless, their

programs are still highly visible on the national scene and often have strong local and regional fan interest (NCAA, 2003b). Division I-AAA institutions (88 active) compete at the highest level in all sports, but do not sponsor intercollegiate football programs.

Division II institutions (279 active members) range in enrollment from 383 to 22,845 and have an average of 3,306 students. Members of Division II require even less of a financial commitment from their central campus administration, operate under slightly less rigorous rules and regulations and have fewer revenue opportunities than members of Division I. Their competition is more regional in nature and rosters feature more local or in-state student-athletes (NCAA, 2003b).

Division III institutions (420 active members) have minimum contest and participant requirements but do not offer student-athletes financial aid related to athletic ability. Athletics departments in Division III typically are staffed and funded like any other department in the university. The emphasis in Division III is more on the student-athlete's experience as a participant and less about the spectator aspect of sports.

Division III athletics programs encourage participation by maximizing the number and variety of athletics opportunities available to students, placing primary emphasis on regional in-season and conference competition (NCAA, 2003b).

The NCAA is governed by the Executive Committee, composed of university presidents from all three divisions, and oversees issues that span the membership of the Association. This committee is organized to ensure that "each division operates consistently with the basic purposes, fundamental policies and general principles of the Association" (NCAA, 2003a, p. 1). The Division I committee structure consists of a

Board of Directors, charged with approving all NCAA legislation; academic affairs, eligibility and compliance, and championships and competition cabinets; and rules and sport committees (NCAA, 2003a, p. 1). Divisions II and III are governed by a Presidents' Council made up of institutional CEOs, the Management Council comprised of athletics administrators and faculty members, and sports and rules committees (NCAA, 2003a).

Each NCAA member institution has a voice in the legislative process through its respective conference and the NCAA committee structure, a governance structure that has changed over time. But despite those changes, a core principle has remained steadfast, a principle calling for sound institutional governance and control.

Institutional Governance and Control

The three divisions of the NCAA are responsible for voting to establish or amend the rules by which they are governed, subject to interpretation by staff members of the NCAA headquarters. Rules are generally instituted to provide a “level playing field” for all intercollegiate competition, often as a result of abuses by some colleges and universities in an attempt to gain a competitive advantage. The NCAA and its institutions are governed by operating principles that attempt to protect the integrity of the members and their role in higher education. As stated in the NCAA Constitution, Bylaw 1.3.1:

Basic Purpose. The competitive athletics programs of member institutions are designed to be a vital part of the educational system. A basic purpose of this Association is to maintain intercollegiate athletics as an integral part of the educational program and the athlete as an integral part of the student body, and, by doing so, retain a clear line of demarcation between intercollegiate athletics and professional sports. (NCAA, 2003a, p. 1)

Intercollegiate athletics has always struggled with its reputation because of the widespread media attention related to violations of NCAA rules and regulations. The NCAA membership has undergone a variety of reform movements to improve its image and integrity, including the formation of The President's Commission in 1983. This group of presidents decided to command the control of intercollegiate athletics, which led to significant changes in the NCAA governance structure.

During the 1990s, there was a movement for even more presidential involvement in the conduct of athletic programs. The reason, of course, was to have presidential control in keeping athletics in line with the educational mission of the university.

Wilford Bailey, former President of Auburn University wrote:

...no institution...can escape the threat of ethical disruption that lies latent in the separated condition between the body of higher education and its athletic subculture. Because of the positive visibility and consolidation of loyalties that even a modestly successful athletic program can engender..., universities are continually vulnerable to their own self-generated pressures to enhance athletics. (Bailey & Littleton, 1991, p. 11)

College and university presidents became more aware and involved in NCAA governance both on the national and campus level after the formation of The President's Commission (Duderstadt, 2000; Gerdy, 1997; Patberg, 2002).

Although most universities have long had a formal system in place wherein the athletic department reports to the president, it was not uncommon in years past for powerful athletic directors to keep the president and the institution at arm's length. However, by the 1980s, it became clear that the days of the czar athletic director and independent athletic department were coming to an end. College sports were becoming simply too visible and their impact on the university too great for their control and management to be left entirely to the direction of the athletic establishment, its values, and its culture. (Duderstadt, 2000, p. 124)

A variety of constituencies play a role in the concept of institutional control. The NCAA requires that member colleges and universities control their athletics programs within the rules and regulations of the Association. According to the NCAA, an institution demonstrates institutional control when:

1. Formal institutional policies and procedures for compliance are in place.
2. Policies and procedures are being monitored and enforced, and are established in such a way as to deter violations before they occur.
3. Communication of compliance procedures occurs clearly and regularly.
4. Steps are taken to alter a compliance system when there are indications the system is not working.
5. After learning of a violation, the institution takes swift action.
6. The institution makes clear that violations of NCAA rules will result in discipline and possible discharge.
7. The institution makes clear that individuals have the responsibility to self-report any NCAA rules violation without fear of negative consequences.
8. Meaningful compliance education programs exist for personnel engaged in athletically related operations. (NCAA, 2003c, p. 1)

The organizational structure of an athletics department is significant in terms of institutional control because the president's involvement and knowledge of the activities of the intercollegiate program are necessary for a college or university to demonstrate that it meets NCAA rules and regulations. The level of direct presidential involvement on campus, however, varies (Duderstadt, 2000; Miller, 1982; Patberg, 2002).

Each NCAA institution is unique in its structure, philosophy, mission, and commitment to intercollegiate athletics; therefore, institutions differ in where they place their athletics departments on their campus organizational chart. Many college presidents desire a hands-on approach and assign the athletics director to a position with a direct reporting line to the president. Duderstadt asserted, "a university president ignores intercollegiate athletics only at great peril – both institutional and personal" (2000, p. 9).

A direct reporting line from the athletic director ideally ensures that the president is directly and regularly informed and can give the necessary guidance on the many issues that arise involving the athletics program (Duderstadt, 2000; Patberg, 2002; Suggs, 2001).

In contrast, Thelin and Wiseman (1989) believed the athletics director should never report directly to the president, as a direct reporting line represents an imbalance of academics and athletics:

...by allowing a formal structure in which the athletics director reports directly to the president, the president tacitly agrees that the intercollegiate athletics program is more than an academic department – more than the biology or English departments, whose chairs report to a dean. Intercollegiate athletics is even more than an entire academic school whose dean reports to the vice president for academic affairs. (p. 92)

In addition to concern about the level of importance placed on an intercollegiate athletics program by its place in the university or college organizational chart, college presidents simply may lack the time to devote the necessary effort to their athletics department. Others may want to distance themselves from potential scandal involving their athletics programs (Duderstadt, 2000; Miller, 1982). Shulman and Bowman (2001) quoted one former college president who states that, “a ‘visceral uneasiness or actual distaste for what is going on in intercollegiate athletics . . . results in a delegation of responsibility for watching over the intercollegiate athletics program to someone lower down in the organization’” (2001, pp. 307-308). These presidents may choose to assign the supervision of the intercollegiate athletics program to a designated vice president or other administrative staff member. This is a trend that some experts such as Miller

(1982) found alarming because of the vice presidents' inexperience in the governance of sport. Miller stated the following is it relates to the "Vice Presidential buffer":

Many presidents prefer this buffer because athletics, particularly in many large-scale programs, is often volatile and time-consuming, and to avoid unwanted pressure, many presidents prefer to stay one step removed. Presidents have learned, many the hard and painful way, of their community's lust for winning, and most chief executives choose not to be in the direct 'firing line' should athletic problems erupt. The strategy is to assign a vice president the responsibility for overseeing the athletic program. (pp. 93)

Sanders' (2001) preliminary data collection revealed that these designated vice presidents might be chosen because they are professionally qualified or suited to fulfill this role as the direct overseer of the athletics program. Or, because of current issues (e.g. legal, financial) involving the intercollegiate athletics program, a specific vice president may be a logical choice. Perhaps there is a particular staff member who has an interest in athletics and in whom the president justifies placing the administration of intercollegiate athletics.

Thelin and Wiseman (1989) argued that a diverse group of administrators on campus might be underutilized if not given an opportunity to oversee athletics. They believe an athletics department can benefit from a structure that ties the program into the larger developmental operation of the university by way of business and finance, administration, public relations, advancement, or student affairs. Kjeldsen (1982) believed there is no best way for an athletics department to fit into the organizational structure, but real supervision can keep programs under control, whether it comes from a dean, a vice president, or a president.

Regardless of the structure, administrators must provide for an organization that ensures a competent supervisor who is aware of the magnitude of the responsibility of intercollegiate athletics whether that individual is the university president or a designee (Duderstadt, 2000). And it should involve a director of athletics who works closely with his or her supervisor, not one who chooses to operate independently and without close communication with the rest of the institution (Duderstadt, 2000; Miller, 1982).

Whether the athletics director has a direct reporting line to the university president or the director position reports to a designee, the president should be active in the administration of the athletics program. A healthy relationship between the president and the athletics director is vital in ensuring the athletics department has appropriate administrative oversight, thus preventing abuses of university, conference, and NCAA rules and regulations that may threaten the integrity of the academic institution.

The Roles of the University President and Athletics Director

The university or college president has many roles but is primarily the individual on campus who serves as chief executive officer, ensuring all departments and areas are run in an effective and efficient manner (Millett, 1980). Presidential schedules are demanding, and the university's top administrator must make choices about the best way to spend time (Cohen & March, 1974). These individuals serve many constituencies including students, faculty, alumni and local taxpayers. Fisher (1984) discusses the different demands these groups place on the president,

The president is expected to deal effectively with a sometimes arrogant faculty that demands results and – at the same time – demands to be equal; dissident

students whose protests disregard reality; alumni who resent change and love football but expect the good reputation of Old Siwash to be maintained at all costs; demanding, demeaning, and wasteful governments; and givers who are sometimes selfish, petty, or worse. Whatever befalls the institution, the president is expected to resolve brilliantly. (p. 3)

Presidents and chancellors are accountable for all activities on their campuses and for establishing an appropriate organizational structure for their institutions (Cohen & March, 1974; Corson, 1960; Millett, 1980). In this complex role is the important responsibility of ensuring integrity within the institution's intercollegiate athletics program (Moore, 1992). Chief executive officers usually progress through the ranks of the academic community and therefore are generally more familiar with educational policies and structures (Cohen & March, 1974) than with intercollegiate athletics. However, the public interest in and examination of intercollegiate athletics, as well as NCAA regulations, force presidents into active roles with their sports programs (Bok, 1985; Gerdy, 1992; NCAA 2003a). The extent that presidents are involved in any campus department varies within and between colleges and universities (Duderstadt, 2000; Miller, 1982; Patberg, 2002). Fisher wrote that presidents should be cautious about their levels of involvement:

Rarely should the president be involved in the direct operation of an office or department assigned to an officer of vice presidential rank except in a convivial or observational manner....deeper involvement would compromise the line of delegated vice-presidential authority and accountability. If a president chooses to become directly involved in an office....that ordinarily reports to a vice president, it is preferable to reorganize the office to report directly to the president rather than to risk the entire organization for a presidential preoccupation. (Fisher, 1984, p. 85)

Because of the high visibility of most athletics programs and the unique place of athletics in higher education, it is essential for college and university presidents to place

high importance on the athletics director position. The athletics director position is far more complex than the general public may perceive. Similar to the university president's job, the athletic director position serves various constituencies whose needs must be addressed and the differences in interests balanced. Some of these interests include, but are not limited to, coaches and staff, media, student-athletes, faculty, fans and alumni, university students, and university administration. Barrett (1985) studied the characteristics that university presidents found desirable in their athletics directors:

College presidents wanted athletic directors who were professional and understood the academic, financial and promotional aspects of intercollegiate athletic programs. The selectees for the Athletic Director's position should be unquestionably loyal and honest, be able to project and articulate the institution's values and philosophy toward intercollegiate athletics and be able to hire coaches and other athletic administrators with these same values and characteristics. (p. 151).

The athletics director represents not just his or her own department, but often speaks for the institution as a whole. The director is typically a very public figure who is involved in public relations; manages a budget that often includes state, university and donor funds; leads the efforts of coaches and staff members; and is skilled at marketing and fundraising (Bailey & Littleton, 1991; Frost 1971; Thelin & Wiseman, 1989). Frost (1971) conducted an analysis of the athletic director position and outlined the "personal qualities and professional competencies" desirable for the job:

It would seem that to be a perfect athletic director one would need to be a wondrous person. This is partially true, for his duties are many and varied. Obviously, no single person can be superlative in all qualifications. Nevertheless, it behooves those who are responsible for his employment to analyze carefully the characteristics and qualities necessary for success in this increasingly difficult vocation.

Personal Qualities

- a. Strength and courage
- b. A sincere interest in youth and their development
- c. A sense of humor
- d. Even temperament
- e. Sincerity and commitment
- f. Optimism, buoyancy and confidence
- g. Sense of justice and impartiality
- h. Integrity and solidarity

Professional Competencies

- a. Knowledge of administrative techniques and procedures
- b. Initiative and imagination
- c. Ability to make intelligent decisions
- d. Tactfulness and wisdom in human relations
- e. Knowledge of and ability in the public relations aspect of the position
- f. Business acumen and experience in financial administration
- g. Competence in planning and administering athletic facilities
- h. The ability to interpret and administer rules and regulations governing athletic competition
- i. A knowledge of coaching methods and techniques and of coaching problems
- j. Ability to communicate
- k. Educational and professional competence
- l. Vision
- m. Experience (Frost, 1971, pp. 242-245)

While the university president is ultimately responsible for the control of the athletics program, the athletics director provides the day-to-day administration of the department and must ensure compliance with all institutional, conference, and NCAA rules and regulations (Bailey & Littleton, 1991). A good athletic director balances all the needs of different constituency groups while meeting program goals in a fiscally and ethically creditable fashion (Miller, 1982).

Organizational Structures and Theories

The governance of college and universities involves complex relationships in complex social institutions (Duderstadt, 2001; Karol, 1980). It is generally the responsibility of presidents and chancellors to establish appropriate organizational structures for their institutions (Cohen & March, 1974; Corson, 1960; Millett, 1980). These structures are often described in the form of an organizational chart. This formal structure outlines how work and communication flow through an organization and clarifies areas of responsibility within and among various departments (Birnbaum, 1988; Blackwell, 1966; Karol, 1980; Lorsch, 1970; Mintzberg, 1983; Obel, 1981). However, there is a very important human aspect to any organizational structure (Millett, 1980). “Clearly, every organization has important power and communication relationships that are not put down on paper” (Mintzberg, 1983, p. 19).

Karol (1980) defined organizing as “the process of grouping activities and responsibilities and establishing relationships, formal and informal, that will enable people to work together most effectively and efficiently in determining and accomplishing the objectives of the enterprise” (p. 92). Given this definition, then, and according to Millett, no two organizations can ever be identical. “The varied leadership styles, the varied kinds of people brought together in an enterprise, the varied work technologies, the varied time factors and location environments – all such factors and others as well mean that every organized enterprise is different from any other enterprise” (Millett, 1980, p. 23).

Millett (1980) defined an organization as “a structure of relationships among people joined together for a common purpose at a particular time and in a particular place” (p. 1). Like Karol, Millett believed that organizational structures are descriptions of relationships among people (Millett, 1980).

Karol outlined his “Principles of Organization,” classic principles that college and university presidents should know:

Objectives: An organization should have a clearly defined objective (or objectives).

Authority: The organization must have a supreme authority and clear lines of authority should run from that individual (or group) down through the various levels of hierarchy of the organization.

Responsibility: Authority should be commensurate with responsibility.

Specialization: To the extent possible, the work of a person or unit should be confined to a single function or a group of related functions and these functions should be grouped under one head.

Efficiency: Objectives should be attained at the lowest possible cost (human, monetary, or other resource costs).

Unity of Command: Each individual should be accountable to only one superior.

Coordination: The organization must provide for a method or mechanism for coordinating all efforts toward common goals or objectives.

Span of Control: There is a limit to the number of immediate subordinates where work is interrelated, that one individual can supervise...an appropriate limit depends on a number of factors such as the nature of the organization, how rapidly decisions must be made, the capabilities, personality, style of the superior and of the subordinates, and like considerations.

Short Chain of Command: There should be as few levels of supervision as possible between the chief executive or supreme authority and the lowest organizational unit.

Delegation: Decisions should be made at the lowest level having competence to make the decision.

Balance: There must be continued concern that there is a reasonable balance in the size of the various units within the organization, between attempting to standardize policies and procedures and insuring flexibility and ability to react, and between centralization and decentralization of decision-making.

Accountability: Authority may be delegated but responsibility may not and accountability for all actions within a span of responsibility must be established.

(Karol, 1980, pp. 92-93)

Universities are generally divided up into three broad groups—academic affairs, student affairs, and business affairs (Karol, 1980). Variances in these groupings might occur from one institution to the next along with individual titles and responsibilities (Karol, 1980). Many questions should be asked when determining where departments fit in the overall university scheme, for instance, “Should the individuals concerned with affirmative action and compliance with various governmental programs be assistants to high ranking officials...or Directors of small units, reporting to a senior administrative official?” (Karol, 1980, p. 100). Or, “Should the Alumni Relations Director report to the president, the Chief Development Officer, or the Chief Administrative Officer?” (Karol, 1980, p. 101).

With many complicated questions and decisions to be made, it is inevitable that new leadership may have different ideas about how the organization should be structured (Karol, 1980). Organizational structures within higher education change for a variety of reasons and are often arranged to meet the styles and personalities of particular individuals (Karol, 1980). Karol advised that the organization of an educational institution should be examined for efficacy by considering the following:

1. The effects of time and growth;
2. The impact of external influences;
3. The need for organizational balance;
4. Changes in key personnel and the caliber of present staff;
5. Possible new objectives or changes in emphasis in the future;
6. The need for reasonably rapid reactions to changing times and needs;
7. The size of the institution and whether it is public, independent, or part of a multi-campus system;
8. Signs of potential or possible organizational problems...some of the more frequently encountered signs versus symptoms are:
 - a. Difficulty in arriving at sound decisions in a timely fashion;
 - b. Unrest, back-biting, high turnover, absenteeism, poor morale;

- c. Poor communications, many rumors;
 - d. Imbalance in the assignment of responsibilities and work;
 - e. Difficulty in determining accountability and responsibility;
 - f. Inadequate development of staff;
 - g. Lack of concern or interest about the structure – a desire to simply copy someone else’s chart, or a belief that it is all a matter of the right people and the right attitude, or conversely, that organization has nothing to do with people problems;
 - h. A sense of drift and lack of accomplishment–ineffectual performance.
- (Karol, 1980, pp. 94-95)

A simple organizational chart does not tell the entire story of how an organization works or how effectively it operates. The individuals who work in the organization bring different characteristics to their supervisory roles and those characteristics must be identified and analyzed.

Massengale and Merriman (1985) wrote about two general models for the housing of intercollegiate athletics. The independent model of the athletics department is one that is clearly not an academic department. In this model, intercollegiate athletics departments are considered an entertainment enterprise and serve the purpose of public relations.

Because an independent athletics department represents a sizable investment and has extensive potential benefits, it seems prudent that its administrative structure be as efficient and as effective as possible. Even cursory examination of administrative flow charts illustrate that placing athletics under another department compounds the bureaucratic structure....One can only speculate at what provides the motivation for using such structures. Perhaps it is nothing more than tradition. Or, on closer examination it may be that chief administrators, because of the controversy that often surrounds college athletics, are reluctant to assume the direct control of collegiate athletic programs and prefer the creation of a buffer (Massengale & Merriman, 1985, p. 191).

The second model presented by Massengale and Merriman (1985) was the affiliated model. In this model, athletics staff members report through the regular

academic channels of the institution and coaches and staff typically have advanced degrees and are considered part of the academic community. This is an arrangement that “features teacher/coaches that view intercollegiate athletics as an educational service for students and society and not a profit motive corporate business enterprise with economic growth as its top priority” (1985, p. 192).

The authors concluded that due to “institutional variability to the rule differences in the purposes of academic and athletic departments and their accompanying administrative responsibilities” (1985, p. 204) that the complete separation of academics and athletics is justified. They believed that if it is absolutely necessary to place an individual in a liaison role between the athletics director and the institutional president, then this person should hold the title of a vice president or dean of student services. In addition to this argument, Massengale and Merriman (1985) believe that because athletics leaders have been asking university presidents to assume more direct oversight of intercollegiate athletics, then athletics departments should be “administered by a director that has a direct line and staff relationship with the president of the institution and that the athletic department be completely independent” (1985, p. 204).

Preliminary Data Collection

Data collected by Sanders (2001) in a preliminary study included results from a survey of all NCAA athletics directors regarding the reporting structure on their respective campuses and their satisfaction level with their structures. Results of this study are reported in chapter 4.

Other Relevant Studies

Four doctoral dissertations have data relevant to the role of the president as it relates to intercollegiate athletics. John A. Barrett's 1985 dissertation entitled *How College Presidents Perceive Their Role in Matters Relating to the Intercollegiate Athletic Program* concludes that college presidents have been perplexed about their role in intercollegiate athletics since the origination of college sport. Some of his major relevant findings and conclusions included:

1. College presidents perceived that their role in matters relating to intercollegiate athletic programs at their institutions was to provide direction and guidance as the leader and policy-maker.
2. The greatest pressure that college presidents felt in their role concerning intercollegiate athletics was in balancing large athletic budgets and keeping them out of the red while at the same time attempting to maintain highly competitive programs for both men and women. Time pressure was minimal.
3. College presidents indicated that they are undergoing an introspective examination of their role in matters relating to the intercollegiate athletic program at their institution, resulting in a period of uncertainty. (Barrett, 1985, 192, 195, 196)

Kurt Lee Patberg's 2002 dissertation studied the local and national involvement of Division I college and university presidents in athletics since the NCAA restructured in 1997. The presidents that responded to his survey indicated their desire to be more involved in intercollegiate athletics, possibly by creating a national forum and/or convention to discuss issues in intercollegiate athletics. His findings showed that many presidents were concerned that the lack of participation by a large majority of Division I presidents in national governance would have a negative effect on presidential participation on their respective campuses (Patberg, 2002).

Timothy Ramsey Rose's 1993 dissertation entitled *College and University Presidents' Involvement with Intercollegiate Athletics: Maintaining Institutional Control and Responsibility* studied the following: 1) with whom presidents interact to maintain institutional control and responsibility for intercollegiate athletics, 2) the nature of that involvement, and 3) the time devoted to those activities. A portion of this research included a study of the numbers of administrators who supervise athletics directors and found the following at the Division I level:

Presidents	99	56%
Other Administrators	77	44%

Of the presidents who indicated the athletics director reported to someone other than himself/herself in Division I, the summary is as follows:

VP Student Affairs	23
Sr./Executive VP	12
VP – Business Admin	11
Univ. or External Relations	9
Other Vice President	7
Split Reporting	5
Dean	4 (Rose, 1983, pp. 88-89)

Rodney Lain Caughron's 1995 dissertation entitled *Analysis of Perceptions of Division I-A Football College and University Presidents Towards the Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics Reform Measures* made the following generalizations that are relevant to this study:

1. Presidents perceive they have authority in athletics matters at their institutions.
2. Presidents have historically not taken control of intercollegiate athletics and continue to not take control. (Caughron, 1995, pp. 120-121)

These studies showed there is still much discussion and indecision surrounding the oversight and administration of intercollegiate athletics. College presidents do have interest and involvement in their intercollegiate programs. However, there is uncertainty about the best way to demonstrate this given the magnitude of some programs and the other demands on the presidents' time.

Anecdotal Data

In my role as Senior Associate Director of Athletics at a Division I-A university, I have the opportunity for regular contact with athletics directors both regionally and nationally. As a result of discussions with some of these individuals, I have collected anecdotal data related to the athletic director's relationship with his/her campus supervisor.

An athletics director from a large Division I-A institution told me he reported directly to the university president and could not imagine any other reporting structure. His opinion was that the immediate access and contact between the athletics director and president was essential and his president understood that "I'm the only member of his staff that has my own section of the newspaper" (Division I-A athletics director, personal communication, December 31, 2003). One Division I-AA athletics director explained that he has worked with two different reporting structures, 1) a direct reporting line to the university president, and 2) a direct report to the Vice President of Student Life, his current structure. He indicated the major advantage to reporting directly to the president was the obvious immediate access, although a number of personnel changes in the

presidency resulted in his inability to establish a relationship with his direct supervisor. This athletics director preferred a reporting line to the vice president, as long as he was considered an “institutional equal” of other vice presidents, including service on the President’s Cabinet. Reporting to a vice president provides for another advocate in matters the athletics director must take to the president and this vice president often “adds insight and perspective to the conversation” (Division I-AA athletics director, personal communication, March 2, 2004).

Other athletics directors expressed concern that by reporting to someone other than the university president, the athletics department was not afforded the status it needs to be successful. Having another level of administrators slowed the communication process, others say. Birnbaum (1998) discussed the significance of a department’s hierarchy on the organizational chart:

“...an office on the chart and its location in the hierarchy are a signal both inside and outside the campus of the importance of the substantive area. Location on the chart has a practical effect as well. People located near each other on the chart are more likely to interact with - and therefore to mutually influence - each other than people who are distant on the chart...those who report directly to senior people are more likely to be able to bring things to their attention...since the values of senior officers are likely to differ because of their roles, the fortunes of programs will often depend on the office to which they report...the structure of the college, thus affects how offices will interact and influence each other” (pp. 109-110).

Chapter Summary

Literature related to the study of the organizational structure of intercollegiate athletics often centered on the university or college president. The examination of the presidential role in campus sports programs revealed a lack of understanding and/or

continuity in how colleges and universities achieved control and effective governance in their intercollegiate programs. It also showed a definite contrast in how intimately involved a president should be in the affairs of the athletics program and how the organizational position of the athletics department can affect the entire campus.

As college sports have grown, the responsibility for oversight has evolved and changed; however, there is still clearly no consensus on what structure best serves both the athletics department and the university. The growth in television exposure, fan interest, revenue potential and media attention has turned intercollegiate athletics into the highest profile department on the college campus. The role of athletics in higher education continues to be debated; however, little attention is paid to how intercollegiate athletics fits into the campus in an organizational sense.

This study should provide needed attention to this aspect of intercollegiate athletics and should inform college and university administrators about the benefits and detriments of different reporting structure models for athletics directors. The literature review led the researcher to conclude that despite efforts to integrate athletics into the academic community, the gap continues to widen. However, effective administrative oversight of intercollegiate programs and a mutual understanding of higher education and athletics by both entities can improve the relationship for the betterment of the athletics department and the institution as a whole.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The problem addressed in this study is that reporting structures of athletics directors at colleges and universities belonging to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) have not been reported or analyzed. In addition, it was not clear what impact reporting structures or changes in reporting structures have had on athletics directors and their athletics programs.

The purpose of this descriptive study was twofold. The first was to report the findings from a preliminary study conducted by the researcher that a) identified and then compared the reporting structures for college and university athletics directors at institutions that are members of the NCAA and are categorized as Division I, II, or III; and b) explored and reported the level of satisfaction the athletics directors had with their respective reporting structures. The second phase of the study was to a) explore the perceptions of select athletics directors about their reporting structure in instances where change in the reporting structure occurred during the period 1996-2001 and b) analyze the perceptions of athletics directors about what characteristics are important in the person charged with supervising the athletics director at institutions where a change in the reporting structure has occurred.

The design, subjects, instrumentation, data collection procedures, and analysis for the study of the athletics director reporting structure in NCAA Divisions I, II and III are presented in Chapter 3. As stated in Chapter 1, the research questions which this study was designed to answer were 1) What are the differences in reporting structures for

intercollegiate athletics departments within NCAA Divisions I, II, and III; 2) What are the relationships between the types of reporting structures of NCAA Division I, II, and III athletics departments and the satisfaction level of the directors of athletics; 3) In cases where reporting structures have changed on campuses during recent years (1996-2001), what are the perceptions of the athletics directors about their structure; 4) How have changes in athletics director reporting structures impacted athletics programs; and 5) What is the preferred characteristic of the athletics director's immediate supervisor.

Design

This descriptive study involved the analysis and formal reporting of a preliminary study of athletics directors in each NCAA division to determine the current status of their reporting structure and their level of satisfaction with that structure. These data were collected through a written survey comprised of questions concerning the current status of the athletics director reporting structure and the director's level of satisfaction with that structure.

The initial data for this study were collected using a survey conducted via US Postal Service and e-mail of all 977 athletic directors at member institutions of NCAA Divisions I, II and III (Appendix B). Athletics directors were asked to respond to survey questions about themselves and their institutional demographics. They were also asked to indicate to whom they report in the administrative structure of the college or university, to provide information on changes in the organizational structure in the previous five years, and to indicate whether they are extremely satisfied, somewhat

satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or extremely dissatisfied with the current reporting structure on their campus. Athletics directors were also asked to comment on why they think their organization is structured the way it is and to give reasons for their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. A professor at Montana State University and an athletics director at a NCAA Division I-AA institution reviewed the survey prior to its distribution.

The cover letter for the survey included information about the purpose of the study, a request for the athletics director's assistance, an explanation of how confidentiality will be maintained, and instructions about how and when to return the completed survey (Appendix A). The researcher received permission to use letterhead from The Sports Management Institute for the cover letter because the survey served as a project for the researcher as an Institute participant. The fact that the researcher was a participant in the well-known, credible Sports Management Institute and was considered a professional colleague positively impacted the questionnaire response rate.

A follow-up telephone interview involved select athletics directors from each NCAA divisional level who had a change in their athletics department reporting structure during 1996-2001. A survey to obtain quantitative and qualitative data was also administered to the same set of athletics directors to get more information about the preferred characteristics of direct supervisors by these athletics directors. The researcher assessed these characteristics using a 20-item, five-point Likert scale to measure the varying degrees of importance placed on those characteristics.

In the telephone interview, athletics directors were asked to respond to a series of questions related to their organizational structure, to whom they report and to whom they previously reported, why they perceive the change was made, and whether the athletics director was involved in the decision-making regarding the change. The athletics director was also asked to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the structure and whether the change in reporting structure made a difference in the level of satisfaction with being the athletics director at the institution. The researcher's doctoral committee chair reviewed the questions prior to the interviews taking place to confirm that the instrument would obtain the desired data (Appendix C).

A 20-item, five-point Likert-scale administered to the same athletics directors included items identified from the researcher's preliminary study to be potentially desirable characteristics in the athletics director's supervisor. The athletics director was asked to express, on a five-point scale, the level of importance they placed on twenty characteristics identified by the researcher as significant (Appendix D).

Subjects

During 2001-02 and at the time the initial survey was conducted, there were 977 four-year colleges and universities classified as active members of the NCAA (NACDA, 2001). The athletics directors of all 977 institutions were asked to complete the written survey. Of the 977 institutions in the survey population, 115 were members of NCAA Division I-A, 123 were classified as Division I-AA, 83 were considered I-AAA, 263 were members of Division II, and 393 were classified as NCAA Division III. The names and

addresses of the subjects as well as the NCAA classifications were obtained from Collegiate Directories, Inc. CD, a database administered by the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA, 2001).

Of the 395 respondents, 108 reported having undergone a change in their athletics department reporting structure during the years 1996-2001 (27.3%). Of 54 respondents in Division I-A, seven (7) athletics directors reported a change (13%); of 50 respondents in Division I-AA, fifteen (15) reported a change (30%); of 31 respondents in Division I-AAA, eleven (11) reported a change (35.5%); of 103 respondents in Division II, thirty-two (32) reported a change (31.1%); and of 157 respondents in Division III, forty-three (43) indicated there was a change in reporting structure during the period 1996-2001 (27.4%). These figures are outlined in Table 17. Select athletics directors from each NCAA division were interviewed through telephone conversations to follow-up on their perspectives of the change in reporting structure.

Initially, all athletics directors who indicated a change had taken place in their reporting structure on their campus (1996-2001) were contacted by e-mail to solicit their participation in the study. This method yielded a proportional ratio of athletics directors from each NCAA divisional level for participation in the study. After the subject agreed to participate, the researcher arranged a date and time for the telephone interview. These subjects were then contacted to elicit their perceptions of the impact of the change in reporting structure. The written characteristic survey was subsequently administered to the same athletics directors.

Instrumentation

The initial data collection instrument was a self-designed survey consisting of seven (7) closed-ended and three (3) open-ended questions (Appendix B). The closed-ended questions were designed to be succinct and easily aggregated to provide factual information about the athletics director and the institution. The questions were also designed to provide standardized information for cross-tabulation purposes. The open-ended questions were designed to provide more detailed information and elicit opinions from the respondents, or simply to discover their points of view. The survey was submitted to Dr. Richard Howard, the chair of the researcher's doctoral committee for content and formatting considerations and was field-tested by a Division I-AA athletics director, a colleague of the researcher. The survey format, content, and clarity were reviewed, and the validity of the questions on the survey was discussed. Following the review, the researcher made the recommended changes to the document.

The follow-up telephone interview questions consisted of nine open-ended questions regarding the campus organizational changes involving intercollegiate athletics, designed to explore the athletics director's perception of the impact of these changes (Appendix C). The following basic questions were posed to the athletics directors: 1) To whom do you report in the campus administrative structure? 2) Where does the athletics director position fall in the campus flow chart (e.g. VP, Dean or Director level)? 3) Before the organizational change involving your position, to whom did your position report? 4) When did the reporting structure change? 5) Why did the reporting structure for intercollegiate athletics change? 6) Were you involved in the decision-making process

regarding the change? 7) What are the advantages of your current organizational structure? 8) What are the disadvantages of your current organizational structure? 9) Has the change in reporting structure made a difference in your level of satisfaction with being the athletics director at your institution and how?

The supervisor characteristic survey was administered to the same set of athletics directors and contained descriptions of various characteristics that might be preferred in an athletics director's supervisor (Appendix D). The list of characteristics in the survey was developed by the researcher and was based upon themes that emerged in the preliminary study. The Likert-scale was selected as an instrument to measure the extent to which athletics directors feel their direct supervisors should possess certain characteristics.

Validity of the scale was established by administering the survey to two athletics directors who were involved in a change in reporting structure and therefore had experience working for different reporting models. They had already shared their opinions in an anecdotal fashion with the researcher. The researcher examined whether their responses were consistent with those indicated by the athletics director on the preliminary study.

Data Collection Procedures

The initial survey was e-mailed on November 2, 2001 to all NCAA Division I, II and III athletics directors (878) who had an e-mail address listed in the database (NACDA, 2001) (Appendix A). In addition, a hard copy of the cover letter and survey

was sent to all athletics directors who did not have an e-mail address listed in the database (99). A self-addressed envelope was included for ease in response. A significant number of the e-mailed surveys were returned undeliverable with the apparent reason being a problem with the server on the researcher's e-mail system. A follow-up e-mail request was sent on November 5, 2001 to all subjects. The second attempt was transmitted successfully.

In order to protect the assurance of confidentiality to the subjects, the researcher set up an e-mail account that was password protected and only accessible by the researcher. Mailed surveys were returned to a post office box arranged solely for this purpose.

A follow-up telephone interview was conducted during March and April 2004 with select athletics directors in order to obtain descriptive data for the analysis regarding changes that were made in their athletics department reporting structures in the time period from 1996-2001. The researcher conducted an interview centered around nine basic open-ended questions with the same line of inquiry and pursued in greater depth any responses that provided the interviewer with more insight (See Appendix C). The interviewer took notes during the interview and conducted a member check by asking the interviewee for a commitment to review the notes for accuracy immediately following the interview (Creswell, 2003).

The same subjects were asked to complete a supervisor characteristic survey related to the importance that the athletics director places on certain characteristics of a direct supervisor (Appendix D). The list of characteristics in the survey was developed

by the researcher and was based upon themes that emerged in the preliminary study (Appendix E). The survey instrument was approved by the researcher's doctoral committee chair. The items were presented to the subjects on an agreement-disagreement continuum. The subjects were directed to select the response that best represented their opinion on the importance of each characteristic by indicating whether they: strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (U), disagree (D), or strongly disagree (SD) with the statements. The subjects were asked to present their responses on a written form and return via e-mail, fax or US mail.

Analysis

The data analysis consisted of descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions and cross-tabulations to examine the responses to the initial survey questions and the follow-up interview questions. A frequency distribution was developed to determine how many athletics directors report to which campus administrators and in what NCAA division. A cross tabulation between reporting lines, NCAA divisions, and satisfaction levels was created to determine the athletics director satisfaction level by NCAA division. Some qualitative data gathered from open-ended questions from the survey and the follow-up interview were categorized and converted into quantitative scales for statistical analysis.

A content analysis of the qualitative data was conducted to identify patterns or themes in responses. Upon review of these descriptive statistics, appropriate statistical tests were applied, if necessary.

The qualitative analysis consisted of a text analysis “to identify core consistencies and meanings” (Patton, 2002, p. 453). The researcher conducted an inductive analysis by searching the text in the survey responses for recurring words or themes. This process helped the researcher build “a foundation for the interpretive phase when meanings are extracted from the data, comparisons are made, creative frameworks for interpretations are constructed, conclusions are drawn, significance is determined, and, in some cases, theory is generated” (Patton, 2002, p. 465). Data and conclusions were submitted to an expert in qualitative research at Iowa State University. This individual evaluated whether the raw data logically led to the researcher’s conclusions (Creswell, 2003).

Each response from the written five-point survey was weighted with the numerical values 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 where a “strongly agree” statement would receive a weight of 5. High scores indicated the athletics director felt the characteristic was important in his/her direct supervisor. Responses to questions were grouped primarily in general categories regarding those athletics directors who wish their supervisor to be more athletics-, academic-, fiscal-, student affairs-, or legal-oriented (Appendix E). The researcher piloted the questionnaire by administering the survey to two athletics directors who have experienced change in their direct supervisors but are no longer employed at the institution where the change took place. These directors were not eligible to participate in the actual follow-up survey.

Limitations

The following were considered limitations of the study:

- The athletics directors' responses to the questions related to their supervisors may have been affected by their working relationship with their supervisor and not necessarily related to the effectiveness of the organizational structure.
- Some athletics directors may not have been involved in the change in organizational structure and therefore provided only their perception on certain questions related to the change.
- Because of their busy schedules and the numerous surveys they receive, athletics directors may have found it difficult to complete and return the surveys, resulting in a data subset of Division I, II and III institutions.
- Because athletics directors were asked about their job satisfaction as it relates to their direct supervisory relationship, they may have been reluctant to provide accurate data out of concern for their job security.

Delimitations

- The researcher was unable to interview every NCAA athletic director that was involved with a change in organizational structure.
- Some athletics directors that were interviewed in the follow-up survey were not the same athletics directors that underwent the change in reporting structure and could not report on their direct experience with the change.
- The data were limited to NCAA institutions and did not consider other types of athletics programs (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics, Junior/Two-Year Colleges).
- Interviews were conducted by telephone; therefore, nonverbal responses could not be measured.

Chapter Summary

The procedures for collecting data have been outlined in this chapter. Results from a preliminary study conducted by the researcher in 2001 will be reported in the next chapter along with results from a follow-up study. The researcher initially contacted all NCAA institutions to determine to whom in the organizational structure the athletics director reports. Athletics directors were then asked questions about their level of satisfaction and whether or not a change in their reporting structure had occurred in the previous five-year period (1996-2001). Selected athletic directors at institutions that had made changes were contacted for the follow-up study for further analysis of the reporting structure and reasons for the change.

The analysis consisted of creating descriptive statistics, including content analysis and frequency distributions to examine the responses. Some qualitative data gathered from open-ended questions from the survey and the follow-up interview were categorized and converted into quantitative scales for statistical analysis. A content analysis of the qualitative data was also conducted to identify patterns or themes in responses.

A survey scored as a Likert-scale was administered to the same set of athletics directors involved in the follow-up study to get their opinions on the necessary characteristics of the individual charged with the oversight of the intercollegiate athletics program. Upon review of all descriptive statistics, appropriate statistical tests were applied, if necessary. Results of the data analysis and conclusions are reported in Chapters Four and Five.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Results of the study are reported in chapter four and include data related to the athletics director reporting structure in NCAA Divisions I, II and III institutions. The purpose of this study was to identify and compare the athletics director reporting structure on campuses of NCAA Division I, II, or III member institutions as well as to explore the level of satisfaction that athletics directors had with their respective reporting structures. Another purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions of select athletics directors about their reporting structure in instances where a change in the reporting structure occurred during the five-year period prior to the 2001 study. It also briefly examined the athletics directors' preferences in characteristics of their immediate supervisor.

To address these purposes, the following five questions were examined:

#1 What are the differences in reporting structures for intercollegiate athletics departments within NCAA Divisions I, II, and III;

#2 What are the relationships between the types of reporting structures of NCAA Division I, II, and III athletics departments and the satisfaction level of the directors of athletics;

#3 In cases where reporting structures have changed on campuses during recent years (1996-2001), what are the perceptions of the athletics directors about their structure;

#4 How have changes in athletics director reporting structures impacted athletics programs;

#5 What is the preferred characteristic of the athletics director's immediate supervisor.

A data set was developed from the 395 responses to a survey that was administered to all 977 NCAA Division I, II, and III athletics directors. Fifteen athletics directors were selected for follow-up telephone interviews, specifically those who indicated in their written survey that their institution had undergone a change in the athletics director reporting structure. Thirteen of those directors also completed a written characteristic survey regarding their supervisors. The results are presented in the following sections as defined by the five research questions.

Results of Data Analysis

Research Question #1: What are the differences in reporting structures for intercollegiate athletics departments within NCAA Divisions I, II, and III.

One purpose of this study was to identify and compare the athletics director reporting structure on campuses of NCAA Division I, II, and III member institutions. Athletics directors at all 977 institutions that were active members of the NCAA in September 2001 were asked to respond to a survey consisting of ten items (Appendix B). The survey included questions about the athletics directors and their length of employment at their institution, whether their institution was public or private, who they reported to in the administrative structure of the college or university, whether there had been any changes in the organizational structure in the past five years, and their level of

satisfaction with the current reporting structure on campus. Athletics directors were asked to comment on why they thought their organization was structured as such and to give reasons for their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

Of the 977 surveys sent by e-mail and through the United States Postal Service, 40.4%, or 395 (n=395), of the athletics directors completed the survey. Of the 878 surveys sent by e-mail, 334 responded, for a 38% return rate. Of 99 surveys sent by U.S. mail, 61 responded, for a 61.6% return rate. Table 1 shows the participation rate according to the survey distribution method.

Table 1. Response Rate by Survey Distribution Method (n=395).

Method	n	% r	N	% N	% t
U.S. Mail	61	15.4	99	10.1	61.6
E-Mail	334	84.6	878	89.9	38.0
Totals	395	100	977	100	40.4

n=number of athletics directors who responded

% r=the percentage of respondents based on the overall number of surveys received [always adds up to 100%]

N=total number of surveys sent to NCAA institutions (2001-02)

% N=the percentage of each variable (method) based on the total population [always adds up to 100%]

% t= the percentage of respondents based on total number of surveys sent

The highest survey response rate came from Division I-A (47%) and Division I-AA (40.7%) athletics directors. Division I-AAA had the lowest response rate (37.3%), whereas NCAA Divisions II (39.6%) and III (39.6%) had identical response rates. The frequency of survey respondents is detailed in Table 2 according to the NCAA

membership of the respondent's institution. The column labeled "% N" shows the percentage rate of each variable compared to the total population. In comparing "% N" to the column labeled "% n" (the percentage of respondents based on the number of surveys returned), the response rate had a very similar distribution rate to that of the population.

Table 2. Response Rate by NCAA Division (n=395).

Division	n	% n	N	% N	% t
Division I-A	54	13.7	115	11.8	47.0
Division I-AA	50	12.7	123	12.6	40.7
Division I-AAA	31	7.8	83	8.5	37.3
Division II	103	26.1	260	26.6	39.6
Division III	157	39.7	396	40.5	39.6
Totals	395	100	977	100	40.4

n=number of athletics directors who responded

% n=the percentage of respondents based on the overall number of surveys received [always adds up to 100%]

N=total number of surveys sent to NCAA institutions (2001-02)

% N=the percentage of each variable (NCAA Division) based on the total population [always adds up to 100%]

% t= the percentage of respondents based on total number of surveys sent

Survey respondents indicated that the most common reporting structure in all NCAA divisions combined was an athletics director with a direct report to the institutional president with 42.3% responding that they had this structure. The next most common structure was a reporting line to student affairs (30.4%). Other less common reporting structures included an athletics director with a direct line to the executive vice

president or provost, an academic dean or chair of an academic department, a vice president for academic affairs, a vice president for finance and administration, or the university legal counsel. The reporting relationships of all NCAA divisions are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The Position to Whom the Athletics Director Reports on Campus.

<u>To Whom AD Reports</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
President	167	42.3
VP for Student Affairs/Dean of Students	120	30.4
Executive VP/Provost	37	9.4
Academic Dean/Department Chair	22	5.6
VP Academic Affairs	17	4.3
Other	17	4.3
VP Finance and Administration	13	3.3
Legal Counsel	2	.5
Totals	395	100

Respondents indicated that the most common reporting structure for NCAA Division I-A institutions was a direct line to the university president, with 85.2% having this structure. Seventy percent of athletics directors in I-AA said they reported directly to the president, whereas 45.6% of Division II athletics directors and 41.9% of Division I-AAA athletics directors indicated a direct reporting line to the president. The lowest percentage of athletics directors reporting to the president occurred at the Division III level with only 16.6% having a direct line to the CEO. The data, distributed by NCAA division, are shown in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4. Athletics Director Reporting Structure by NCAA Division (Frequency).
Division

To Whom AD Reports	I-A	I-AA	I-AAA	II	III	Total
President	46	35	13	47	26	67
VP for Student Affairs/Dean of Students	0	10	8	39	63	120
Executive VP/Provost	2	3	5	12	15	37
Academic Dean/Department Chair	0	1	0	0	21	22
VP Academic Affairs	0	0	0	1	16	17
Other	3	0	3	2	9	17
VP Finance and Administration	1	1	2	2	7	13
Legal Counsel	2	0	0	0	0	2
Totals	54	50	31	103	157	395

Table 5. Athletics Director Reporting Structure by NCAA Division (Percentage).
Division

To Whom AD Reports	I-A	I-AA	I-AAA	II	III	Totals
President	85.2	70.0	41.9	45.6	16.6	42.3
VP for Student Affairs/Dean of Students	0	20.0	25.8	37.9	40.1	30.4
Executive VP/Provost	3.7	6.0	16.1	11.7	9.6	9.4
Academic Dean/Department Chair	0	2.0	0	0	13.4	5.6
VP Academic Affairs	0	0	0	1.0	10.2	4.3
Other	5.6	0	9.7	1.9	5.7	4.3
VP Finance and Administration	1.9	2.0	6.5	1.9	4.5	3.3
Legal Counsel	3.7	0	0	0	0	.5

The majority of respondents indicating that they had a direct reporting line to the division of student affairs were at the Division II and III levels. Division III respondents had the greatest percentage of athletics directors under the student affairs umbrella with 40.1%; whereas 37.9% of Division II, 25.8% of Division I-AAA, and 20% of I-AA

respondents reported to student affairs officials. None of the Division I-A respondents indicated having a direct reporting line to student affairs.

As indicated above, in Division I-A, most athletics directors indicated having a direct reporting line to the president (85.2%). Other institutional personnel mentioned as supervisors of intercollegiate athletics at this level included the executive vice president/provost (3.7%), legal counsel (3.7%) and vice president for finance/administration (1.9%). No Division I-A respondents indicated having a reporting line to student affairs, a vice president for academic affairs, an academic dean or the chair of a campus department.

According to survey respondents, the two most common structures for Division I-AA institutions were those that included a reporting line to the president (70.0%) and to student affairs (20.0%). Also mentioned as athletics director reporting structures in Division I-AA were the executive vice president/provost (6.0%), the academic dean/chair (2.0%) and the vice president for finance/administration (2.0%).

The ranking order for I-AAA was the same as in I-AA; however, far fewer I-AAA (41.9%) respondents had a reporting line directly to the president. Respondents indicated that the two next most common reporting areas were student affairs (25.8%) and the executive vice president/provost (16.1%). Division II respondents also reported predominately in these same areas, with 45.6% reporting to the president, 37.9% reporting to student affairs, and 11.7% reporting to the executive vice president/provost.

Respondents from Division III athletics programs had the most unique distribution of reporting structures of all NCAA institutions. The largest percentage of

athletics directors in Division III indicated they had a direct reporting line to a student affairs official (40.1%), while 16.6% of athletics director respondents had a direct line to the university president and 13.4% reported to an academic dean/chair. In addition, 10.2% reported to the vice president for academic affairs and 4.5% to the vice president for finance/administration.

Athletics directors were also asked to indicate whether their institution was considered public or private. More than half of all respondents indicated their employers were private collegiate institutions (57.2%). The national average for the total number of four-year private institutions was approximately 64%. The remainder of the respondents listed their institution as being public (42.5%) with the national average being 36%. The number of respondents from public vs. private institutions is presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Type of Institution (Public or Private) by NCAA Division (n=395).

Division	Private		Public	
	n(%)	N	n(%)	N
Division I-A	11 (20.4)		43 (79.6)	
Division I-AA	24 (48.0)		26 (52.0)	
Division I-AAA	16 (51.6)		15 (48.4)	
Division II	53 (51.5)		50 (48.5)	
Division III	123 (78.3)		34 (21.7)	
Totals	227 (57.5)	625(64%)*	168 (42.5)	352 (36%)*

n=number of athletics directors by NCAA division who responded

N=total number of surveys sent to NCAA institutions (2001-02)

*N is based on percentages of all private vs. all public four-year institutions (IPEDS, 2004)

The proportion of athletics director respondents employed at public institutions was concentrated in the Division I-A, or larger athletics programs (9.6%), while the

majority of respondents at private institutions were at Division III (78.3%) programs. Respondents indicated that the number of public institutions that had an athletics director with a direct reporting line to the president was 57.5%. The largest disparities in reporting structures between public and private institutions were those that had a reporting line to the vice president for academic affairs (81.8% private, 18.2% public); the academic dean/department chair; (81.8% private, 18.2% public) and the executive vice president/provost (81.1% private, 18.9% public). Table 7 shows the frequency of public and private institutions and to whom the athletics director reported at these institutions.

Table 7. Reporting Structure According to Institution Type.

<u>To Whom AD Reports</u>	<u>Frequency (Percentage)</u>	
	<u>Public</u>	<u>Private</u>
President	96 (57.5%)	71 (42.5%)
VP for Student Affairs/Dean of Students	44 (36.7%)	76 (63.3%)
Executive VP/Provost	7 (18.9%)	30 (81.1%)
Academic Dean/Department Chair	4 (18.2%)	18 (81.8%)
VP Academic Affairs	3 (17.6%)	14 (82.4%)
Other	8 (47.1%)	9 (52.9%)
VP Finance and Administration	4 (30.8%)	9 (69.2%)
<u>Legal Counsel</u>	<u>2 (100%)</u>	<u>0 (0.0%)</u>
Totals	168 (42.5%)	227 (57.5%)

Research Question #1 Summary: Athletics Director Reporting Structures

Research question #1 addressed the differences in reporting structures for intercollegiate athletics departments within NCAA Divisions I, II and III. According to survey results, the two most common athletics director reporting structures among NCAA

member institutions involved a direct line to the university president and to student affairs. Most Division I-A athletics directors indicated that they reported directly to the university president with very few athletics directors at this level reporting to any other campus office. The office of student affairs was listed as the first or second most common reporting structure for respondents in all other divisions, aside from Division I-A, where none of the respondents indicated a report to student affairs. In general, in Division I-AA, the majority of athletics director respondents reported either to the university president or to the office of student affairs. In Divisions I-AAA and II, less than half of athletics directors indicated having a report to the university president with just slightly fewer reporting to student affairs officials. The majority of Division III athletics directors indicated they reported to the office of student affairs with the president's office being the next most common. The highest number of respondents reporting to academic administrators or faculty members was at the Division III level. Aside from legal counsel, the second least common reporting structure in all divisions combined was a reporting line to the vice president for finance and administration.

Respondents indicated that as an institution's NCAA classification moved from the larger athletics programs to the smaller athletics programs, the percentages of athletics directors that reported to the university president generally decreased. According to respondents, public institutions tended to sponsor the larger athletics programs while more private institutions tended to sponsor the smaller athletics programs. Of the seven most common reporting structures, only the direct report to the

president was more common at public institutions. All other reporting structures were more common at private institutions.

Research Question #2: What are the relationships between the types of reporting structures of NCAA Division I, II, and III athletics departments and the satisfaction level of the directors of athletics

Research question #2 examined relationships between the different types of reporting structures and how satisfied athletics directors were with their reporting structure on campus. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction using a scale consisting of “Extremely Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Dissatisfied, or Extremely Dissatisfied.” This was question #9 on the survey (See Appendix B).

Nearly three-quarters (71.4%) of all athletics directors in NCAA Divisions I, II and III indicated that they were extremely satisfied with their current reporting structure. Of the 395 respondents to the survey, 80 reported being somewhat satisfied (20.3%), 19 reported being somewhat dissatisfied (4.8%) and 8 reported being extremely dissatisfied (2.0%). The athletics director satisfaction level among respondents at NCAA Divisions I, II and III is presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Athletics Director (AD) Satisfaction Level in NCAA Divisions I, II and III.

<u>AD's Satisfaction Level</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Extremely Satisfied	282	71.4
Somewhat Satisfied	80	20.3
Somewhat Dissatisfied	19	4.8
Extremely Dissatisfied	8	2.0
<u>No Response</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>1.5</u>
Totals	395	100

Of respondents reporting to the university president, 154 (92.2%) said they were extremely satisfied with their reporting structure, while three athletics directors who reported to the university president indicated that they were extremely dissatisfied (1.8%). In comparison, of the respondents reporting to the division of student affairs, 53.3% indicated being extremely satisfied whereas 2.5% reported being extremely dissatisfied. Twelve of the 120 athletics directors (10%) that indicated having a direct report line to student affairs described their satisfaction level as either somewhat or extremely dissatisfied. The respondents with the largest percentage indicating they were either somewhat or extremely dissatisfied were those who reported to an academic dean/chair (18.2%) or a vice president for academic affairs (17.6%). These data are shown in Tables 9 and 10.

Table 9. Athletics Director Satisfaction Level by Position to Whom AD Reports
(Frequency).

To Whom AD Reports	Satisfaction					Total
	Extremely Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Extremely Dissatisfied	No Response	
President	154	5	1	3	4	167
VP for Student Affairs/Dean of Students	64	44	9	3	0	120
Executive VP/Provost	27	8	2	0	0	37
Academic Dean/Department Chair	11	7	3	1	0	22
VP Academic Affairs	9	5	2	1	0	17
Other	6	9	0	0	2	17
VP Finance and Administration	10	1	2	0	0	13
Legal Counsel	1	1	0	0	0	2
Totals	282	80	19	8	6	395

Table 10. Athletics Director Satisfaction Level by Position to Whom AD Reports (Percentage).

To Whom AD Reports	Satisfaction				
	Extremely Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Extremely Dissatisfied	No Response
President	92.2	3.0	.6	1.8	2.4
VP for Student Affairs/Dean of Students	53.3	36.7	7.5	2.5	0
Executive VP/Provost	73.0	21.6	5.4	0	0
Academic Dean/Department Chair	50.0	31.8	13.6	4.5	0
VP Academic Affairs	52.9	29.4	11.8	5.9	0
Other	35.3	52.9	0	0	11.8
VP Finance and Administration	76.9	7.7	15.4	0	0
Legal Counsel	50.0	50.0	0	0	0
Totals	71.4	20.3	4.8	2.0	1.5

Athletics director respondents at the Division I-A level had the highest percentage that reported being extremely satisfied with their campus reporting structure (83.3%).

Division III respondents had the lowest percentage indicating they were extremely satisfied with their campus reporting structure (65.6%). Division III also had the highest percentage of respondents who were extremely dissatisfied with their reporting structure (2.5%) compared to Division I-A and Division II athletics directors who had the lowest percentage indicating that they were extremely dissatisfied with their reporting structure (1.9%). While the majority of athletics directors in Divisions II and III indicated being

satisfied, athletics directors at these levels reported having the highest percentage of dissatisfaction compared to other divisions, with 9.7% and 7.6%, respectively, expressing that they were either somewhat or extremely dissatisfied. Six percent (6%) of Division I-AA athletics directors said that they were either somewhat or extremely dissatisfied with their reporting structure while none of the Division I-AAA athletics directors that responded to the study indicated they were either somewhat or extremely dissatisfied. The percentages of athletics directors that indicated being extremely satisfied, generally decreased with smaller NCAA divisional membership. Data showing satisfaction level according to NCAA division are shown in Tables 11 and 12.

Table 11. Athletics Director Satisfaction Level by NCAA Division (Frequency).

NCAA Division	Satisfaction					Total
	Extremely Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Extremely Dissatisfied	No Response	
I-A	45	6	1	1	1	54
I-AA	36	9	2	1	2	50
I-AAA	22	8	0	0	1	31
II	76	16	8	2	1	103
III	103	41	8	4	1	157
Total	282	80	19	8	6	395

Table 12. Athletics Director Satisfaction Level by NCAA Division (Percentage).

NCAA Division	Satisfaction				
	Extremely Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Extremely Dissatisfied	No Response
I-A	83.3	11.1	1.9	1.9	1.9
I-AA	72.0	18.0	4.0	2.0	4.0
I-AAA	71.0	25.8	0	0	3.2
II	73.8	15.5	7.8	1.9	1.0
III	65.6	26.1	5.1	2.5	.6
Total	71.4	20.0	4.8	2.0	1.5

The final question posed to athletics directors was designed to elicit responses related to the reasons for the respondents' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the current reporting structures on campus (See Appendix B, Question #10). Responses were categorized into the following 21 themes, with percentages of respondents that gave this reason indicated in parenthesis. The reported reasons for satisfaction and dissatisfaction and a breakdown of data according to NCAA Division are presented in Tables 13 and 14.

- AD enjoys direct contact with president; president should have control (20%)
- No response (17.2%)
- Good working relationship; person gets things done (13.9%)
- System is effective (9.4%)
- AD would like a direct report to President/Chancellor (7.6%)
- Direct line of communication is good (5.3%)
- Person sees the importance of athletics (3.3%)
- System enables athletics to be part of college community (3.0%)

- System allows AD to run athletics; gives AD a louder voice (2.8%)
- Structure is unclear, ineffective (2.5%)
- Person is very knowledgeable of athletics (2.3%)
- Person does not understand athletics (2%)
- Person has limited time for athletics (1.5%)
- Person cannot make big decisions or deal with large issues (1.5%)
- Structure makes sense philosophically (1.5%)
- System is best for the student-athletes; person is in tune with student-athletes (1.3%)
- Involves the AD in fundraising; college athletics are a business; importance of financial issues (1.0%)
- Change has been difficult; AD preferred the previous system (1.0%)
- AD reports to only one person and receives quick responses (1.0%)
- There is a lack of communication in the reporting structure (.8%)
- Good idea, but it doesn't work very well (.5%)
- Parties have conflicting interests (.5%)

The most common reason given by satisfied respondents is that they enjoyed the regular contact with their university presidents, responses clearly given by athletics directors who had a direct reporting line to the president. The next most common reason for satisfaction was that athletics directors felt their immediate supervisor got things done and they had a good working relationship. Of the two most common responses, one referred specifically to the position held by their direct supervisor; the other referred to

the person who held the position. Of the 395 respondents, 17.2% failed to give a reason for their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the current reporting structure.

The most frequent response from athletics directors who were not necessarily satisfied with their reporting structure was that they desired a direct report to the university president (7.6%). An unclear, ineffective system was the next most common response from athletics directors who were not necessarily satisfied (2.3%).

The majority of respondents in all divisions except Division III indicated they were most satisfied because they enjoyed the direct contact with the university president. Most Division III athletics directors equated their satisfaction level with the management style of their supervisor, indicating that they had a good working relationship with the person and/or they had a supervisor who got the job done. Of the reasons given by those athletics directors who were not extremely satisfied with their reporting relationship, the most common was simply a desire to report directly to the president. The highest frequency of responses citing this reason came from Division III athletics directors. A total of 68 athletics directors did not list a reason for their satisfaction on the survey.

Table 13. Reason for Satisfaction with Reporting Structure (Frequency).

Reason	Division					
	I-A	I-AA	I-AAA	II	III	Total
AD likes direct contact with president; institutional control	15	19	9	21	15	79
System allows AD to run athletics	3	2	0	3	3	11
Person sees importance of athletics	0	0	2	1	10	13
Good working relationship; person gets things done	4	2	3	10	36	55
System is effective	3	6	3	8	17	37
Direct communication	4	1	2	8	6	21
System enables athletics to be part of college community	0	0	1	4	7	12
Person very knowledgeable about athletics	1	1	1	2	4	9
System is best for student-athletes	0	0	0	4	1	5
Involves AD in fundraising; athletics is a business; finances	1	0	0	2	1	4
Makes good philosophical sense	0	2	0	2	2	6
AD reports to 1 person; receives quick responses	2	0	0	1	1	4
Totals	33	33	21	66	103	256

Table 14. Reason for Dissatisfaction with Reporting Structure (Frequency).

Reason	Division					
	I-A	I-AA	I-AAA	II	III	Total
Person does not understand athletics	0	2	0	2	4	8
Good idea, but does not work well	0	1	0	0	1	2
Person has limited time for athletics	0	0	0	4	2	6
AD wants to report to the president	4	2	4	9	11	30
Lack of communication in reporting structure	0	0	0	1	2	3
Person cannot make big decisions or deal with large issues	0	0	2	3	1	6
Change difficult; preferred previous system	0	0	1	0	3	4
Structure is unclear; ineffective	1	1	0	0	8	10
Conflicting interests	0	0	0	1	1	2
Totals	5	6	7	20	33	71

Some athletics directors submitted additional comments regarding their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their reporting structures. A selection of relevant quotes follows:

Quotes From Athletics Directors Reporting to Presidents:

This job is too important to report to any position other than the President. For better or worse, it is clearly the most visible department within the university structure – receiving far more scrutiny both internally and externally than any other department or college – and demands a close working relationship between the President and AD’s offices (Division I-AA AD, Extremely Satisfied).

...the life of the athletic department is dependent on the amount of involvement and prejudices of the Vice President. In many cases, the athletic department is then left to fend for itself...(Division III AD, Extremely Satisfied – formerly reported to Vice President for Student Affairs)

The President has the final say on institutional decisions and by reporting directly to the President there is open communication and decisions regarding athletic department issues can be communicated directly to the CEO. (Division I-AA AD, Extremely Satisfied)

I have direct and immediate access to the Chancellor. It also sends a very important message to the campus of where athletics fits into the overall structure. (Division I-AAA AD, Extremely Satisfied)

...because “most” Deans have no clue about athletics, and because there is a “tremendous” financial involvement for/from the institution. (Division II AD, Extremely Satisfied)

The AD needs direct access to the president. (Division I-A AD, Extremely Satisfied)

Reporting to the president is the best for all concerned. The president sees the total picture of the college...the big picture...and treats athletics accordingly. In many cases in which the AD reports to a dean of students or person other than the president, they tend not to see the big picture and look at athletics only from the perspective of their particular department or bias. (Division III AD, Extremely Satisfied)

Athletics Directors Reporting to Vice Presidents for Student Affairs or Deans of Students:

(Reporting to the Vice President for Student Affairs) makes sense because we are all working with the same people. It seems to be the wave of the future. (Division III AD, Extremely Satisfied)

The Director of Athletics has many issues that need to be discussed with the President. Experience has shown that no matter how well intentioned or supportive a Vice President is, that they cannot carry the message as well as the people most directly affected by the situation in question. (Division III AD, Extremely Dissatisfied)

Athletics should be seen on the same level as our other major areas on campus. Not to do so lessens the campus/community visibility of athletics and perceived importance. (Division II AD, Somewhat Dissatisfied)

The main reason I’m satisfied has less to do with the structure and more to do with the quality and capability of the individual in the position. He gets athletics, and is an effective advocate to various constituents across the campus and

community. He's a straight shooter, honest, consistent, and fair. He gives me direct line to the VP for finance or the president when needed and helps me strategize, build a case when needed...my only dissatisfaction is the lack of connection to academics. There are benefits in being more integrated into the academic side of campus...mutual respect and understanding...sense of community and common purpose. Without that, athletics can become isolated. At the Division III level in particular, this should not be the case. (Division III AD, Extremely Satisfied)

...athletics is under the student affairs umbrella where all other co-curricular activities are...I have a working relationship with other areas in student affairs like Greek life, residential living, student recreation center, etc. (Division II AD, Somewhat Satisfied)

I report to an individual that is actively involved in student life and one who is sensitive to the needs of students – has an understanding of what athletics provides and its proper relationship within the context of academics. (Division III AD, Extremely Satisfied)

The Vice President for Student Affairs lacks the basic experience and competencies to oversee a Division I athletic program. (Division I-AA AD, Somewhat Dissatisfied)

Athletics Directors Reporting to the Executive Vice President:

It is a better system than reporting to the Vice President for Student Affairs...it keeps the students and Vice President for Student Affairs from controlling the facilities. (Division III AD, Extremely Satisfied)

Athletics Director Reporting to Vice President for Finance/Administration:

Finances are a large part of athletics programs. (Division III AD, Extremely Satisfied)

Athletics Directors Reporting to the Vice President for Academic Affairs:

Most schools report to student affairs, but ours probably makes more sense here, demonstrating that academic success will be strongly and closely monitored by key academic administrators. (Division II AD, Extremely Satisfied)

Athletics Directors Reporting to the Dean of the Faculty:

Athletic participation is considered part of the education and, as such, is appropriately located within the auspices of the academic body of the institution. (Division III AD, Extremely Satisfied)

Academics had no clue. (Division III AD, Somewhat Satisfied)

...total lack of understanding and unwillingness to listen, learn or trust the AD...(Division III AD, Extremely Dissatisfied)

Athletics Directors are professionals who should have the control and authority to run the department without having to report to a vice president in another area...with the high visibility and importance of athletics on the college campus, this certainly seems appropriate. (Division III AD, Somewhat Dissatisfied)

Quotes from athletics directors revealed that in general, respondents who reported directly to the institutional president felt that direct contact with the president was important for communication, public relations, decision-making, NCAA institutional control issues, and for getting the presidential perspective on the institutional philosophy of intercollegiate athletics. In essence, they felt that it was necessary for them to be successful and have successful athletics programs and was related to their satisfaction with their campus supervisors.

Comments from respondents who reported directly to vice presidents for student affairs or deans of students varied depending on the NCAA division sponsored by their institution. Some felt there was a natural connection between intercollegiate athletics and student affairs, whereas others indicated that there were too many differences between athletics and student affairs. Some respondents thought communication was less

effective with a vice president or dean of students supervisor whereas others thought having a student affairs advocate with the president was beneficial.

Respondents with financial or academic administrators as their supervisors tended to feel that person was not as equipped to deal with the wide range of intercollegiate athletics issues, although others felt their alignment was appropriate to deal with their critical issues.

Table 15 shows data related to the tenure of NCAA Division I, II and III athletics directors. Survey respondents were asked how long they had been in their positions at their current institution. The average length of employment for athletics directors at each NCAA Division is shown below.

Table 15. Tenure of Athletics Directors by NCAA Division.

Division	N	Mean (yrs)	Min.(yrs)	Max (yrs)	Range (yrs)
Division I-A	54	7.05	.25	28.00	27.75
Division I-AA	50	4.68	.10	17.00	16.90
Division I-AAA	31	6.67	.10	31.00	30.90
Division II	102	7.27	.25	32.00	31.75
Division III	155	7.62	.25	33.00	32.75
Not Reported	(3)				
Total	392	7.00	.10	33.00	32.90

N=number of athletics directors who responded to the survey, categorized by NCAA division

The group of athletics directors who indicated they had the shortest tenure was at the Division I-AA level with a mean of 4.68 years of employment at their institutions.

This mean was 2.32 years shorter than the average tenure of all athletics directors (7 years). The group of respondents who indicated having the longest tenure at their institutions was the Division III athletics director, with an average of 7.62 years. The Division I-AA range was 16.90 years. The Division III range (32.75) was nearly double that of any athletics director at the Division I-AA level.

Research Question #2 Summary: Athletics Director Satisfaction

Research question #2 examined the relationships between the types of reporting structures of NCAA Division I, II and III athletics departments and the satisfaction level of the directors of athletics. Most respondents indicated that they were extremely satisfied with their reporting structure. The next most frequent response from athletics directors was that they were somewhat satisfied with their reporting structure. Athletics directors who reported to the university president indicated being the most satisfied. The highest percentage of athletics directors who were somewhat dissatisfied with their reporting structure came from those who reported to the vice president for finance and administration or academic officials. The numbers of athletics directors who indicated being extremely dissatisfied most often came from those reporting to academic or student affairs officials.

In each NCAA division, except Division III, athletics directors gave their primary reason for being satisfied with their reporting structure as enjoying the direct contact with the president. Some respondents without the direct relationship with the institutional president felt that it hurt the image of intercollegiate athletics.

Some respondents felt that intercollegiate athletics was a natural fit with student affairs and student services whereas others thought that student affairs was not an appropriate relationship with intercollegiate athletics. Division III athletics directors listed their primary reasons for being satisfied as their good working relationship with their supervisors and their belief that their structure was effective.

Athletics directors reporting to institutional personnel other than the president or student affairs seemed to do so because of current issues surrounding intercollegiate athletics at that particular institution. Satisfied respondents seemed to agree with the institutional philosophy surrounding intercollegiate athletics whereas less satisfied respondents felt there was a lack of understanding about the nature of intercollegiate athletics.

Research Question #3: In cases where reporting structures have changed on campuses during recent years (1996-2001), what are the perceptions of the athletics directors about their structure.

Groups of athletics directors who responded to questions about change on their campuses as well as the groups of athletics directors who were interviewed by telephone did not comment on their concern over the prior structure nor the process of change itself; rather, they were primarily focused on their present situation. Many athletics directors indicating they were less than extremely satisfied with their reporting structure seemed most concerned about how they might effect a change on their campus so that a satisfactory reporting structure might be established. The athletics directors who were interviewed responded to questions about their current structure, but not in comparison to the old structure.

Athletics directors were asked to state why they believed the current reporting structure existed on their campus. Responses from all 395 respondents were categorized into the following 14 themes, with percentages of respondents that gave this reason indicated in parenthesis:

- Athletics a natural fit with students/student services/student activities (18.7%)
- Due to the big decisions that need to be made and the high visibility of the athletics program (12.7%)
- An outside organization recommended the structure (i.e. NCAA, Knight Commission, Campus Athletics Board) or to address NCAA institutional control issues (10.6%)
- President is too busy; works better with a middle person; campus reorganization (9.4%)
- Improves communication/access to president (8.9%)
- To emphasize the importance of academics (8.6%)
- Presidential preference (7.8%)
- It works; best way to organize; previous systems did not work (7.3%)
- No response (6.6%)
- To align with someone qualified, knowledgeable about athletics (2.8%)
- Due to the financial aspect of athletics/fundraising (2.0%)
- To fit the institutional mission (1.8%)
- To elevate the status of the athletics department (1.5%)

- It has always been that way – uncertain about what else to do with athletics (1.3%)

A breakdown of themes by division is included in Table 16.

Table 16. Reason for Current Reporting Structure (Frequency).

Reason	Division					Total
	I-A	I-AA	I-AAA	II	III	
It works – best way to organize	4	4	3	5	13	29
Outside entity recommendation	10	9	7	12	4	42
Big decisions/high visibility	16	8	3	18	5	50
Natural fit with students/student services	0	5	4	20	45	74
President too busy; campus reorganization	2	2	6	10	17	37
Elevate status of athletics dept.	3	1	0	2	0	6
Improve communication/access to president	7	6	4	4	14	35
Emphasize importance of academics	0	1	0	2	31	34
Presidential preference	3	4	3	12	9	31
Align with someone knowledgeable about athletics	3	0	1	3	4	11
Financial aspect/fundraising	1	0	0	4	3	8
Uncertain about what to do with athletics	0	0	0	3	2	5
Fits institutional mission	0	0	0	2	5	7
No Response	5	10	0	6	5	26
Totals	54	50	31	103	157	395

The most common reason given for their current reporting structure was that athletics was a natural fit with students and student services. Seventy-four (74) athletics directors gave this as their primary reason for the current campus structure. The highest concentration of responses with this primary reason came from Divisions II and III. Of

the 18 athletics directors in Division I-AA and I-AAA who reported to the chief student affairs officer, half (9) indicated that a natural fit with student services was the primary reason for the structure. The most common response for both Divisions I-AA and I-AAA was that an outside entity recommended the structure or it was necessary for institutional control. Athletics directors who listed these reasons were primarily athletics directors with a direct reporting line to the university president. The most common reason given for a direct reporting line to the president in Division I-A was because of the high visibility of their programs and the big decisions that need to be made.

Athletics directors were asked to indicate if there had been a change in their reporting line within the past five years and the reasons for the change. As shown in Table 17, just over one-fourth of all respondents (27.3%) said that their department had undergone a change in their reporting structure in the previous five-year period. Respondents from Division I-A institutions indicated having the most stability in their reporting structures with 13% having been involved in a change in their direct report. All other divisions indicated that change was more common among them, with 35.5% of Division I-AAA, 31.1% of Division II, and 30.0% of Division I-AA athletics departments undergoing a change in their reporting structure within the previous five-year period.

Table 17. Frequency of NCAA Institutions With Change in Athletics Director Reporting Structures During the Years 1996-2001.

Method	n	%	N	%
Division I-A	7	6.5	54	13.0
Division I-AA	15	13.9	50	30.0
Division I-AAA	11	10.2	31	35.5
Division II	32	29.6	103	31.1
Division III	43	39.8	157	27.4
Totals	108	100	395	27.3

n=number of athletics departments that underwent change in their reporting structure from 1996-2001

N=total number of survey respondents

Athletics directors were then asked to indicate their perceptions of the reasons for the change and offer additional comments about the change. Nearly half (45.4%) of all respondents indicated the change in structure was due to the president's busy schedule and/or due to some reorganization of the campus administrative structure. There were few responses that indicated a more specific reason for the change. The various themes for each NCAA division are further detailed in Table 18.

Table 18. Reason for Change in Reporting Structure (Frequency).

Reason	Division					Total
	I-A	I-AA	I-AAA	II	III	
It works - best way to organize	0	1	0	5	5	11
Outside entity recommendation	2	4	2	1	1	10
Big decisions/high visibility	0	0	0	0	0	0
Natural fit with students/student services	0	0	0	3	3	6
President too busy; campus reorganization	3	7	5	16	18	49
Elevate status of athletics dept.	0	0	0	1	0	1
Improve communication/access to president	1	1	1	1	2	6
Emphasize importance of academics	0	0	0	0	0	0
Presidential preference	0	2	2	3	9	16
Align with someone knowledgeable about athletics	0	0	0	0	0	0
Financial aspect/fundraising	0	0	0	2	1	3
Uncertain about what to do with athletics	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fits institutional mission	0	0	1	0	0	1
Politics	0	0	0	0	3	3
AD Request	1	0	0	0	1	2
Totals	7	15	11	32	43	108

Research Question #3 Summary: Athletics Director Perception of Changed Structure

This research question was designed to probe athletics directors' perceptions of change in reporting structures on their campuses in instances where a reporting structure had occurred in the previous five years. Respondents directed their replies toward their current structure and they did not provide a sense of comparison from the previous to the current reporting structure.

The most common perception of why the athletic directors' reporting structure was established was due to the natural fit of intercollegiate athletics with students and student services, an opinion predominantly given by Divisions II and III athletics directors. No Division I A respondents indicated having a direct reporting line to student affairs therefore none indicated that a natural fit with students and student services was the reason for their reporting structure. In general, Division I-A athletics directors indicated that the reason for their structures was due to the high visibility of their programs and the big decisions that needed to be made relative to it. Another common reason for reporting structures was that an outside entity recommended the structure, most often due to NCAA violations or the Knight Commission report. The second most common reason for the structure among Division III institutions, as reported by the athletics director, was to emphasize the importance of academics within the athletics setting.

Comparison data regarding departments that had undergone change in their athletics director reporting structure revealed that, in general, responding Division I-AAA athletics directors were the most likely to have undergone such a change. According to the survey, Division I-A institutions had the fewest reported changes. Of the respondents that reported having undergone a change in their reporting structure during the five-year period prior to the administration of the survey, most indicated that the reason for the change was due to the president's busy schedule or due to a general university reorganization. None of these respondents indicated a more specific reason for or knowledge of the reason for being aligned with their current supervisor.

Research Question #4: How have changes in athletics director reporting structures impacted athletics programs.

After the initial data collection effort was concluded, a follow-up analysis was conducted with a group of athletics directors (15) who had indicated a change had been made in their reporting structure. A review of the data indicating all respondents' reporting structures at the time of the survey (2001) was conducted. This reporting structure data was compared to what it was prior to any changes that were reported to have occurred (1996-2001). The data revealed some general trends in athletics director reporting structures.

As indicated in Table 19, there was an increase in the percentages of athletics directors reporting to college presidents from 37% to 43%. The numbers of senior student affairs officers supervising athletics directors increased 1.5%. Positions that showed a decrease in the frequency of athletics directors reporting to them included the academic deans and department chairs, vice presidents for academic affairs and vice presidents for finance and administration.

Table 19. The Position To Whom the Athletics Director Reports on Campus.
(Figures prior to change in reporting structure indicated in parenthesis)

To Whom AD Reports	Frequency	Percentage	%Change
President	167 (146)	42.3 (37.0)	+5.3%
VP for Student Affairs/Dean of Students	120 (114)	30.4 (28.9)	+1.5%
Executive VP/Provost	37 (36)	9.4 (9.1)	+ .3%
Academic Dean/Department Chair	22 (30)	5.6 (7.6)	-2.0%
VP Academic Affairs	17 (23)	4.3 (5.8)	-1.5%
Other	17 (28)	4.3 (7.1)	-2.8%
VP Finance and Administration	13 (16)	3.3 (4.1)	- .8%
Legal Counsel	2 (2)	.5 (.5)	0%
Totals	395 (395)	100 (100)	

As earlier reported (See Table 17, page 92), 108 athletics directors indicated they had been involved in a change in reporting structure during the previous five-year period. The researcher e-mailed all 108 athletics directors at those institutions to ask for their participation in a follow-up telephone interview (Appendix F). Many of the athletics directors were new since the preliminary study and therefore the athletics director position had a new e-mail address since the original data collection effort. This was evident due to the numbers of messages in these cases that were returned as undeliverable. A total of 15 athletics directors agreed to and were available for a telephone interview. All 15 were interviewed by phone while 13 also completed and returned the survey on their preferred supervisor characteristics. Of the 15, two were from Division I-A, one was from Division I-AA, two were from Division I-AAA, and five each were from Division II and Division III.

The reporting and satisfaction data from these 15 institutions that were derived from the initial collection effort and the subsequent telephone interviews are shown in Tables 20, 21 and 22.

Table 20. The Position To Whom the Athletics Director Reports on Campus.

<u>To Whom AD Reports</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	
	<u>Previous</u>	<u>Current</u>
President	3	9
VP for Student Affairs/Dean of Students	7	3
Executive VP/Provost	2	2
Academic Dean/Department Chair	1	0
VP Academic Affairs	0	1
Other	2	0
VP Finance and Administration	0	0
Legal Counsel	0	0
Totals	15	15

Table 21. Athletics Director (AD) Satisfaction Level.

<u>AD's Satisfaction Level</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
Extremely Satisfied	10
Somewhat Satisfied	3
Somewhat Dissatisfied	1
Extremely Dissatisfied	1
Totals	15

Table 22. Reason for Change in Reporting Structure.

Reason	Survey Frequency	Phone Interview Frequency
It works - best way to organize	2	
Outside entity recommendation	2	1
President too busy; campus reorganization	9	2
Improve communication/access to president	2	
Presidential preference	0	2
Percent of budget that athletics occupies		1
Strengthen athletics/maximize its impact		2
Critical issues in athletics		3
Change was all about the person		3
President discomfort with athletics		1
Totals	15	15

A summary of the characteristics of the 15 respondents is included in Table 23.

The columns include information related to the NCAA membership classification of each institution, the athletics director satisfaction level as reported on the initial survey, and whether this response was consistent with the satisfaction level they discussed in the telephone interview. Of the 15 respondents, 3 reported directly to the president prior to the change in their reporting structure. After the change, 9 athletics directors had a direct line to the institutional president. The majority of athletics directors indicated that the change in structure improved their satisfaction level with their administrative reporting line.

Table 23. Summary of Athletics Director Interviews.

	AD Interviewed	Previous Report	Current Report	Survey-Reported Satisfaction Level	Change Improved Satisfaction
	Institutional Description				
1	I-A, Public	Student Affairs	President	ES	Yes
2	II, Private	Student Affairs	President	ES	Yes
3	II, Private	Student Affairs	President	ES	Yes
4	I-A, Public	Exec VP/Prov	President	ES	Yes
5	III, Private	Acad Dean/Chair	President	ES	Yes
6	II, Private	President	Student Affairs	ES	Yes
7	I-AAA, Public	Student Affairs	Exec VP/Prov	ES	Neutral
8	III, Private	Other	Student Affairs	SD	Yes
9	II, Public	Student Affairs	President	ED	Yes
10	I-AAA, Private	President	Exec VP/Prov	SS	Neutral
11	III, Private	Student Affairs	VP Acad Affairs	SS	Neutral
12	II, Public	Other	President	ES	Yes
13	III, Private	Student Affairs	President	ES	Yes
14	I-AA, Public	Exec VP/Prov	President	ES	No
15	III, Private	President	Student Affairs	SS	Neutral

ED: extremely satisfied; SS: somewhat satisfied; SD: somewhat dissatisfied; ED: extremely dissatisfied

Athletics directors listed the following as primary advantages of their current reporting structure:

- More frequent, ongoing communication
- President is staunch believer in athletics

- Quick decisions
- Athletics needs are presented directly and therefore, not subject to the interpretation of a middle person
- Ability to deal with issues directly, not through the grapevine
- Athletics director is in communication loop early – particularly beneficial as budgets are determined
- Saves time
- Supervisor very supportive of and knowledgeable about athletics
- Most issues end up with the president, anyway – may as well start there
- Reporting to the president gives president vested interest in athletics
- Able to enhance stance with president with direct argument
- Makes a statement to fans, coaches and the NCAA that the president cares; important because the NCAA places emphasis on presidential control

Athletics directors listed the following as primary disadvantages of their current reporting structure:

- Person has too much to do
- Not able to enlist support from other individuals (vice presidents) when AD reports directly to the president
- Does not have president's ear
- President does not understand athletics
- The perception that people have about athletics' place in the organization

- President can tell the athletics director “no” directly
- People think AD has an advantage and that things come easier because of the access to the president, although that is not necessarily the case
- Primary report lacks advocacy for and understanding of intercollegiate athletics

One Division III athletics director said in his telephone interview that the athletics director reporting structure was a key issue among the athletics directors in his conference and on the national level. He indicated that there was momentum behind a movement toward establishing a reporting structure directly to the president at least on a conference-wide, if not national, basis. The rationale for this movement was to establish the importance of athletics programs on Division III campuses, to acknowledge the portion of the budget that is attributed to athletics and to recognize the importance of athletics in the recruitment and retention of quality students.

Other athletics directors discussed at length the issue of serving on the president’s cabinet. They felt strongly that having representation among this group was critical to their ability to work with their campus colleagues on issues of concern to the athletics department. Despite having a direct reporting line to the president, one athletics director who was not invited to be a part of the president’s cabinet said he felt very isolated from his campus colleagues, and his inability to directly discuss his concerns or hear their concerns severely hampered his efforts on campus.

Quotes from athletics director telephone interviews:

[This issue] is a primary issue of concern to aspiring athletics directors – I would be very reluctant to assume a job that did not have a direct reporting line to the president. (Division I-AA AD)

Institution should decide philosophically, administratively, financially, etc. what makes sense organizationally for the position of the athletics department in the campus structure. There are many high profile issues that require my direct involvement with the president about what to do next. I am then able to speak on behalf of the university regarding such issues...structures should be based on how things ought to operate, not based on personalities – structure things because they are right, not because of president's or athletics director's characteristics or personalities. (Division I-A AD)

If I were creating a structure, I would have athletics directors be part of the presidential arm of the university – at every level- not unique to Division I-A. (Division I-A AD)

Reporting to the president is a very collegial thing – you cannot put athletics under academics – it's like vinegar and water – and, I wouldn't want the student life area. (Division II AD)

Because I report to the president, I am lonely – there is not much collegiality or good counsel across campus. It would be nice to have a little more interaction. (Division II AD)

It's a presidential-controlled league...visibility, accountability...regardless of the level it needs a direct report to the president. Access can be up to the individual, but the reporting structure at any level should be with the president. The athletics director protects the president and the institution. (Division I-A AD)

Critics [of my direct report to the president] confuse priority with efficiency and appropriate relationship...also, the percentage of the institution's budget is a factor. (Division I-A AD)

Athletics is the same as any other co-curricular program. They are the only campus department that is engaged in every single one of the vice presidential areas – enrollment, recruitment, teaching, student affairs...also, our mission states explicitly that physical activity and sport are necessary for a true education. (Division III AD)

In Division I, revenue drives decisions; in Division III, decisions are made based on what kind of students the institution can draw. For example, we determined

that we could recruit outstanding scholar-athletes if we sponsored a lacrosse program. (Division III AD)

Vice presidents either know too much (micromanage) or too little (they don't understand athletics). (Division II AD)

Athletics directors felt that their campus reporting structure was significant in both their practical and perceived role on campus, and that the high profile nature of their athletics programs warranted a direct report to the institutional president. While some acknowledged the challenges they face with the perception that athletics is "more important" than other campus entities because of its direct relationship with the president's office, most felt that the access and communication aspects were critical to their success.

Research Question #4 Summary: Impact of Change on Athletics Program

Data indicated that, in general, trends are increasing toward athletics directors who report directly to the university president. Survey data and interviews showed that athletics directors, in general, have a desire to report directly to the university president. While some Division III athletics directors believe that reporting to an academic dean or vice president for academic affairs appropriately emphasizes the academic importance of the athletics department, many others at this level felt that reporting to the president was critical in recognizing the importance of athletics on their campuses.

To whom the athletics director reports had a significant impact on the athletics programs of those athletics directors interviewed. Some respondents indicated that whether athletics departments had a direct voice with the presidents of the institutions or whether their voice was subject to the interpretation of a vice president or other

supervisor had an impact on a number of items, including the resources allocated to athletics. On the other hand, some athletics directors enjoyed having a reporting structure other than a direct line to the president as it gave them an additional ally in the promotion of the athletics program.

The majority of athletics directors interviewed felt that having a place on the president's cabinet was as much or more important than a direct reporting line to the president. Athletics directors who reported directly to the president but did not serve on the president's cabinet missed out on much discussion, collaboration and collegiality that being part of this group would offer. They did not have the opportunity to give a voice to their athletics programs nor did they have a chance to hear the concerns of their campus colleagues in order to promote a more efficient and collegial working environment.

Respondent interviews revealed a slight increase in student affairs and executive vice president/provost reporting structures while all other reporting structures (except legal counsel which stayed the same) showed a decrease. Of the fifteen athletics directors interviewed, ten of them said that the change in their reporting structure improved their satisfaction level with their organizational structure, many citing better, more frequent and efficient communication with their campus presidents as a primary advantage of their new structure.

Some reported disadvantages of their changed structures included a new supervisor who has too much to do or does not understand athletics. Some felt that a direct report to the campus president gave some campus colleagues the wrong impression about the importance of athletics.

Research Question #5: What is the preferred characteristic of the athletics director's immediate supervisor.

The final research question was designed to examine what supervisory characteristics or philosophies were important to athletics directors. Athletics directors who participated in the telephone interview were also asked to complete a survey in which they were asked to rate a series of statements on a scale indicating the importance they place on supervisory characteristics (Appendix C). These questions were derived from themes that emerged in the initial athletics director survey.

Athletics directors were asked to indicate whether they strongly agree, agree, are undecided, disagree, or strongly disagree with 20 different statements about the characteristics they prefer to have in their direct supervisor. The questions were grouped into six themes that indicated whether the athletics director preferred this individual to have a strong general administration orientation, and/or a strong orientation toward athletics, academic, fiscal, student, and/or legal affairs. On a scale of 1-5, five (5) indicated a strong agreement that the characteristic was important and one (1) indicated a strong disagreement that the characteristic was important. Table 24 shows what characteristic was preferred overall in rank order of priority.

Table 24. Athletics Director (AD) Preferred Supervisor Characteristics.

<u>Orientation</u>	<u>Mean</u>
Academic	4.38
Student Affairs	4.21
General Administration	3.49
Athletics	3.23
Legal	2.85
Fiscal	2.74

5 - indicates strong agreement

1 – indicates strong disagreement

Research Question #5 Summary: Preferred Characteristics

The fifteen athletics directors were administered a survey designed to generate themes in their preferred characteristics of their direct supervisors. Thirteen athletics directors returned their completed surveys. On a scale of one to five, with five showing strong agreement, athletics directors ranked their preferred characteristics of their supervisor. Having a strong academic-orientation was the most important while a strong student affairs orientation closely followed. Having a legal or a fiscal background was the least important characteristic to the respondent.

Because there were only 13 responses, the quantitative data set was too small to draw any broader conclusions.

Chapter Summary

Survey results indicated that the two most common athletics director reporting structures in NCAA Divisions I, II and III included a direct report to the university

president and the office of student affairs. A direct report to the president was the most common structure in Divisions I-A and I-AA and while the presidential reporting structure was also the most common in Divisions I-AAA and Division II, less than half of all athletics directors had this reporting structure. Student affairs was the most common reporting structure for Division III athletics directors. None of the Division I-A athletics directors that participated in the study indicated having a reporting line to student affairs.

In general, most athletics directors were extremely satisfied with their reporting structure and those that report to the university president enjoyed the direct contact and communication with the president. Many athletics directors who did not report to the president and who were less than extremely satisfied with their reporting structure indicated a strong desire to have a reporting relationship with the president as the reason for their satisfaction level.

Overall, athletics directors who reported to student affairs officials indicated that their natural fit with students and student services was the primary reason for their reporting structure. This was a more common and consistent response among Division II and III athletics directors than it was for Division I athletics directors who reported to student affairs.

Of the athletics directors who were involved in a change in the reporting structure, nearly half indicated that the change was due to the president's busy schedule or because of a campus' reorganization. Athletics directors were more forthcoming and detailed in their telephone interview responses as opposed to the written survey with regard to reasons for their reporting structure. This was possibly due to their comfort level in

talking about their situations as opposed to putting this information in writing. Another possible reason was the ease in discussing complex issues rather than trying to articulate those in written form.

Data indicated that in general, trends were moving toward an athletics director reporting structure that included a direct report to the university president. Institutions that moved toward a presidential reporting line did so, often, because of a recommendation from a group outside the athletics department such as the Knight Commission or as a result of NCAA violations.

Athletics directors at bigger programs tended to desire a direct report to the president. Lower division athletics directors were more satisfied with a student affairs or academic reporting structure, however, many of them also indicated an interest in seeing a change toward a presidential reporting structure. Regardless of to whom athletics directors reported or their degree of satisfaction with their reporting structures, respondents said that the area in which they report was an important campus issue for them and had an impact on their job satisfaction. Many indicated that they would look at the reporting structure carefully as a criterion in their job selection.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A summary of the problem and purpose, methodology, results of the study, and conclusions are presented in chapter five. The first section includes the overview of the study while the second section includes a discussion of the findings and suggested implications. Finally, the researcher provides recommendations for further research related to the athletics director reporting structure on campus, and a chapter summary that includes final comments.

OverviewProblem and Purpose

The researcher conducted a preliminary study in 2001 to collect data about the campus reporting structure for NCAA Division I, II and III athletics directors. In this study, athletics directors revealed information about their institution's athletics director reporting structure, the director's satisfaction level with that structure, and whether their department had undergone any changes in that reporting structure in the previous five-year period (1996-2001). Responses from the survey led to the conclusion that many institutions, had in fact, made changes in their athletics department organizational structure, directors had strong opinions about their supervisory relationships, athletics directors felt strongly about the issue of oversight of intercollegiate athletics on their campuses, and reporting structure satisfaction levels among athletics directors varied among NCAA divisions.

Other than the preliminary study reported in this dissertation, there was little information found regarding the administrative positions to whom athletics directors report. In addition, there was little information about the appropriateness of any given structure for the athletics director or the institution. Neither senior-level university/college administrators nor athletics directors had access to supporting data from other institutions to help evaluate whether or not any given structure was effective for their type of institution and level of competition.

The problem addressed in this study was that reporting structures of athletics directors at colleges and universities belonging to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) have not been systematically collected and analyzed. In addition, it is not clear what impact reporting structures or changes in reporting structures have had on athletics directors and their athletics programs.

The purpose of this descriptive study was twofold. The first was to analyze and report the findings from a preliminary study conducted by the researcher that a) identified and then compared the reporting structures for college and university athletics directors at institutions that were members of the NCAA and were categorized as Division I, II, or III; and b) explored and reported the level of satisfaction the athletics directors had with their respective reporting structures.

The second phase of the study was to a) explore the perceptions of select athletics directors about their reporting structure in instances where change in the reporting structure occurred during the period 1996-2001; and b) analyze the perceptions of athletics directors about what characteristics were important in the person charged with

supervising the athletics director at institutions where change in the reporting structure has occurred.

Methodology

Findings from a preliminary study conducted by the researcher regarding the athletics director reporting structure and the satisfaction level of those athletics directors with their reporting structure were reported in this study. The researcher collected data in a 2001 study to answer questions concerning the current status of the athletics director reporting structure and the director's level of satisfaction with that structure. All 977 athletics directors at member institutions of the NCAA were asked to respond to survey questions about themselves and the demographics of their institutions (Appendix B). They were also asked to indicate to whom they reported in the administrative structure of their college or university, to provide information on changes in the organizational structure during the previous five years, and to indicate whether they were extremely satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or extremely dissatisfied with the current reporting structure on campus. Athletics directors were also asked to comment on why they thought their organization was structured the way it was and to give reasons for their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

Using the results from the preliminary study, the researcher then contacted 15 institutions that had made changes in their athletic director reporting structure within the past five years (1996-2001). The athletics directors of those institutions were asked in a telephone interview to respond to a series of questions related to their organizational structure, to whom they report and to whom they previously reported, why they perceived

the change was made, and whether the athletics director was involved in the decision-making regarding the change. The athletics director was also asked to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the structure and whether the change in reporting structure made a difference in their level of satisfaction with their supervisory relationship.

In order to examine the responses from the preliminary and follow-up surveys, an analysis consisting of descriptive statistics, including cross-tabulations and frequency distributions, was conducted. Some qualitative data gathered from open-ended questions from the survey and the follow-up interview were categorized and converted into quantitative scales for statistical analysis. A content analysis of the qualitative data was conducted to identify patterns or themes in responses.

Additional data were collected by means of a supervisor characteristic questionnaire that was administered to the same athletics directors targeted in the follow-up study (Appendix D). The subjects were asked to rate the level of importance that they placed on certain characteristics demonstrated by their direct supervisors, or the person assigned by the institution to oversee the director of athletics and the athletics program. The list of characteristics in the survey was developed by the researcher and was based upon themes that emerged in the preliminary study. Upon review of all descriptive statistics, appropriate statistical tests were applied, if necessary.

Discussion of Findings and Implications

Athletics Director Reporting Structures

The most notable findings were that the two most common athletics director reporting structures in NCAA Divisions I, II and III included a direct report either to the university president or to the office of student affairs. A direct report to the president appeared to be the most common structure in Divisions I-A, I-AA, I-AAA, and Division II. Division III had the lowest percentage of athletics directors reporting directly to the university president and was the division in which athletics directors most often reported directly to student affairs. None of the Division I-A athletics directors that participated in the study had a direct reporting line to student affairs.

Survey results indicated that there were a variety of different reporting structures across all divisions and it was not uncommon for institutions to make changes in their reporting structures. The most consistency in reporting structures was among Division I-A institutions, perhaps because of the large commitment that an institution must make to sponsor athletics at this high level. In general, though, Division I athletics programs are a unique enterprise that do not necessarily fit into any one element of the university campus. Athletics programs tend to touch all campus elements.

Division I athletics programs transect the rest of campus, whether it be through external development and fundraising, high finance, or the recruitment and retention of students. Division I athletics programs directly serve a small number of students (student-athletes) in proportion to the student body. But, it also serves all students by providing opportunities for students in general to attend athletics events and by providing

a mechanism for students to connect and identify with their institutions. Because it touches all elements of the university and its external constituents, it can be argued that athletics programs are appropriately situated when reporting directly to the university president, an individual whose job responsibilities require being in touch with all of those same elements.

As defined by the NCAA and included in Chapter 1, Divisions I-A, I-AA and I-AAA institutions are those that have made a commitment to having major, high profile athletics programs. Division II and III institutions that sponsor intercollegiate athletics may do so for a variety of reasons, but also by the NCAA's definition, they are less committed to having highly visible athletics programs. According to data from athletics directors, there may be a relationship between Division I institutions that establish a direct reporting line from the athletics director to the university president and those that understand the far-reaching elements of a major athletics program. Athletics directors who reported directly to the president indicated that their institutions were aware of the high profile nature of the athletics enterprise and realized the importance of athletics programs serving as a window to the rest of the university.

Fewer athletics directors reported to the president at the Division I-AA and I-AAA level than at the Division I-A level. While responses indicated that most athletics directors were satisfied with their reporting structure, many who were not satisfied and who did not report directly to the campus president, desired a direct report to this area. Athletics director satisfaction and tenure data might mean that athletics directors in Division I institutions without this direct reporting line to the president, particularly at the

Division I-AA level, felt that having this relationship was critical to their success as athletics directors at their particular institutions.

More Division II athletics directors reported directly to the president than those at Division I-AAA institutions. This may have been attributable to the “football” element in that Division I-AAA programs do not sponsor football programs. The Division II institutions that sponsored and were competitive with their football programs may account for the larger percentage of athletics directors that reported directly to the president at this level.

The smallest percentage of athletics directors reporting to the president was at the Division III level. According to the NCAA’s definition written in Chapter 1, the Division III philosophy is such that their athletics programs are lower profile and are used more to directly serve a larger portion of the student body. Student-athletes generally make up a larger portion of the student body than at Division I institutions and athletics is used as a recruitment tool for them. This falls more into the student service function of the institution and therefore athletics might be more appropriately placed in student services or student affairs.

Athletics Director Satisfaction

The vast majority of athletics directors reported being satisfied with their campus reporting structure. Athletics directors that reported directly to the university or college president enjoyed the direct contact, accessibility and frequent communication associated with that structure. Many athletics directors who did not report to the president and who

were less than “extremely satisfied” with their reporting structure indicated a desire to have a reporting relationship with the president.

Of athletics directors reporting to student affairs officials, the percentage that were “extremely satisfied” with their reporting structure was lower than those who reported directly to the president. While most athletics directors reporting to student affairs officials were satisfied with their reporting relationship, more athletics directors reporting to this institutional officer were “extremely dissatisfied” with their reporting structure than those who reported directly to the president.

The reporting structure that yielded the largest percentage of athletics directors either “somewhat” or “extremely dissatisfied” was that in which the athletics director reported to an academic dean/chair or a vice president for academic affairs. These athletics directors generally stated that they believed their reporting structure to the academic side of campus to be designed to emphasize the importance of academics in the athletics enterprise. Responses from athletics directors, however, indicated that this arrangement might not necessarily meet the practical needs of the athletics department. At Division III campuses it may be argued that athletics is simply a component of the academic experience. This may be the case, however, it also could be a disadvantage to an athletics director to report to an academic dean or vice president who does not fully understand the complexities or broader vision of an athletics program, and might not be able to effectively communicate this vision to both the university president and the athletics director.

The same case may be said for athletics directors who reported to chief financial officers at the institution. This was another reporting structure that had some dissatisfied athletics directors. Reasons cited for this reporting structure included that the athletics budget was a significant portion of the institution's overall budget and/or that athletics has had financial difficulties. However, the rationale that athletics programs should then report to the chief financial officer may be questioned. Responses from athletics directors indicated that their athletics programs might be best served by reporting to an individual who knows more about the program than the bottom line. Their view was that the bigger picture and vision of the athletics program might get lost if their supervisor has such a narrowly defined focus in their job responsibilities.

Division I-A had the highest percentage of athletics directors that were "extremely satisfied" with their reporting structures while Division III had the lowest percentage of "extremely satisfied" athletics directors, relative to other divisions. Division I-A and Division II athletics directors had the lowest percentage that were "extremely dissatisfied," however Division II had the highest percentage of athletics directors who were "somewhat dissatisfied."

It is generally easier and more satisfactory for people to work for individuals that understand their jobs and the challenges that accompany them. While presidents typically ascend to their positions through the academic ranks, their positions as presidents require them to acquire knowledge of all of their campus elements and all constituents served by them. Because of the scope of their positions, presidents would likely be in the best position to fully understand the unique complexities of an

intercollegiate athletics program and have the most authority to make immediate decisions that affect the athletics department. In addition, it was clear that often the campus philosophies of intercollegiate athletics programs are different from those in student affairs, creating a potential disconnect between athletics directors at higher-division programs and their student affairs supervisors.

The shortest average athletics director tenure occurred at the Division I-AA level. While most athletics directors at this level reported being satisfied with their reporting structure, those athletics directors who were not satisfied might also account for the shorter tenure of athletics directors at this level. This relationship might be attributed to a difference in philosophy between the athletics director and the supervisor who is not the college president.

Athletics Director Perception of Changed Structure

Athletics directors who reported to student affairs officials indicated that their natural fit with students and student services was the primary reason for their reporting structure. This was a more common response from Division II and III athletics directors than Division I-AA and I-AAA athletics directors. Athletics directors in Division I-AA and I-AAA did not believe that this natural fit was necessarily the reason they reported in this area. This could mean that athletics at the Division I level is not necessarily a natural organizational fit with students and student service functions.

Division I-A athletics directors indicated that the reason for their structures was due to the high visibility of their programs and the big decisions that needed to be made relative to their programs. Another common reason for reporting structures across all

divisions was that an outside entity recommended the structure, most often due to NCAA violations or the Knight Commission report. This was a common reason given by those who had been involved in a change in their reporting structure to include a direct report to the university president. This is supported in the literature that indicated presidents should be closely involved in the operation of their athletics programs, based on the NCAA's definition of institutional control. If a vice president or other supervisor of athletics is not able to effectively keep the president involved to the extent necessary to keep institutional control, then the reporting structure may need to be critically examined.

The second most common reason for the structure among Division III institutions was to emphasize the importance of academics within the athletics setting. While this may effectively send the desired message, the academic dean or vice president who supervises athletics may not have the background or scope of responsibility to deal with the complexities of intercollegiate athletics. A student services reporting structure might be more appropriate for these institutions, depending on the institutional philosophy of their intercollegiate athletics program.

Of the athletics directors who were involved in a change in the reporting structure, nearly half indicated that the change was due to the president's busy schedule or because of a reorganization of campus offices or personnel. Athletics directors at higher-level NCAA institutions tended to desire a direct report to the president. Directors at lower divisions were more satisfied with a student affairs or academic reporting structure, however, some also indicated being interested in seeing a change toward a presidential reporting structure. Regardless of the area in which athletics directors reported or their

degree of satisfaction with their reporting structures, respondents indicated that the area in which they report is an important campus issue for them and has an impact on their job satisfaction. Many indicated that they would look at the reporting structure carefully as a criterion in job selection.

Impact of Change on Athletics Program

Responses indicated that in general, trends were moving toward athletics directors' reporting structures that include a direct report to the university president. Institutions that moved to a presidential reporting line did so, often, because of recommendations from a group outside the athletics department such as the Knight Commission or as a result of NCAA violations.

Most athletics directors desired this structure although some Division III athletics directors believed that reporting to an academic dean or vice president for academic affairs appropriately emphasizes the academic importance of the athletics department. Other Division III athletics directors felt that reporting to the president was necessary to give the athletics director a voice on issues of importance to the athletics department. They believed this reporting structure was also critical in demonstrating the importance of athletics on their campuses.

An athletics program with a reporting structure directly to the president may be indicative of a desire on the part of the institution to elevate the status of the athletics department and to ensure that the president is closely involved in the operation and decision-making of the department. Because Division I athletics is not primarily a student service function, a reporting structure that directly involves student affairs at the

Division I level could mean that the president chooses not to be directly involved in the day-to-day operations of the program, there is a student affairs official who has a specific interest or knowledge in intercollegiate athletics, or the institution does not believe that intercollegiate athletics warrants a direct report to the president.

Recommendations for Further Study

This study focused on the athletics directors' reporting structures and their perceptions of their reporting structures, however further research might include responses from the administrators who supervise athletics directors. An analysis might be conducted of the decision-making process regarding the organizational structure involving intercollegiate athletics programs or the effectiveness of different reporting structures. College or university administrators who supervise intercollegiate programs likely share similar challenges in their roles. An investigation of those challenges and a look at what professional and academic preparation they had to help them deal with those challenges might make a further contribution to this area of study.

A reason often cited for a change in reporting structure to the president was to accommodate NCAA institutional control issues or due to the Knight Commission recommendation. An investigation as to whether these changes have, in fact, prevented further NCAA violations or whether the changes have had an impact on efforts to maintain institutional control would be important to the NCAA and its member institutions. Further research efforts might analyze whether this impact varies depending on the institution's NCAA classification. An investigation of those athletics departments

without a direct report to the institutional president to determine whether the number of NCAA violations is related to the reporting structure or if the number or seriousness of violations differs depending on the reporting structure would contribute additional data to this study.

Some athletics directors in this study responded that having a place on the president's executive staff or cabinet was as much or more essential to their satisfaction as athletics directors as their reporting structure. This aspect of the organizational structure was not probed as part of this study but a review of this might give institutional administrators an idea of more options as they make campus-wide organizational decisions. The working relationships between athletics directors and their campus peers seem to be a factor in the athletics director job satisfaction, and the best way to incorporate this working relationship into the organizational structure might be analyzed.

Other research opportunities might include a study of NCAA Division I institutions to determine whether there is a relationship between having a successful athletics program and having an athletics director with a direct reporting relationship to the university president. There are very few nationally prominent collegiate institutions that do not sponsor high profile athletics programs. A researcher might look at relatively new major programs and study the institution before and after the addition of a high-level athletics program to see how far-reaching its effects have been.

This study limited its scope to NCAA Division I, II and III programs. Further research might include a study of the athletics director reporting structure at the various levels of NAIA programs or junior colleges.

While this study focused on athletics directors' satisfaction with their reporting relationships, additional research might focus on the athletics director job satisfaction in general. The knowledge gained from this research might help institutional administrators effectively address issues related to the increase in visibility of the athletics director position as well as the escalating salaries. Due to these trends, it is extremely important to structure the position in an efficient and effective way, and in a way that is satisfactory to the athletics director and his or her campus supervisor. The particular variables that affect an athletics director's satisfaction with his or her position should be further analyzed.

The data in this study related to the preferred characteristics of an athletics director supervisor was too small to draw any conclusions. However, the emerging results from this data indicated that the philosophies of the athletics director and his or her supervisor might be further studied and analyzed to determine similarities or differences and whether these issues have an impact on organizational effectiveness.

Trends in the athletics director reporting structure might be recorded in an electronic database to provide additional insight to college and university administrators into their administrative structure decisions. A thorough examination of the mission and scope of the athletics department should be conducted in order to align the athletics department with the campus area that shares and believes in their same philosophies in order to maximize the human resources on campus. Some of the above research suggestions might assist in this process.

Chapter Summary

Intercollegiate athletics at the highest levels are complex, high profile programs that transect many, if not all, parts of the college campus as well as many of its external constituencies. The athletics director position is closely associated with the position of the college president in these unique ways. In cases where athletics directors are not satisfied with their reporting structure, it appears to sometimes be attributed to a disconnection or lack of communication between intercollegiate athletics programs and institutional administrators who oversee athletics directors. Or, it might be because the athletics director views his or her department as having a different value to the institution and the reporting structure does not reflect this value in the eyes of the athletics director. If the institution values the revenue, the public relations and the identity that athletics programs give the institution and its students, then it is important that these programs are closely aligned with the individual that has similar goals for the institution in general. This person is likely to be the institutional president.

If an institution looks at its athletics program as a tool to recruit students or as a program to give many students an opportunity to participate, then it might look at placing its athletics program in an area that also closely values those elements, the office of student affairs.

There are few, if any, other reporting structures that seem to be desirable organizational models. A reporting structure that includes an academic administrator or a finance administrator might be appropriate to address current issues involving the athletics program or to send the appropriate message as to the area of emphasis of

intercollegiate athletics. However, it may not effectively serve the long-term, or broader needs of the athletics department and the campus.

At bigger, higher level athletics programs, it is recommended that presidents directly oversee their athletics departments. At lower NCAA divisions, where athletics serves as more of a student service function, the athletics department might best be aligned with student affairs or student services. If Division II or III programs wish to elevate the status of their athletics programs and be nationally competitive, then their organizational structure might also be amended to include direct departmental oversight by the college president.

It is recommended that institutional administrators and their directors of athletics periodically examine the mission and scope of the athletics department. This is necessary to be certain the program is appropriately aligned with a supervisor who shares the same values and philosophies and can effectively communicate those with both campus and off-campus stakeholders.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: SURVEY COVER LETTER

November 2, 2001

Dear Athletics Director,

As part of my project for the Sports Management Institute, I am collecting data on the reporting structure for athletics directors at all NCAA member institutions. This is a very brief survey and should take only a couple of minutes to complete, but will provide valuable data for my colleagues who are or aspire to be athletics directors.

I have enclosed a survey with ten brief questions that I would like to ask you related to the athletics director reporting structure at your institution. This survey is being sent to all athletics directors from institutions at the NCAA Divisions I, II and III level. Your responses to the survey will be aggregated with others to develop a profile of the reporting relationships of athletics directors at NCAA institutions and determine their level of satisfaction with the current structure. This aggregate data will then be reported to my colleagues at the January 2002 meeting of the Sports Management Institute at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, South Carolina.

While identification of your institution is necessary as part of the research evaluation and comparison of subgroups, please be assured that your specific responses will remain confidential. Please indicate on the form if you would like a copy of the results sent to you.

I would ask that you return the questionnaire to me at the address listed on the form by November 15, 2001.

Thank you so much for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

Calli T. Sanders

Enclosure

APPENDIX B: SURVEY

Sports Management Institute
2001-02 Project

Topic: The Athletics Director Reporting Structure
Athletics Director Survey of all NCAA Member Institutions

1. Name of Institution _____

2. NCAA Division _____ Public or Private (Circle One)

3. How long have you been in the position of Director of Athletics at your institution?

4. To whom does the Director of Athletics report?
____ University President
____ Executive Vice President
____ Vice President for Student Affairs
____ Vice President for Finance/Administration
____ Other (please indicate)_____

5. How many years as the current reporting structure been in place? _____

6. In your opinion, what are the reasons for the current reporting structure?

SEE REVERSE FOR ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

Athletics Director Survey

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7. If there has been a change in reporting structure within the past 5 years, to whom did the Director of Athletics previously report?

8. If there has been a change in the reporting lines within the past 5 years, what were the reasons for the change?

9. How satisfied are you with the current reporting structure? (Circle One)

Extremely Satisfied

Somewhat Satisfied

Somewhat Dissatisfied

Extremely Dissatisfied

10. Why? _____

Check this box if you would like a copy of the results of this study

Thank you for your time. The results will be aggregated with others to develop a profile of reporting relationships in NCAA collegiate athletics. Your specific responses will remain confidential. Please return to:

Calli T. Sanders, Associate Dean of Students

University of Maine

P.O. Box 535

Orono, ME 04473

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APPENDIX C: TELEPHONE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Athletics Director Telephone Interview Questions

Bold - changes made based on feedback from pilot study

- 1) Who do you report to in the campus administrative structure? Who does your direct supervisor report to?

- 2) Where does the athletics director position fall in the campus flow chart (e.g. VP, Dean or Director level?)**

- 3) Before the organizational change involving your position, to whom did your position previously report?

- 4) When did the reporting structure change?

- 5) Why did the reporting structure for intercollegiate athletics change?

- 6) Were you involved in the decision-making process regarding the change?**

- 7) What are the advantages of your current organizational structure?

- 8) What are the disadvantages of your current organizational structure?

- 9) Has the change in reporting structure made a difference in your level of satisfaction with being the athletics director at _____.

How?

APPENDIX D: SUPERVISOR CHARACTERISTIC SURVEY

Supervisor Characteristic Survey

Preferred Characteristics of Direct Supervisors by Athletics Directors

Bold - changes made based on feedback from pilot study

For the following 20 items, please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, are undecided, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements about the characteristics you prefer to have in a direct supervisor.

1. My supervisor must have **final** decision-making authority regarding intercollegiate athletics

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

2. My supervisor does not have to be the **final** decision-maker, but must have access to the campus **final** decision-maker regarding intercollegiate athletics

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

3. My supervisor must have a background in or substantial knowledge of intercollegiate athletics

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

4. My supervisor should have a background in or knowledge of the coaching profession

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

5. It is essential that my supervisor has a strong interest in intercollegiate athletics

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

6. My supervisor should believe that student learning and development are central to the mission of intercollegiate athletics

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

7. My supervisor should have a background in or knowledge of financial management

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

8. My supervisor must have a strong commitment to the university's academic mission

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

9. My supervisor must believe athletics to be central to the university's mission

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

10. It is essential that my supervisor possess strong public relations skills

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

11. My supervisor needs to believe the welfare of the student-athletes should be a priority in athletics decision-making

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

12. My supervisor must have the time and desire to be involved in the day-to-day activities of the athletics department

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

13. My supervisor should be available only if I need him or her and should not be involved in the day-to-day activities of the athletics department

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

14. My supervisor needs to have a background/knowledge in student life/affairs/activities

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

15. My supervisor needs to have a background/knowledge in legal affairs

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

16. It is essential that my supervisor understands the complexities of NCAA rules and regulations

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

17. My supervisor needs to understand that college athletics is primarily a business

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

18. My supervisor needs to understand that college athletics is primarily about the educational aspect of competition and sports

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

19. My supervisor should view athletics as a means to increase university revenues

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

20. My supervisor needs to bring a spirit of collaboration and cooperation between his/her units

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

APPENDIX E: TABLE OF SURVEY SPECIFICATIONS

Table of Specifications for Survey on Athletics Director Preferred Characteristics

General

1. My supervisor must have final decision-making authority regarding intercollegiate athletics
2. My supervisor does not have to be the final decision-maker, but must have access to the campus final decision-maker regarding intercollegiate athletics
10. It is essential that my supervisor possess strong public relations skills
12. My supervisor must have the time and desire to be involved in the day-to-day activities of the athletics department
13. My supervisor should be available only if I need him or her and should not be involved in the day-to-day activities of the athletics department
20. My supervisor needs to bring a spirit of collaboration and cooperation between his/her units

Athletics Orientation

3. My supervisor must have a background in or substantial knowledge of intercollegiate athletics
4. My supervisor should have a background in or knowledge of the coaching profession
5. It is essential that my supervisor have a strong interest in intercollegiate athletics
16. It is essential that my supervisor understand the complexities of NCAA rules and regulations

Academic Orientation

8. My supervisor must have a strong commitment to the university's academic mission
9. My supervisor must believe athletics to be central to the university's mission
18. My supervisor needs to understand that college athletics is primarily about the educational aspect of competition and sports

Fiscal Orientation

- 7. My supervisor should have a background in or knowledge of financial management
- 17. My supervisor needs to understand that college athletics is primarily a business
- 19. My supervisor should view athletics as a means to increase university revenues

Student-affairs Orientation

- 6. My supervisor should believe that student learning and development are central to the mission of intercollegiate athletics
- 11. My supervisor needs to believe the welfare of the student-athletes should be a priority in athletics decision-making
- 14. My supervisor needs to have a background/knowledge in student life/affairs/activities

Legal Orientation

- 15. My supervisor needs to have a background/knowledge in legal affairs

APPENDIX F: TELEPHONE INTERVIEW COVER LETTER

Dear Athletics Director,

A few years ago, you assisted me in a project I completed for the Sports Management Institute related to the athletics director reporting structure on campus. I had a terrific response rate and even received feedback that some athletics directors used my data to inform their administration about ways to improve their campus organizational structure. Thank you for your participation in that important research project.

I am expanding on that research for my doctoral dissertation and I have identified your institution as a potential subject. I am studying athletics departments in all NCAA divisions that have undergone changes in their reporting structure and I am analyzing those changes. In my previous survey, you indicated a change in your reporting structure during the five-year period leading up to the study. In addition, I am working on the identification of characteristics that athletics directors find beneficial in their direct supervisors.

I do realize the value of your time and understand how busy this month is for all of us who work in intercollegiate athletics. I do have a few questions, though, that I would like to ask you over the phone, if you could spare a few minutes. After I receive confirmation from you that you are willing to participate (a reply to this e-mail will suffice), I will e-mail the set of questions for your review. I will then contact you to arrange a convenient time for a 10-15 minute conversation. If you are interested, I will then forward you a copy of the results of the study, which I hope you will find very informative.

I hope to hear from you soon. Thank you and have a great day.

Sincerely,

Calli T. Sanders

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