

GPAC CONSTITUTION

(April 2010 Update)

ARTICLE I NAME

The name of this organization shall be GREAT PLAINS ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

ARTICLE II STATEMENT AND PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE

The purpose of the organization shall be the mutual promotion and supervision of intercollegiate athletics consistent with the dignity and high purpose of Christian higher education.

The member institutions of the GPAC, an athletic conference of faith-based institutions of higher learning, are committed to an intercollegiate athletic environment that is grounded in an educational athletic model, recognizing the centrality of the GPAC institutions' academic missions and encouraging integration of the athletic and educational experiences of its student athletes. Members are collectively committed to the conference by involvement in conference activities and events.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

Section I. Membership in the conference shall consist of the following colleges and universities: Briar Cliff University, Sioux City IA; Concordia University, Seward NE; Dakota Wesleyan University, Mitchell SD; Doane College, Crete NE; Dordt College, Sioux Center IA; Hastings College, Hastings NE; Midland Lutheran College, Fremont NE; Morningside College, Sioux City, IA; Mount Marty College, Yankton SD; Nebraska Wesleyan University, Lincoln NE; Northwestern College, Orange City IA; University of Sioux Falls, Sioux Falls SD.

Section II. A member must be a 501(c)(3) four year, faith-based, institution of higher learning. Participation in all approved conference sports is encouraged. For membership in the Conference, an institution is required to offer the following sports. For men: cross country, basketball, baseball, track & field, and football or soccer. For women: cross country, basketball, softball, track & field, and volleyball or soccer.

ARTICLE IV OFFICERS

Section I. The officers of this Conference are the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council of Presidents (COP), the president and vice-president of the General Assembly, the treasurer, and conference eligibility chair who shall each perform the customary duties of such offices.

Section II. The offices of President and Vice-President shall rotate alphabetically among the Faculty Athletics Representatives from the various member colleges every two years. The terms of these positions are defined in Article V.

Section III. The Conference Treasurer and Eligibility Chair shall be elected from the Faculty Athletic Representatives at the spring meeting of the Conference and shall assume their duties at the close of the fiscal year after the meeting at which they are elected.

Section IV. A vacancy in any office between official meetings shall be filled by the Executive Committee within two weeks from the time of occurrence.

ARTICLE V ORGANIZATION

Section I. Governance -

The governance of the conference shall be shared by three bodies: Council of Presidents, General Assembly, and Steering Committee. Votes taken during the meeting of the Council of Presidents shall be cast only by the President of each member institution. The Faculty Athletics Representatives (or his/her duly appointed representative) shall constitute the General Assembly and shall each cast the vote for the institution for the General Assembly. The Athletics Directors (or his/her duly appointed representative) shall constitute the Steering Committee and shall each cast the vote for the institution for the Steering Committee.

Section II. Council of Presidents (COP)-

The GPAC Council of Presidents (COP) shall consist of the President or Chief Executive Officer of each of the member institutions. Non voting advisors of the COP shall be the Commissioner, two Faculty Athletics Representatives (President and Immediate Past President) of the General Assembly, and two Athletics Directors of the Steering Committee (Chair and appointed AD representative to the Executive Committee). The Chair of the Steering Committee and the representative to the Executive Committee must not be the same person.

1. The COP shall meet not less than twice each year in conjunction with the fall and spring meetings of the conference.
2. The chair and vice-chair of the COP shall be elected by the membership of the COP to a two year term. The chair of the COP shall present the President's report at meetings of the conference.
3. The Commissioner of the GPAC shall be responsible for the keeping of the minutes of each meeting of the COP.
4. The responsibilities of the Council of Presidents.
 - a. The COP shall be responsible for the appointment (or reappointment), annual performance appraisal, and compensation of the Commissioner.

- 1) The recommendation for appointment or reappointment of the Commissioner shall be conducted by the COP at their spring meeting.
 - 2) The COP shall conduct an annual review of the Commissioner with input from the Steering Committee and Executive Committee.
 - 3) A report of the performance review will be presented at the spring meeting of the conference by the Chair of the COP as part of the President's Report.
- b. Along with the conference treasurer, the COP shall establish the annual budget of the conference including dues assessment to each institution. The proposed budget will be presented to the conference by the Chair of the COP for formal vote at the spring meeting according to established conference procedures.
All financial commitments must receive approval through normal institutional budgetary procedures.
 - c. Following a recommendation of the General Assembly, the COP shall make the definitive vote on conference membership, Constitutional changes, and By-Law changes. For Constitutional and By-Law votes a quorum of the members of the COP is required. All members of the COP shall participate in any final membership votes.
 - d. The COP shall oversee the financial aid limits for the conference. Changes in financial aid limits proposed by the COP will be presented to the General Assembly and Steering Committee in the form of Amendments to the By-Laws.
 - e. The COP may sponsor amendments to the Constitution or By-laws of the conference according to established conference procedures.
 - f. At the meetings of the conference, the Chair of the COP or, an institutional president designated by the Chair of the COP, will be given the privilege of the floor for the purpose of discussion and making motions on behalf of the COP.

Section III. General Assembly

1. General Assembly – Consists of Faculty Athletics Representatives, one from each Conference Member selected by such Conference Member. This assembly shall have the responsibility to administer the eligibility of student athletes within the conference according to NAIA guidelines. Additionally, this assembly shall have oversight over the work of the Steering Committee. This body shall review and vote upon all Constitutional, By-Law, and Sport By-Law amendments. All Constitutional and By-Law amendments shall be forwarded to the COP for final vote. Sport By-Law amendments approved by the General Assembly will be final unless objections are raised on the floor of the COP meeting.

Section IV. Steering Committee

1. Steering Committee – Consists of Conference Member Athletics Directors. This committee shall have the responsibility to administer the athletic programs of the conference. This committee shall recommend designees for commissioner, supervisors of officials and information director to the conference at the second meeting of the academic year. Each year this committee shall provide from the conference funds suitable trophies for the conference champions in each sport. Each member school shall have one vote. The commissioner shall serve as an ex-officio non-voting member.

Section V. Standing Committees.

Standing committees shall be appointed by the executive committee at the second meeting of the academic year to serve for one year as follows:

1. Executive Committee – Chair of the COP, Vice Chair of the COP, President of the General Assembly, Vice-President of the General Assembly, an appointed representative of the Steering Committee, and Commissioner (ex-officio non-voting). Its duties will include such functions as directed by the COP, the General Assembly and the Commissioner. The committee shall transact all interim business not assigned to the standing or to special committees. This committee shall rule on requests to exceptions to conference regulations except those involving eligibility. No institution may be represented on the committee by more than two people. Its acts shall be subject to review by the COP.
2. Eligibility Committee – Three Faculty Athletics Representatives and the Conference Eligibility Chair (who serves as Chair of this Committee). The Eligibility Chair and Eligibility Committee shall perform duties according to National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics guidelines. This committee shall be charged with reviewing and acting upon cases in which a student or institutional representative provides false or inaccurate information to the NAIA, the Conference, or to a member institution. This committee is authorized to recommend penalties on institutions' athletics programs, coaches, and/or students.
3. Conference Sports Committees – Membership of each Conference Sport Committee shall consist of one representative from each participating member of the conference. This representative may be either an athletics director or a coach. Their function will be to work out details for and make recommendations regarding their specific sports. These recommendations will be forwarded to the Steering Committee.
4. Conduct and Ethics Committee – This committee shall be charged with reviewing and acting upon cases involving violations of Conference sports guidelines including cases involving:

- a. Inappropriate conduct of a physical or verbal nature by players, coaches or fans
- b. Violations of the NAIA Code of Ethics
- c. Violations of the athletic financial aid policy
- d. Violations of the campus visitation/tryout, financial assistance, recruitment, scheduling and/or frequency of play regulations
- e. Violations of the declaration of intent to participate in conference play regulations

The committee is comprised of two (2) members from the Steering Committee and one (1) member from the Conference Faculty Representatives. Each group shall select their own members with the committee chaired by a member of the Steering Committee. This committee shall report to the Commissioner and Executive Committee. This committee is authorized to recommend penalties on institutions' athletic programs, coaches and/or students.

ARTICLE VI MEETINGS

- Section I. There shall be two meetings of the conference annually as set by the conference at a meeting of the General Assembly. The spring meeting for the current academic year shall be designated as the annual meeting.
- Section II. The sequence of meetings shall be the Steering Committee followed by the General Assembly followed by the COP. Normally the site of the meetings shall rotate alphabetically through the membership of the conference, with the south schools hosting each fall and the north schools hosting each spring.
- Section III. The agenda of the annual (spring) meeting shall include a report by the Chair of the COP. The report will include a recommendation for the annual budget, the performance review of the Commissioner and recommendations for appointment (or reappointment) of the Commissioner.
- Section IV. Special meetings of the conference may be called at any time by the conference president with the approval of the executive committee.
- Section V. Two-thirds of the current voting membership of the conference or COP shall constitute a quorum for each body. For final votes on membership, all members of the COP must be participating.

ARTICLE VII REFERENDUM

The majority vote of the faculty athletics representatives is sufficient to pass measures other than those pertaining to membership in the conference. No institution may be added to the conference without an 85% vote from the current member institutions. Matters regarded by the faculty athletics representatives as being in the nature of major changes in policy shall be referred to their several faculties, and shall require ratification by two-thirds (2/3) of the member schools before they can become a matter of record. Each faculty ratification shall be registered with the secretary of the conference within thirty (30) days after the conference meeting at which such regulations were passed. In case any college of the conference fails to report within the required time, such colleges shall be considered as being in favor of the regulation in question.

ARTICLE VIII DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Difficulties or disputes that may arise between two or more colleges concerning enforcement of rules, disregard of schedules, or any other similar questions, shall be referred to the Commissioner by the faculty athletics representative, who then will forward to the conduct and ethics committee for resolution. Either school can appeal the resolution to the executive committee. No member of the conduct and ethics committee and/or the executive committee shall serve if his/her school is involved in the dispute, in which case the remaining member or members of the conduct and ethics committee and/or the executive committee shall select faculty athletics representatives from the neutral schools to complete committee representation. In the event that all three regular members of the conduct and ethics committee and/or the executive committee are involved in the dispute, those conference faculty athletics representatives not involved shall constitute the conduct and ethics committee and/or the executive committee.

ARTICLE IX WITHDRAWAL FROM THE CONFERENCE

If a member institution intends to withdraw from the conference, as evidenced by: 1) the submission of a written notice of such intention to the Conference Chair and Commissioner; 2) acceptance into another conference; or 3) acceptance into another national athletic association, for example, as a candidacy (Division II) or provisional member (Division III) of the NCAA, the Conference shall have the power by two-thirds (2/3) of its members to remove such institution from membership at the end of at the end of a period of no longer than two years (beginning on the date that one of the foregoing events occurs), at the GPAC's discretion. The vote of the Conference shall be ratified by 2/3 vote of the total membership COP within thirty days.

ARTICLE X LOSS OF MEMBERSHIP

The Conference shall have power by vote of two-thirds (2/3) of its members to remove any institution from membership for a sufficient reason. The vote of the Conference shall be ratified by 2/3 vote of the total membership COP within thirty days.

ARTICLE XI AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended by a 2/3 majority vote of the member institutions as cast by each institution's President at a regularly scheduled meeting, provided, prior to that vote, the amendment has been forwarded in writing to the General Assembly in advance of a regular conference meeting.

Any member institution of the GPAC can sponsor an amendment to the constitution.

ARTICLE XII ASSESSMENTS

- Section I. The annual dues shall be established at the fall meeting for the following academic year. Each member school will be assessed for dues on July 1 for the upcoming year.
- Section II. Special assessments may be levied when necessary by vote of the conference members.

ARTICLE XIII PROCEDURE

Roberts Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority of this conference.