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DIVISION I COMMITTEE ON INFRACTIONS ISSUES DECISION ON
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA, TUSCALOOSA

INDIANAPOLIS---The NCAA Division I Committee on Infractions has penalized
University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, for major violations involving 16 sports in its athletic
program.

These sports include softball, baseball, women's gymnastics, football, men's basketball,
women's basketball, men's golf, women's golf, men's swimming, women's swimming, men's
tennis, women's tennis, men's track and field, women's track and field, women's soccer and
women's volleyball.

The violations include a failure to monitor by the university and impermissible benefits
obtained by 201 student-athletes through misuse of the university's textbook distribution
program. The total retail value of these impermissible benefits is approximately $40,000. It was
found that $21,950 of this value was obtained by student-athletes who were aware they were
receiving impermissible benefits.

Penalties in this case include three years probation, vacation of records, and a $43,900
fine.
The university is a repeat violator, having appeared before the committee in 2002 for violations in its football program. At the time of the 2002 case, the university was also a repeat violator due to a 1999 case involving its men's basketball program. As stated in its report, "Although the committee commends the institution for self-discovering, investigating and reporting the textbook violations, it remains troubled, nonetheless, by the scope of the violations in this instance and by the institution's recent history of infractions cases."

Of the 201 student-athletes that received impermissible benefits, 22 were identified by the university as "intentional wrongdoers," as they were aware they received improper benefits. These student-athletes – 14 of whom were members of the men's and women's track and field programs – exploited the university's textbook distribution system for scholarship student-athletes to acquire textbooks and materials of value greater than $100 for girlfriends, friends and other student-athletes.

The value of the impermissible benefits obtained by these intentional wrongdoers ranged from a low of $32.30 by a women's track student-athlete to a high of $3,947.19 by a football student-athlete. The committee noted that the four highest amounts, ranging from $2,714.62 to $3,947.19, were obtained by football student-athletes.

The second type of infraction involved student-athletes who unintentionally received the impermissible use of non-required textbooks and materials. Among the student-athletes who unintentionally violated NCAA rules, about 125 received benefits that totaled less than $100 each.
The committee found that the scope and nature of the violations demonstrate that the university failed to effectively monitor the student-athlete textbook distribution system. Although the university had created and implemented a system to control the textbook distribution process for NCAA compliance, it fell short in three areas, the committee explained. First, the university did not provide adequate rules education on the textbook issuance process for employees and student-athletes. Second, the university did not sufficiently monitor the textbook process before the textbooks left the store to prevent violations. Third, the university did not sufficiently monitor the textbook process afterwards to detect the violations in a timely fashion. The student-athletes were able to bypass the process in place for textbook purchases made with athletics aid, were not restricted by any purchase limits and not required to show photo identification.

As a result of the violations, there was a sharp increase in the total cost of books and supplies over a two-year period. Specifically, there was a 30-percent spike in charges between the 2004-05 academic year and the 2006-07 academic year. Had the university been carefully monitoring these numbers, the committee said, it seems likely this increase would have been investigated.

Finally, the committee notes that the university was unable to produce any records prior to the 2005 fall semester. As a result, the university could not ascertain whether violations of this nature may have occurred prior to the fall of 2005. Therefore, the scope of the case was limited to violations that occurred after that date.
The penalties, some of which were self-imposed by the institution and adopted by the committee, are below. Additional details are available in the public report.

- Public reprimand and censure.
- Three years of probation (June 11, 2009 to June 10, 2012).
- Vacation of all wins in which any of the seven football student-athletes identified by the university as "intentional wrongdoers" competed while ineligible during the 2005-06 through 2007-08 academic years. Further, in the sports of men's tennis, men's track and women's track, the individual records of the 15 student-athletes identified as "intentional wrongdoers" shall be vacated and team point totals shall be reconfigured accordingly. This includes regular season contests, postseason contests and any NCAA championship competition. The university's records regarding all of the involved sports, as well as the records of the head coaches of those sports, will reflect the vacated records and be recorded in all publications in which these records are reported, including, but not limited to, university media guides, recruiting material, and university and NCAA archives.

Finally, any public reference to these vacated contests, including conference championships, won during this time shall be removed from athletics department stationery, banners displayed in public areas and any other forum in which they may appear.
• The university shall pay a fine of $43,900 to the NCAA. This figure represents an approximate value of the benefits obtained by the "intentional wrongdoers" ($21,950) multiplied by a factor of two.

The members of the Committee on Infractions who reviewed this case include Paul Dee, lecturer of law and education at the University of Miami and formerly the institution's athletics director and general counsel. He is the chair of the Committee on Infractions. Other members are John S. Black, attorney; Melissa Conboy, deputy director of athletics at University of Notre Dame; Eileen Jennings, general counsel at Central Michigan University; Britton Banowsky, commissioner of Conference USA; and Dennis Thomas, the commissioner of the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference and formerly director of athletics at Hampton University.