CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I
NAME

The name of the athletic conference shall be HEART OF AMERICA ATHLETIC CONFERENCE. It is an affiliated conference within the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA). The conference is a tax-exempt corporation under IRS Code 501(c)(3).

ARTICLE II
PURPOSE

PURPOSE
To organize, control, and supervise intercollegiate athletics among the institutions of this Conference.
To establish standards and promote scholarship and high ideals in sportsmanship in the institutions of the conference.
To formulate principles and disseminate information regarding the proper place of athletics in colleges and universities.
To promote scholarship, high ethical standards, good sportsmanship and better fellowship opportunities among the competing athletes of the conference.

ARTICLE III
MEMBERSHIP

SECTION A
CONFERENCE MEMBERS AND SPONSORED SPORTS

1. Baker University
2. Benedictine College
3. Central Methodist University
4. Clarke University
5. Culver-Stockton College
6. Evangel University
7. Graceland University
8. Grand View University
9. MidAmerica Nazarene University
10. Missouri Valley College
11. Mount Mercy University
12. Peru State College
13. William Penn University

SECTION B
ADMISSION OF NEW MEMBERS

Admission of new members or reinstatement to the conference shall be by three-fourths vote of the Council of Presidents upon recommendation of the Board of Governors.

SECTION C
MEMBERSHIP

Institutions must be an active member of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) and must be fully accredited members of one of the six institutional accrediting bodies.

Required Core Sports
To become eligible for membership in the conference, a prospective institution must meet two requirements: 1) participation in requisite core sports; and, 2) participation in at least 10 Heart sponsored sports (5 sports for single gender institutions). The core sports are as follows: men’s sports of football or soccer, basketball, and baseball; women’s sports of volleyball or soccer, basketball, and softball. Failure to meet either requirement shall cause an existing member institution to be ineligible for a conference championship in any sport. Failure to compete a second year will cause automatic expulsion from the conference.

The Heart conference membership shall include a minimum of 12 football sponsoring institutions. Should the number of football sponsoring institutions fall below 12, the Heart will consider new members applications only from institutions with active football programs until the minimum is achieved.

These requirements are to be interpreted as minimum requirements for eligibility and continuation in the conference. Membership can only be offered and approved by The Heart of America Conference Council of Presidents.

Affiliate (Per sport membership)
An institution that belongs to another conference but does not have six institutions that sponsor a sport.
An affiliate member shall be subject to all relevant portions of the Conference Constitution and Bylaws and Sport Procedures. An affiliate member is entitled to conference services including voting rights for sport procedures in coaches’ business meetings, awards, ratings and postseason conference participation.

SECTION D  
DUES

All members shall pay annual nonrefundable dues sufficient to cover all costs of operating the conference. The amount of annual dues must be submitted no later than August 1 and shall be determined by the Council of Presidents.

An affiliate member shall pay $1,500 to offset administrative costs along with any postseason assessment fees determined yearly.

SECTION E  
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION PROCESS

The following process shall be used for institutions that desire to become a full member of the Conference. The Conference reserves the right to terminate or grant an exception to the process based upon an applicant institution’s conference.

Letter of Interest

The applicant institution shall provide a letter of interest to the conference commissioner. The commissioner shall forward the letter of interest to the Council Presidents for review.

Application

If the Council of Presidents approved the letter of interest, the applicant institution’s president shall submit the official application (provided by conference) along with a $1,500 application fee. The application must be received by July 1 or December 1 to be reviewed by the COP at their business meetings held in October and April.

Site Visit

The conference shall assemble a Site Evaluation Team to visit the campus of the applicant institution and make a recommendation to the Council of Presidents.

Final Review

The Council of Presidents shall vote to approve or deny the application for membership. A 3/4 majority vote of COP and voting shall be required to admit the applicant institution. The commissioner shall notify the applicant institution of the outcome of the COP’s vote.

SECTION F  
CONFERENCE REPRESENTATION AND VOTE

Each College or University holding membership in the conference shall be represented on the Board of Governors by a Faculty Athletics Representative and its Director of Athletics. Each shall be entitled to one vote. No proxy votes allowed and no substitute may attend.

Any college or university failing to be represented by its Director of Athletics and/or Faculty Athletics Representative for two consecutive regularly scheduled meetings of the Board of Governors shall thereupon be warned of the danger of being dropped from the membership roll of the conference; if two further successive, regularly scheduled meetings should be missed by the institution’s Director of Athletics and/or Faculty Athletics Representative, it shall be called upon to show cause for the absences before the Board of Governors who will in turn make a recommendation to the Council of Presidents as to the future membership status of the institution in question.

SECTION G  
WITHDRAWAL FROM A CONFERENCE

A member college must give written notice of its intention to withdraw from the conference two years in advance. Permission to withdraw upon a shorter notice may be recommended to the Council of Presidents by a three-fourths vote of the Board of Governors.

Should a member institution withdraw from the HEART without a two (2) year notice (Notice must take place prior to any fiscal year which is July 1) the following fees will be assessed:

1. 1-2 years notice: Current annual conference dues
2. Less than 1 year: 2 times the current annual conference dues.

All remaining conference institutions shall impose a three (3) year schedule moratorium in all athletic programs, whether they are sanctioned by the conference or not.
Conference schools that violate this regulation will forfeit any opportunity for standing for a conference championship in that year.

Failure to complete a scheduled conference date will result in forfeiture, and a $500.00 fee for each contest.

ARTICLE IV   GOVERNANCE

SECTION A   COUNCIL OF PRESIDENTS

The assembly of Presidents from member colleges shall be called the Council of Presidents. This Council shall be recognized as the Executive Committee of the Conference with all-inclusive authority.

HEART property, business and affairs shall be controlled and managed by the Council of Presidents of the member institutions.

Council of Presidents’ responsibility shall be all inclusive and shall include but not be limited to matters concerning policy, fiscal matters, conference membership, and personnel including the Commissioner and final approval for all matters of business by the conference.

Council of Presidents shall work through the Commissioner to the Board of Governors unless special circumstances warrant.

Council of Presidents shall meet twice yearly (first Wednesday in October and first Wednesday in April) and on call as the need arises. Any College or University failing to be represented by its President (no substitute attendee or proxy vote permitted) for two successive regularly scheduled meetings of the Council of Presidents, shall thereupon be warned of the risk of being dropped from the membership roll of the Conference; if two further successive, regularly scheduled meetings should be missed by the institution’s President, it shall be called upon to show cause for the absences before the Council of Presidents. In addition to the Council of Presidents regularly scheduled meetings, the Council may take action via email, telephone, or in person at a meeting called for discussion of a specifically identified matter. A simple majority of the COP membership shall constitute a decision (exceptions: Article III, Section II A admission of members and Article VI Section II A, Amendments to Constitution and By Laws requires ¾ majority). The Chair of the Council of Presidents follow the rotation alphabetically by institution and shall serve for two-year terms. The Commissioner shall be the Conference Treasurer unless otherwise determined by the Council.

SECTION B   BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The Faculty Athletics Representative and Director of Athletics from each institution shall constitute the Board of Governors. The Commissioner shall be an ex-officio member without vote and shall be the liaison from the Board of Governors to the Council of Presidents.

The Board of Governors shall implement the policies established by the Presidents. Further, the Board of Governors shall review and evaluate all conference business.

The Board of Governors may recommend to the Council of Presidents for final approval, any changes or additions to the constitution, by laws or any written policy of the conference.

The Board of Governors shall establish a process whereby infractions, grievances, violations/breach of proper conduct or other special concerns may be promptly and fairly investigated. The results of these investigations or inquiries shall be acted on by the Board of Governors and reported to the Council of Presidents within 30 days. No action by the Board of Governors shall be permanent for 45 days or until such time as the Council of Presidents review for action the Board of Governors decisions.

The Board of Governors will rule on any grievances or complaints pertaining to a conference ruling with the Council of Presidents serving as a final route of appeal.

The Board of Governors may arrange for sub-groups to carry out their function.

Nominating committee for national honors shall consist of the Faculty Athletic Representatives at the institutions represented by the officers of the Board of Governors.
A member of the Board of Governors shall serve as a liaison to a sport. The responsibilities will be to serve as the primary liaison to the coaches, assist with scheduling, prepare final proposals for review, attend the mandatory coaches’ business meetings and conference postseason.

SECTION C COMMISSIONER

The Heart of America Athletic Conference shall employ a commissioner who shall serve as the chief administrative officer of the conference under the terms and direction of the Council of Presidents. The Commissioner shall be an ex-officio member of the Board of Governors and of the Council of Presidents, without voting privileges. The Commissioner shall be the official representative of the Conference at the annual business meeting of the NAIA.

The Commissioner shall work as a direct representation of the Council of Presidents to the Board of Governors. The Commissioner shall not use the office to further personal or commercial interests and shall have no official connection with any member college. The Commissioner may be relieved of duties by the Council of Presidents or by recommendation of the Board of Governors and approval of the Council of Presidents.

The Commissioner shall normally interpret the policies and expectations of the Council of Presidents to the Board of Governors. However, the Council of Presidents and the Board of Governors may communicate directly with one another if such communication is deemed preferable or necessary by the Council of Presidents.

The Commissioner’s job description shall be drafted by the Council of Presidents after consultation with the Board of Governors.

SECTION D ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER

The Heart of America Athletic Conference may hire an Assistant Commissioner based on the needs of the conference. The Assistant Commissioner is selected by and report to the Commissioner.

SECTION E DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

The Heart of America Athletic Conference shall hire a Director of Communications who will be selected by and report to the Commissioner. The Director of Communications job description shall be approved by the Board of Governors with consultation provided by the Commissioner.

SECTION F SPORT CHAIRS

The sport committees consist of the head coaches from member institutions that coach a specific sport. Sport chairs may be reelected. Specific duties of the Sport Chair are defined below:

1. Submit recommendations to the Conference through the Board of Governors liaison respective sport policies and tournament procedures (e.g., dates, qualification plans, site, etc.)
2. Call and chair meetings of the business meetings.
3. Coordinate establishment of the sport conference schedule.
4. Obtain nominations for a rater (if applicable) and forward the nominee to the Commissioner for appointment.
5. Forward for resolution to the Commissioner any disputes irresolvable.

SECTION G OFFICERS

The officers of the Board of Governors shall be elected from among the Board of Governors alphabetical rotation procedure and shall consist of a Chair and Vice Chair. The officers shall serve for two-year terms.

The Administrative Committee of the Board of Governors shall be composed of the officers of the Board of Governors. The Commissioner shall be an ex-officio member of this committee without a vote. It shall have power to act when the Board of Governors is not in session but its actions must be ratified at the next meeting of the Board of Governors. Action taken by the administrative committee may be made or confirmed to all members of the Board of Governors via email or at a regular meeting.
The Commissioner shall manage all meetings of the Board of Governors. The Chair shall manage any meetings of the Board of Governors in the absence of the Commissioner.

The conference Director of Communications shall keep available all records of the conference and shall perform other duties as assigned.

ARTICLE V  CONFERENCE MEETINGS

SECTION A  COUNCIL OF PRESIDENTS MEETINGS

The Council of Presidents shall meet twice yearly (first Wednesday in April and first Wednesday in October) and on call as the need arises. No official meeting may be held without a quorum of three-fourths of the Council membership present. The location of the meetings will rotate alphabetically among member institutions.

The President of each member institution shall attend duly called meeting to consider matters pertinent to the conference.

Persons other than institutional CEOs may not serve as permanent representatives to the Council of Presidents. No Proxy vote or substitute attendee permitted.

Official action taken by the Council of Presidents pursuant to the prescribed quorum shall be binding upon member institutions without regard to the Institution(s) whose President(s) are not in attendance.

SECTION B  BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETINGS

There shall be three yearly meetings of the Board of Governors: fall, winter and spring. Additional meetings may be called as determined by the Commissioner. No official meeting may be held without a quorum of three-fourths of the Board membership present.

Institutions hosting the Board of Governors meetings will provide a working luncheon.

ARTICLE VI  FISCAL MATTERS

SECTION A  GENERAL

All matters of finance shall have the advice and consent of the Council of Presidents before implementation occurs.

SECTION B  BUDGETARY PROCEDURES

The Commissioner shall present to the Council of Presidents a balanced budget for the next year at the April meeting.

The Commissioner shall present the budget request along with written copies at the spring meeting of the Council of Presidents.

The Commissioner shall have the operational budget available for review by the Council of Presidents at any time.

The operational budget shall show all revenue and expenditures by category. The categories of expense shall include but not be limited to travel, support services, awards and honors, meeting expense, marketing, salaries and other obvious categories.

SECTION C  ASSESSMENTS

Each member institution shall share equally in the expenses approved by the Council of Presidents unless special circumstances warrant a differentiation between institutions.

All assessments shall be sent directly to the Commissioner before August 1 of each year.

SECTION D  FISCAL CONTROL

The HEART shall have a banking account as determined by the Commissioner. A current Council of Presidents member shall have signatory privileges along with the Commissioner on the checking account. Only one signature shall be required to write checks.

The Commissioner at the October meeting of the Council of Presidents shall present the previous fiscal year (July 1-June 30) budget performance along with copies of bank checking account and investment account statements and balances. At the April meeting, the Commissioner shall present the 6-month budget performance (July 1-December 31) along with copies of the same account statements.
and balances mentioned above. The Council of Presidents may at any time, call for a full audit of all financial accounts by the comptroller at the institution of the Chair of the Council of Presidents.

The Commissioner as needed may accomplish all entrees in or out of the bank account that have the approval of the Council of Presidents. The Commissioner prior to expenditure shall review any expenditure not covered by the annual budget with the Chair of the Council of Presidents.

ARTICLE VII  CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

SECTION A  AMENDMENT PROCEDURES

Proposed constitutional amendments initiated by the Council of Presidents must have been filed with the Commissioner at least one month prior to the next meeting of the Board of Governors for transmission to all members of the Board of Governors at least two weeks prior to their next meeting for the purpose of discussion.

Proposed constitutional amendments initiated by the Board of Governors must have been filed with the Commissioner at least one month prior to next regular meeting of the Board of Governors at least two weeks prior to their next meeting, in which case a three-fourths vote shall be required to pass the amendment proposal on to the Council of Presidents for action.

SECTION B  AMENDMENT RATIFICATION

All proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws must be ratified by three-fourths of the Council of Presidents.
CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I  CONTROL

I SECTION A  JURISDICTION OF ATHLETIC CONTESTS
All intercollegiate games played by a member of this conference shall be played on grounds under jurisdiction of one or both members of the participating schools, with NAIA or NCAA sanctioned games being the only exception. All intercollegiate games are played under college management unless such games sponsored by cooperation, association, or private individual are sanctioned by NAIA or NCAA.

Requests for exceptions to this rule may be made by the Boards of Governors at the request of the contesting parties.

ARTICLE II  ADMISSIONS

II SECTION A  STUDENT-ATHLETE ADMISSION STANDARDS
The current NAIA policy on student-athlete admissions governs admissions to member institutions.

ARTICLE III  ELIGIBILITY

III SECTION A  STUDENT-ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS
The current NAIA student-athlete eligibility standards govern all member student athletes.

III SECTION B  TRANSFER ELIGIBILITY EXCEPTION
A student athlete who identifies with one member institution and then seeks transfer will not be eligible at another member institution for 365 days beginning the day after the official end of the last semester the student-athlete was enrolled at the previous HEART institution.

The following exceptions apply:

1. The institution from which the student is transferring (sending institution) releases the student-athlete to become immediately eligible at the member institution to which the student-athlete is transferring (receiving institution).

   OR

2. The sending institution releases the student-athlete to become eligible per NAIA rule (16 weeks).

A Member wishing to appeal Article III: Section B:

A student-athlete who does not receive an immediate release from the sending institution may appeal the decision to an eligibility committee at the sending institution. The committee at the sending institution will include the Director of Athletics as a non-voting member, the Faculty Athletics Representative and two members of the institution’s administrative leadership as appointed by the institution’s president.

NOTE: The appeal does not go to the Board of Governors. It stops at the sending institution.

ARTICLE IV  FINANCIAL AID

IV SECTION A  GENERAL
Scholarships, grants-in-aid, or student loans shall be controlled by the faculty through the regularly constituted committee on student loans and scholarships.

Athletes should be required to maintain at least the same minimum standards, academically as non-athletes, in order to qualify for and maintain such scholarships.

HEART financial aid policy shall be the NAIA financial aid policy.

IV SECTION B  REPORTING OF FINANCIAL AID
The commissioner will send a copy of the Financial Aid Report to every member institution’s Director of Athletics no later than October 1. A complete list of all athletes participating the current year in conference sports who receive aid must be listed on this report.

The Commissioner shall identify possible violations and upon discovery shall deliver evidence to the Conduct and Ethics Committee. The Committee shall review evidence to determine if violations have occurred. If so, it will send sanctions and/or penalty recommendation to the Commissioner who shall submit the recommendation to the Board of Governors for vote.

### IV SECTION C WITHDRAWAL OF FINANCIAL AID

Any coach may, upon written approval of the Athletic Director, withdraw an athletic financial grant or a portion thereof, at the end of any academic term, for failure to participate in accordance with the agreement made at the time the award is given.

An athletic financial grant, or any portion thereof, may be withdrawn for lack of participation due to injury sustained in practice or contest.

### ARTICLE V VIOLATIONS – BREACH OF PROPER CONDUCT - INFRACTIONS

#### V SECTION A ENFORCEMENT POLICY

Power to enforce provisions of the conference Constitution and Bylaws to carry out suspensions and penalties for violations/ breach of proper conduct, shall be vested in the Board of Governors following a recommendation by the Conference Conduct and Ethics Committee appointed by the BOG Chairperson.

The BOG shall take such action as deemed necessary after reasonable opportunity has been given the President of the institution(s) involved to justify its action constituting the alleged violation/breach of conduct.

Reporting Violations:
1. The reporting of possible violation or breach of proper conduct should be submitted to the Commissioner via email.
2. The Commissioner, after being informed of the possible violation/breach of proper conduct, will notify the President, Athletic Director and Faculty Athletic Representative at the institution(s) involved of the allegations. The President shall perform an internal investigation of the alleged violation/breach of proper conduct. The results of the internal investigation (including actions taken) shall be sent to the Commissioner within five (5) business days of the original notification. The Commissioner will immediately, upon reply from the institution(s) involved, forward all documentation to the Conduct and Ethics Committee and the Chairperson of the Board of Governors. Said Committee shall review all information then send its recommendation, including rationale for its conclusions, to the Commissioner who shall promptly submit the Committee’s recommendation including all documentation to the BOG for vote.

#### V SECTION B NOTIFICATION – RIGHT OF APPEAL

The Commissioner shall notify the President of the offending institution(s) of the findings and action taken by the BOG.

Right of Appeal on BOG Violations/Breach of Conduct decisions.

1. The President of the offending institution(s) may submit an appeal, via email, of any violations/breach of proper conduct decision made by the BOG. Any appeal must be submitted immediately to the Chairperson of the HEART COP with a copy to all Member Presidents and to the Commissioner. The HEART COP decision shall be final with no further opportunity for appeal.

#### V SECTION C PROCEDURES FOR PROCESSING ELIGIBILITY INFRACTIONS

A. The following procedures are to be followed when submitting information on eligibility infractions within a conference school.

3. A written statement of explanation for the infraction from the Faculty Athletic Representative, Director of Athletics, and the student involved.
4. A copy of the student’s transcript.
5. Send by email, a copy of the full disclosure documentation to each member of the BOG Eligibility Committee and Commissioner.
6. The Eligibility Committee shall make a recommendation then send to the Commissioner who shall immediately solicit the vote of the BOG.

B. Eligibility Infractions of HEART Eligibility Policy more restrictive than NAIA Policy

1. The school may be placed on probation for conference championships if only conference rules are involved. However, when NAIA rules are involved, NAIA regulations apply if the NAIA rules are more restrictive than the conference rules.

2. Notification of eligibility infractions decisions of the BOG shall be sent by the Commissioner to the Faculty Athletic Representative, Director of Athletics, and President of the school committing the infraction(s).

C. Right of Appeal on BOG Eligibility Decisions

1. An offending school shall have the right to appeal any decision made by the BOG for any eligibility infraction incurred by that school.

2. The appeal must be submitted via email by the President of the institution making the appeal, to the Chairperson of the HEART COP, with copy to all Member Presidents and the Commissioner. The appeal should include reason(s) why the school feels the penalty to be unjust to either the school or to the student involved.

3. The COP Chairperson shall appoint a three member Review Board, consisting of Board of Governors members whose schools are not represented on the COP Administrative Committee, nor representing the school under penalty. This committee shall investigate the appeal and make a judgment as to accepting or rejecting the appeal. This decision shall then be sent to the Chairperson of the HEART COP who shall then have the decision of the Review Board confirmed by the full COP. The COP Chairperson shall notify the “appealing school” and Commissioner of the final decision with no opportunity for further appeal.

ARTICLE VI CONFERENCE SPORTS

VI SECTION A CRITERIA – SPORT TO BE RECOGNIZED AS CONFERENCE STATUS

A. At least six (6) conference institutions must declare their intent to compete in the sport.
B. A meeting of coaches of the particular sport will establish a proposal for rules determining championship play and scheduling procedures.
C. The overall plan must be approved by the Board of Governors prior to the beginning of the first sport season of competition.
D. All rules and regulations of the HEART and the affiliated national association will be followed by participating teams.
E. Sports not involving conference play will be governed by the rule of the participating institution.

VI SECTION B CHAMPIONSHIPS

A conference championship is awarded in all conference sports. In football, soccer, basketball, baseball, and softball regular season champions are determined by the overall conference win-loss record. In the sports of soccer, volleyball, basketball, baseball, and softball a conference tournament champion will also be crowned by playing a championship tournament. In the sports of cross country, track and field, golf, cheer and dance, wrestling and bowling and any other sport as designated as official by the conference, the conference champion will be determined by holding a championship event.

The conference is to provide a championship banner and trophy in all official conference sports. Individual awards for track and cross-country will be provided by the conference. Conference championship awards shall be determined at the first meeting of the Board of Governors following the close of each sport season.

In the event of co-champion, both schools will receive a banner.
### VI SECTION C  
**COMPETITION**

The Heart determines a start date for fall practices to begin.

Dates for the Conference Championship formats shall be approved by the Board of Governors and arrangements made by the appropriate committee of coaches with the cooperation of the Commissioner.

### VI SECTION D  
**POSTSEASON FINANCES**

All sports that have a conference tournament/meet, the host school(s) shall be required to pay a host rights fee to the conference as follows:

A. $300 per contest for all sports that have one contest at a time hosted at the highest seed. (Women’s Volleyball, Soccer, Basketball, Men’s Volleyball)

B. $600 per postseason event that take place at one time over 1-2 days. (Cheer and Dance, Wrestling, Softball, Baseball)

### VI SECTION E  
**AWARDS**

Conference individual awards are certificates and plaques for every sport so as to ensure consistency between sports for this type of recognition.

**Larry Lady Academic Award:** Two awards are given; one to the institution with highest institutional Cumulative Grade Point Average for male athletes and one to the institution with the highest institutional Cumulative Grade Point Average for female athletes. When calculating the institutional Cumulative Grade Point Average, use only athletes that were certified eligible and completed an athletic season within the academic year. The only exception would be students that withdrew after the season ended, but before the semester ended. The Cumulative Grade Point Average should be calculated in the normally accepted manner by totaling all quality points (honor points) and dividing by the total hours attempted. The Cumulative Grade Point Average should not be calculated by averaging the averages. The Cumulative Grade Point Averages are due to the Conference Commissioner by August 1 each year. An institution will be the winner of each award; therefore, each institution is to select the student-athlete who is to receive each award and is to include that name (with Cumulative Grade Point Average) with the institutional Cumulative Grade Point Average submission. The recipient of each award must be a student-athlete who will enroll at his/her institution the following Fall Semester. Each $1000 scholarship will be awarded following the announcement of the recipients at the September BOG meeting.

**HEART Scholar-Athlete Awards:**

**Criteria**

a. Have a cumulative GPA of 3.40 (on a 4.0 scale)

b. Have accumulated a minimum of 60 semester hours, at least 5 semesters, and attended the nominating institution for at least 2 semesters prior to being nominated.

c. Be a varsity participant having made a significant contribution to their team and school.

**Procedure**

a) The Faculty Athletic Representative must submit an application to the conference Director of Communications by June 1.

**Application** - The scholar-athlete application should include the following:

a) Name

b) All institutions attended together with dates

c) GPA

d) Number of semesters or terms

e) Number of hours earned

f) Academic achievements

**Announcement**

a) The conference Director of Communications may announce to media the scholar-athletes immediately upon receipt, but no later than June 30.

**Awards**
a) The scholar-athlete award will consist of a HEART certificate provided by each institution. Template provided by conference.

b) A Heart of America Commissioner Award will be awarded to all athletes achieving an overall 4.0 grade point average.

HEART Sportsmanship Award: To encourage and reward good sportsmanship, the HEART has established The HEART Sportsmanship Trophy to be awarded annually to the institution that demonstrates good sportsmanship at the highest level in its athletic programs. The award winner will be determined by a vote of the Athletic Directors and the Commissioner at the spring meeting of the HEART Board of Governors.

ARTICLE VII SPORTSMANSHIP

VII SECTION A STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Heart of America Conference adheres to the code of ethics and the NAIA code as set forth in the NAIA Handbook and the Heart COP has established a conference Statement of Commitment to Sportsmanship.

HEART STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO SPORTSMANSHIP/AWARD

Member institutions of the Heart of America Athletic Conference value and enjoy the athletic competition that brings us together as a conference. Good sportsmanship is at the soul of fair athletic competition. Good sportsmanship is expected of players, coaches and fans both on & of the playing court or field. It is incumbent upon each of our Member Institutions to ensure that good sportsmanship is an integral part of our athletic programs. Good sportsmanship is not a goal but an expectation.

VII SECTION B GUIDELINES

The Athletic Director is responsible for the sportsmanlike conduct of guest personnel and control of fans and student body in any contest held at his/her school. Any violations of unsportsmanlike conduct standards shall be reported to the Commissioner for investigation.

Sportsmanship Guidelines:

1. Mechanical noisemakers shall be permitted if sports related rules and interpretations are followed.

2. Coaches must assume a leadership role in preventing crowds from getting out of hand.

3. Clearly defined and concise Standards of Behavior must be established by each Member’s Athletic Department then communicated to the student body and other fans regarding the type of behavior expected at athletic events. Shouting of expletives, etc., (by groups or individuals) is prohibited.

4. The test of any athletic organization is the ability to control its teams, coaches, players and fans, in accordance with the spirit of fair play and generally acceptable code conduct.

5. Smoking shall not be permitted in the area of indoor athletic events. The host institution, at its discretion, may establish smoking regulations that are more restrictive than stated above or in other areas including the entire campus if that is the general policy on its campus.

6. As a sign of good sportsmanship following completion of all HEART athletic contests, all participants and coaches will shake hands.
ARTICLE VIII  GATE ADMISSION POLICIES

VIII SECTION A  ADMISSION FEES TO HEART EVENTS

Only persons showing NAIA Membership Cards and one guest shall be admitted free of charge to HEART athletic events including post season events. A host institution may admit free of charge, anyone they choose to athletic events except at Conference administered post-season events.

Minimum conference postseason ticket prices: Reserved $6, General Admission $5, Students $2

If seating becomes a problem for HEART events, the two Athletic Directors will follow the system of 85% seat allocation to the home team and 15% seat allocation to the visiting team. The seating would be first come, first serve for each school.

ARTICLE IX  AMENDMENTS

IX SECTION A  AMENDMENT PROCEDURES

Proposed bylaw amendments initiated by the Council of Presidents must have been filed with the Commissioner at least one month prior to the next annual meeting of the Board of Governors for transmission to all members of the Board of Governors at least two weeks prior to their next meeting for the purpose of discussion.

Bylaw amendments may be proposed at any official meeting of the Board of Governors. A proposed amendment shall then be considered for action at the next regular meeting of the BOG. If approved by a 3/4 majority vote of members present, the Commissioner shall carry the recommendation to the next official meeting of the HEART COP for consideration.

IX SECTION B  AMENDMENT RATIFICATION

All amendments of the Constitution and Bylaws must be ratified by three-fourths of the Presidents of HEART member institutions.

ARTICLE X  COMMITTEES

A. HEART Conduct & Ethics Committee – Standing committee comprised of two AD’s and one FAR to be appointed by the commissioner. Committee members must have 3 years of NAIA experience.

B. HEART Eligibility Committee – Standing committee comprised of conference eligibility chair and two FAR’s to be appointed by the commissioner. Committee members must have 3 years of NAIA experience.

C. NAIA National Administrative Council – HEART Nominations to NAC by majority vote of the HEART BOG.

ARTICLE XI  ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT-ATHLETES

The Heart Association of Student-Athletes is to actively promote a positive relationship between student-athletes and both conference and campus athletic administrators through open communication, support, representation and constructive feedback while creating unity, academic success and well-being among all student-athletes.

Each member institution appoints one student-athlete to serve on the HASA, with representatives being deemed in having exceptional character, leadership skills and an ability to understand a conference-wide big picture. The conference HASA meets via teleconference twice per academic year (fall and spring) to discuss NAIA and conference topics that involve student-athlete welfare. The HASA will also attend the annual Heart Summit.