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Communications

June 16, 2017

Board Establishes Policies and Develops Strategic Plans

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Gardner-Webb University President Dr. Frank Bonner has been appointed to a four-year term on the NCAA Division I Board of Directors. The 24-member board is comprised of representatives from the various conferences in Division I, the chair of the NCAA Division I Council, one faculty athletics representative, one senior woman administrator representative, and one student-athlete.

Photo of Dr. Frank Bonner

Bonner is honored to represent Gardner-Webb at this national, high level of NCAA governance for Division I. “The experience and knowledge I hope to gain will be beneficial as I work with our own athletic program,” he added. “The most important challenge facing the leadership of intercollegiate athletics is to promote and advance the personal well-being of student athletes. We must ensure that participating in athletics is not detrimental to the academic, career, and personal success of the student-athlete. This is a complex and major challenge involving many factors, and I am convinced that the NCAA is fully committed to this worthy goal.”

Bonner came to Gardner-Webb in 1987 as vice president for Academic Affairs and served as provost before being named president in 2005. Prior to GWU, he was a faculty member and associate dean for Special Programs at Anderson College in Anderson, S.C. A 1969 graduate of Furman University in Greenville, S.C., with a bachelor’s degree in English, Bonner earned his master’s degree from the University of Georgia in 1971, and his PhD from UNC Chapel Hill in 1977.

During his tenure as GWU President, Bonner has served on academic and athletic advisory boards. He is a member of the Executive Council of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), serving on more than 30 accreditation committees, many times as chair. Additionally, he is a member of the Executive Committee of the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities (NCICU). He continues to serve on the Committee on Academics for NCAA. He is also a past president of the Big South Conference and was recently honored by the league for his four years of service. He is a past chair of the Board of Directors of the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities.

“Being involved in discussions of academics in athletics and the effect on students should help me to be more effective on the Division I Board, but most important, that experience should make me better able to work for the academic success of our own student athletes,” Bonner observed. “Experience in leadership of the Big South Conference will be invaluable to service on the board, because it has given me not only an understanding of challenges facing conferences but also an understanding of the issues and challenges facing the other institutions in the Big South and others like them.”

Located in the North Carolina foothills, Gardner-Webb University is a private, Christian, liberal arts university that prepares students to become critical thinkers, effective leaders and compassionate servants in the global community. Emphasizing a strong student-centered experience and rigorous academics, Gardner-Webb ignites learning and service opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.