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Myles Brand, N.C.A.A. President, Dies at 67

By [RICHARD GOLDSTEIN](#)

[Myles Brand](#), a former college president who pushed for academic reforms in collegiate athletics as president of the [N.C.A.A.](#) for the last six years, died Wednesday at his home in Indianapolis. He was 67.

His death was announced by the N.C.A.A. Mr. Brand announced in January that he was being treated for pancreatic cancer. He continued to run the organization's day-to-day operations while undergoing treatment.

When Mr. Brand became the head of the National Collegiate Athletic Association in January 2003, he seemed an unlikely choice. The departing president, Cedric Dempsey, had taken the post after serving as athletic director at the [University of Arizona](#). But Mr. Brand was hardly recruited from the ranks of big-time athletics. He was a former philosophy professor, and while president of [Indiana University](#) he fired one of college sports' biggest names, the Hoosiers' men's basketball coach, [Bob Knight](#), for abusive behavior. The decision led to a student protest at his home, quelled by police officers in riot gear.

While at Indiana, Mr. Brand had likened the competition among collegiate powers in football and basketball to an arms race threatening academic integrity. When he was selected as N.C.A.A. president he said he would "look forward to being a change agent."

At Mr. Brand's urging, the N.C.A.A. approved an academic reform package in 2004 penalizing colleges whose scholarship athletes did not meet standards for academic progress.

“It is a major change in the athletic culture,” Mr. Brand said at the time. “Nothing like this has been done before.”

The new system, which remains in effect, goes beyond graduation rates, which had been used as a measure of academic progress. Each college team in Division I is awarded points when an athlete remains eligible and when the athlete advances academically from semester to semester. A college with programs that fall below a specified point level can lose athletic scholarships in those sports, and since 2008-9 can be kept from postseason play in the sport at issue.

In May 2008, 37 football programs were penalized by the N.C.A.A. after submission of the annual Academic Progress Report, but only six programs were from the major conferences sending teams to the [Bowl Championship Series](#). Mr. Brand viewed the actions taken by the N.C.A.A. as “measurable progress.”

Under Mr. Brand, the N.C.A.A. adopted recruiting reforms in 2004 eliminating lavish perks for prospective star athletes after scandals at the [University of Colorado](#) and at the [University of Miami](#).

Mr. Brand oversaw an N.C.A.A. crackdown against colleges with mascots, nicknames or images deemed “hostile or abusive in terms of race, ethnicity or national origin.” Implemented in 2005 and directed largely against the use of American Indian symbols, the N.C.A.A. directive banned the ethnic representations at postseason events it controlled, most notably the basketball tournament in March. Exceptions were made, however, for colleges receiving permission from the ethnic groups; as a result, [Florida State University](#) was allowed to continue as the Seminoles.

In April 2008, the N.C.A.A. turned to abuses in youth basketball leagues, joining with the [N.B.A.](#) to finance their oversight beginning this summer.

There were some contentious issues that Mr. Brand did not resolve.

College football’s Bowl Championship Series remains in place despite calls by many for a playoff series to determine the national champion. And there are

still few African-American head coaches. “It’s more frustrating than anything I can think of,” Mr. Brand said last December. “I can’t see my way clear to the solution.”

Myles David Brand, a native of Brooklyn, was born May 17, 1942. He received a bachelor’s degree in philosophy from [Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute](#) and a doctorate in philosophy from the [University of Rochester](#). Among his academic posts, he was provost and a vice president at [Ohio State University](#); chairman of the philosophy departments at the University of Illinois-Chicago and the University of Arizona, and president of the [University of Oregon](#) from 1989 to 1994, before being named president at Indiana.

Mr. Brand is survived by his wife, the former Peg Zeglin, and a son, Joshua, from a previous marriage. The N.C.A.A. did not announce his successor.

For all his advocacy of academic reform, Mr. Brand presided over a vast, multimillion-dollar sports culture. He paid tribute to college athletes for the fortitude they brought to their work.

“Here’s an interesting fact,” Mr. Brand told [National Public Radio](#) in 2005. “Football players tend to do better academically during the fall when their teams are working hard than in the spring. They learn how to be focused and committed to what they’re doing, and it shows. It’s a great life experience.”