

HOW THE NCAA WORKS:

# Division III

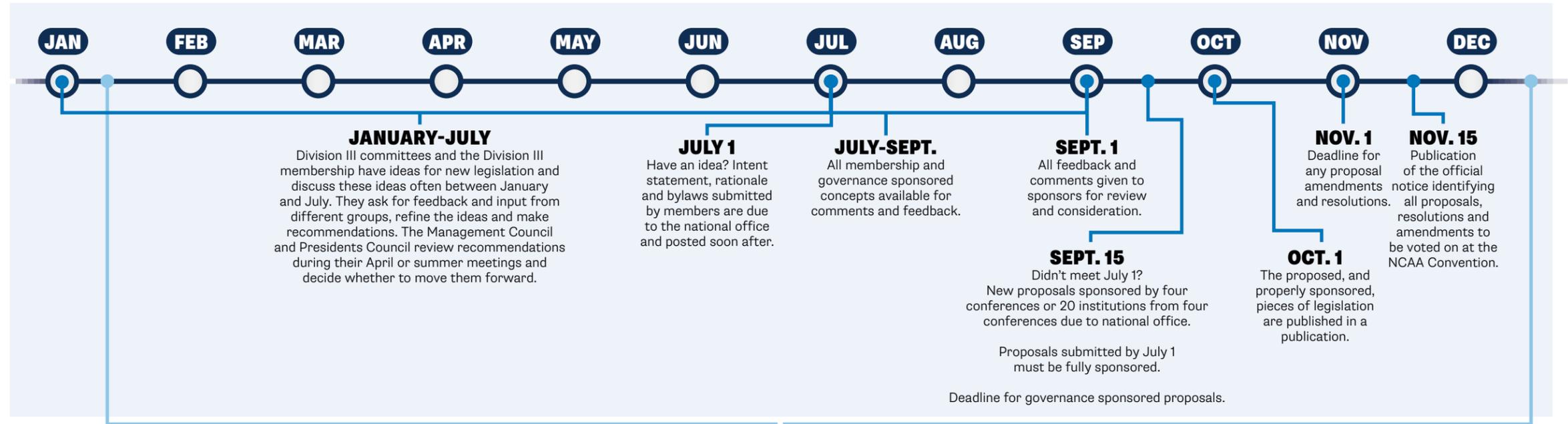
The Division III philosophy maintains that a student-athlete's athletics are an integral part of a well-rounded college experience. The athletic experience is designed to complement time spent in the classroom and pursuing other activities – some related to coursework, others extracurricular.

While Division III doesn't permit athletics scholarships, roughly 80% of Division III student-athletes receive some form of academic grant or need-based scholarship.

Access to competing in national championships is important to Division III, where one of every 6.0 teams competes in the NCAA postseason. Division III is home to more than 200,000 student-athletes – the most in any division – who can earn the opportunity to compete in 28 Division III national championships. The division's philosophy and the rules that implement it are set by members hailing from approximately 420 schools and more than 40 conferences.

# DIII Legislative Calendar and Convention Process

## Legislative Calendar



## Convention

The NCAA Convention, held each year in January, is the finish line for all sponsored proposals in Division III. Delegates from every school and conference gather during a Convention Business Session to cast their votes on each proposal.

Since the division was established in 1973, it has operated under a "one institution, one vote" model. The Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee also has one vote at the Business Session.



### Proposed Legislation

New rules in Division III begin in one of two ways. Proposals can start in Division III committees and be sponsored by the governance structure. Proposals can also be sponsored by the Division III membership. Twenty active member schools or two conferences are needed to properly sponsor a proposal. Membership proposals submitted between Sept. 1 and Sept. 15 require four conferences or 20 active member schools from at least four conferences.



### Membership Votes

In most cases, Division III legislation requires only a simple majority vote of members present. Sometimes – such as in 2025, when the NCAA added women's wrestling as a championship sport – legislation applies to the entire Association, and each division must reach its own majority vote to pass.



### Legislation Adopted

Adopted proposal takes effect on the date specified in the legislation, usually Aug. 1 of that year.

# NCAA Division III Governance and Legislative Process

## Start

It all starts here, with the schools and athletics conferences that make up Division III. The idea-generator might be an athletics director interested in allowing football players to suit up in protective gear during spring practice, a faculty athletics representative who wants the division to limit how many hours student-athletes can travel for competition or a coach who thinks scrimmage rules are too restrictive. No matter its origin, the proposal begins life as a discussion topic in one or more Division III committees.

## DIVISION III COMMITTEES

### Championships Committee\*\*

Oversees administration of the division's 28 championships.

**12 Members:**  
 2 - from Management Council  
 1 - from Student-Athlete Advisory Committee  
 1 - Faculty athletics representative  
 1 - Conference Office staff  
 7 - DIII personnel\*

### Committee on Infractions

Holds hearings as needed involving Division III schools accused of violating NCAA rules.

**5 Members:**  
 1 - from Management Council  
 1 - General public  
 3 - DIII personnel\*

### Committee on Student-Athlete Reinstatement

Determines reinstatement process for college athletes deemed ineligible because of a rules violation.

**6 Members:**  
 1 - from Management Council  
 1 - from Student-Athlete Advisory Committee  
 4 - DIII personnel\*

### Financial Aid Committee

Reviews and considers the bylaws that govern financial aid.

**10 Members:**  
 3 - Financial aid administrators  
 1 - Faculty athletics representative  
 1 - Conference Office staff  
 1 - from Student-Athlete Advisory Committee  
 3 - DIII personnel\*  
 1 - from Management Council

### Infractions Appeals Committee

Hears and acts on appeals of decisions by the Committee on Infractions.

**5 Members:**  
 1 - President or chancellor  
 1 - from Management Council  
 1 - General public  
 2 - DIII personnel\*

### Interpretations and Legislation Committee

Interprets all Division III legislation, issues official interpretations and reviews and refines legislative proposals.

**10 Members:**  
 1 - from Management Council  
 1 - Conference Office staff  
 1 - Faculty athletics representative  
 1 - from Student-Athlete Advisory Committee  
 6 - DIII personnel\* (At least 2 with compliance oversight)

### Membership Committee

Reviews issues related to Division III membership, including status of incoming and active members.

**10 Members:**  
 1 - from Management Council  
 1 - from Student-Athlete Advisory Committee  
 1 - Faculty athletics representative  
 1 - Conference Office staff  
 6 - DIII personnel\*

### Nominating Committee

Suggests individuals who can fill vacancies on various Division III committees.

**10 Members:**  
 1 - from Management Council  
 1 - Faculty athletics representative  
 1 - Conference Office staff  
 1 - from Student-Athlete Advisory Committee  
 6 - DIII personnel\*

### Strategic Planning and Finance Committee

Makes budget recommendations and monitors the Division III Strategic Plan.

**12 members:**  
 2 - from Presidents Council  
 2 - from Management Council  
 1 - from Student-Athlete Advisory Committee  
 1 - Faculty athletics representative  
 1 - Conference Office staff  
 1 - Championships Committee chair  
 4 - DIII Personnel\*

### Student-Athlete Advisory Committee

Composed of college athletes who monitor and act on issues representing the student-athlete voice.

**42 Members:**  
 1 - Member for every multisport conference



Some legislation is proposed by the members themselves. Depending on when a proposal is submitted, certain sponsorship thresholds must be met. If those thresholds are met, the proposal will reach the Convention floor no matter what position the division's committees and Councils take.



Committees debate the ideas and decide whether to recommend them as pieces of legislation. Next stop: Management Council, which considers these recommendations.

Schools and conferences continue to finalize their proposals to meet the July 1 or Sept. 15 submission deadlines.

## PRESIDENTS COUNCIL

The top leadership group in Division III, the Presidents Council is composed of presidents and chancellors and establishes and directs general policy.

- » Establishes a strategic plan for Division III.
- » Implements policies adopted by the NCAA Board of Governors.
- » Can sponsor legislative proposals that are considered by Division III members each year at the NCAA Convention.
- » Can adopt some administrative bylaws and regulations without approval of full membership.
- » Approves the Division III budget.
- » Approves championships regulations.
- » Orders proposals for voting at the Convention Business Session.

### 23 Members\*\*\*:

- 21 - One president or chancellor from half of the active multisport conferences
- 2 - from Student-Athlete Advisory Committee

## Administrative Committee

Takes action on issues that arise between meetings of the Presidents Council and Management Council.

### 5 Members:

- 2 - from Presidents Council (chair and vice chair)
- 3 - from Management Council (chair, vice chair and most-tenured president)

## MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

The Management Council is composed primarily of individuals who have day-to-day knowledge of athletics operations, including faculty athletics representatives - the college faculty members who are designated liaisons to athletics.

- » Implements policies adopted by the Presidents Council and Board of Governors.
- » Recommends policy-oriented legislative proposals for sponsorship by the Presidents Council.
- » Makes interpretations of Division III bylaws.
- » Makes recommendations to the Presidents Council related to Division III.
- » Reviews appeals by members of decisions made within the Division III governance structure.
- » Sponsors proposals for membership vote to be considered by members at the NCAA Convention.

### 23 Members\*\*\*:

- 21 - Representatives from half of the active multisport conferences
  - 9 - Directors of athletics or senior woman administrators
  - 2 - Presidents or chancellors
  - 2 - College athletics direct reports
  - 2 - Faculty athletics representatives
  - 6 - DIII personnel\*
- 2 - Student-Athlete Advisory Committee

The proposed rule, recommended by either the Presidents or Management Council, may be sponsored for the convention or adopted noncontroversially and ratified at the convention.

## CONVENTION



Proposal



Membership votes



ADOPTED

\* DIII personnel is a member school or conference administrator, faculty athletics representative or other person who works daily at a member institution or conference.

\*\* Each Division III championship sport has a committee made up of coaches and athletics administrators with knowledge of that sport. These committees select teams and individuals for championships competition, plus recommend sites and dates.

\*\*\* Effective Aug. 1, 2024, all multisport conferences will be represented on councils. The number of non-student-athlete council members will depend on the number of active multisport Division III conferences.