



DIVISION III
DISCOVER | DEVELOP | DEDICATE

2025-26

NEW ATHLETICS

DIRECTOR HANDBOOK

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Division III New Athletics Director Handbook
Last Updated: November 2025

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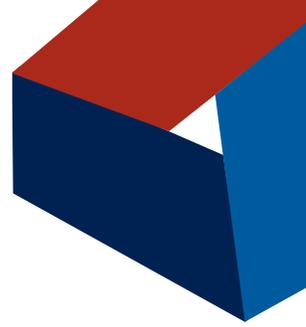
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Division III Philosophy Statement



The purpose of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) is to assist its members in developing the basis for consistent, equitable competition while minimizing infringement on the freedom of individual members to determine their own unique objectives and programs. The philosophy statement articulates principles that represent a commitment to Division III membership and shall serve as a guide for the preparation of legislation by the division and for planning and implementation of programs by institutions and conferences.

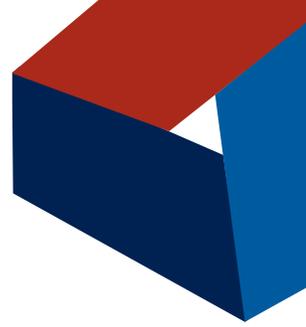
DIVISION III MEMBERS AFFIRM THE PURPOSES AND FUNDAMENTAL POLICY OF THE NCAA, AS SET FORTH IN CONSTITUTION ARTICLE 1 WITH EMPHASIS ON:

1. Division III members shall establish and maintain an environment in which a student-athlete's activities are conducted with the appropriate primary emphasis on the student-athlete's academic experience.
2. Division III intercollegiate athletics shall be conducted in a manner designed to protect, support, and enhance the physical and mental health and safety of student-athletes.
3. Division III members shall be committed to the creation of diverse and inclusive environments with respect for and sensitivity to the dignity of every person.
4. Division III athletics shall be conducted in a manner free of gender bias.

NCAA CONSTITUTION ARTICLE 2 ESTABLISHES THE INDEPENDENT AUTHORITY OF DIVISION III TO ORGANIZE ITSELF AND DETERMINE ITS OWN GOVERNING STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP.

1. Institutional presidents and chancellors have the ultimate responsibility and final authority for the conduct of Division III intercollegiate athletics at the national, conference and institutional levels.
2. Institutional and conference members determine policy at the national level through the Division III governance and legislative processes.
3. Key institution and conference constituents who play an integral role in the governance and operation of Division III at the national, conference and institutional levels include, but are not limited to athletics direct reports, athletics diversity and inclusion designees, athletics health care administrators, coaches, conference commissioners, directors of athletics, faculty athletics representatives, presidents and chancellors, senior compliance administrators, senior woman administrators, and student-athletes.

Division III Philosophy Statement



DIVISION III MEMBERS ABIDE BY THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES THAT HELP TO DEFINE AND DISTINGUISH THE DIVISION AND ITS POLICIES AND LEGISLATION.

1. Student-Athlete Collegiate Experience.

- i. Primarily focus on intercollegiate athletics as a four-year undergraduate experience.
- ii. Seek to establish and maintain an environment in which a student-athlete's athletics activities are conducted as an integral part of their educational experience.
- iii. Assure that student-athletes are supported in their efforts to meaningfully participate in nonathletic pursuits to enhance their overall educational experience.

2. Student-Athlete Athletics Experience.

- i. Support student-athletes in their efforts to reach the highest levels of athletics performance, with a primary emphasis on conference and regional competition, while providing access to national championships.
- ii. Prioritize the experience of the participants, and the internal constituency (e.g., students, alumni, institutional personnel) rather than on the entertainment needs of spectators or the general public.
- iii. Develop and maintain an environment that promotes sportsmanship and a positive culture for student-athletes, coaches, and administrative personnel, recognizing the role intercollegiate athletics can play in human development. Ensure spectators contribute to a positive sporting experience in support of all participants.

3. Member Responsibility and Oversight.

- i. Encourage participation and provide equitable opportunities with support for gender and ethnic/racial diversity. Give equal emphasis to men's and women's sports.
- ii. The administration of an institution's athletics program (e.g., hiring, compensation, professional development, certification of coaches) should be integrated into the campus culture and educational mission.
- iii. Assure all teams are provided with appropriate facilities, competent coaching, and competitive opportunities.
- iv. Assure student-athletes are treated similarly to the student-body in areas that include, but are not limited to, admissions, enrollment, financial aid, academic and career support, academic performance, and degree completion.
- v. Assure that financial aid is not awarded to any student on the basis of athletics leadership, ability, participation or performance.

Division III Strategic Positioning Platform

NCAA Mission

To govern competition in a fair, safe, equitable and sportsmanlike manner, and to integrate intercollegiate athletics into higher education so that the educational experience of the student-athlete is paramount.

Division III Positioning Statement

Who We Are

The college experience is a time of learning and growth. For Division III student-athletes, this happens most importantly in the classroom and through earning an academic degree. The Division III experience provides for participation in a competitive athletics environment. Student-athletes push themselves to achieve excellence and build upon their academic success with new challenges and life skills within an environment that fosters health and wellness. Student-athletes are encouraged to pursue the full spectrum of opportunities available during their time in college. In this way, Division III provides an equitable and inclusive environment for student-athletes to take responsibility for their own paths, follow their passions and discover their potential through a comprehensive educational experience.

Division III Key Benefits

The DIII Experience

- Participation in a highly competitive athletics program while retaining the full spectrum of college life.
- With a focus on academic achievement, student-athletes graduate with a comprehensive education that develops skills beyond the classroom.
- Ability for student-athletes to create their own path, discover their potential and pursue a variety of interests.
- Opportunities to be a multi-sport athlete.
- Reasonable practice and playing seasons and regional competition minimize time away from academics and keep student-athletes on a path to graduation.
- Student-athletes are integrated on campus and treated like all other members of the student body, allowing them to be students first.
- Participation in athletics provides valuable “life lessons” for student-athletes (teamwork, discipline, perseverance, leadership, health, wellness, etc.), which often translate into becoming a better student and more responsible citizen.

Division III Attributes

What We Stand For

Proportion

Appropriate balance of academics, athletics and additional collegiate opportunities.

Comprehensive Learning

Opportunity for broad-based education and success.

Passion

Playing for the love of the game, competition, enjoyment, self-improvement, and our teammates and communities.

Responsibility

Development of accountability through personal commitment and choice.

Sportsmanship

Fair and respectful conduct toward all participants and supporters.

Citizenship

Dedication to developing responsible leaders and global citizens.

Division III Supporting Features

Reasons to Believe

Comprehensive educational experience.

Division III institutions develop student-athlete potential through a holistic educational approach that includes rigorous academics, competitive athletics, and opportunities to pursue other interests and passions.

Competitive athletics programs.

Student-athletes participate in an intense, competitive athletics environment. They do not receive any monetary incentive (athletics scholarship) and play for a love of the game.

Commitment to inclusive environments.

Division III prides itself on creating inclusive, diverse and equitable environments for its student-athletes.

- More than 80% of student-athletes report a sense of belonging and an inclusive team environment.
- More than three-quarters report that coaches and teammates are accepting of differing viewpoints and cultures and believe college athletics has positively impacted their racial and cultural understanding.

Academic focus.

Student-athletes most often choose a Division III institution because of the excellent academic programs.

- More than 80% of student-athletes report a positive academic experience.
- Primary focus on learning and degree achievement, evidenced by an NCAA Academic Success Rate of nearly 90%.
- Balances academics and athletics via shorter season lengths, the number of contests, and a focus on regional in-season and conference play.

Commitment to athletics participation.

Division III institutions are committed to a broad-based program of athletics because of the educational value of participation for the student-athlete. The division averages 17 sports per institution, more than any other division in the NCAA. It also emphasizes integrating competitive men's and women's sports into higher education so that the educational experience of the student-athlete is paramount.

Integrated campus environment.

A quarter of all Division III students participate in athletics. These student-athletes are integrated into the campus culture and educational missions of their institutions:

- Adhere to the same academic standards as the student body.
- Provided the same housing, services and support as the student body.
- Encouraged to take full advantage of the many opportunities of campus life.
- More than two-thirds develop lifelong mentor relationships with faculty members.
- More than two-thirds participate in internships.
- One-quarter participate in study abroad programs.

Available financial aid.

Eighty percent of all student-athletes in Division III receive some form of grant or non-athletics scholarship. Student-athletes have equal opportunity and access to financial aid as the general student body - but are not awarded aid based on athletics leadership, ability, performance, or participation. Without the obligation of an athletics scholarship, student-athletes can emphasize academics, athletics, and other opportunities of college life appropriate to the necessary commitment and their own passions.

National championship opportunities.

Over 195,000 student-athletes compete annually in 37 different Division III national championships. These competitions provide an opportunity for student-athletes to compete at the highest level and fulfill their athletics potential.

Division III Strategic Plan

2024-26 Budget Biennium [Year 2: 2025-26]

Vision Statement: Division III will be a dynamic and engaging group of colleges, universities and conferences of varying sizes and missions committed to an environment that encourages and supports health and safety, diversity, values, fairness, and equity, and places the highest priority on the overall educational experience of its student-athletes in the conduct of intercollegiate athletics.

Mission Statement: Promoting the student-athlete academic and athletic experience, with a commitment and dedication to the membership through effective inclusion, communication, and engagement.



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INTRODUCTION

The Division III Strategic Plan serves many purposes. It begins with the Division III Philosophy Statement to establish the framework from which the division's programs, resource allocations, and regulatory decisions are made. It highlights the Division III Strategic Positioning Platform to clarify the practical impact of the Division III philosophy and summarizes the division's strategic priorities by outlining what must be accomplished in the current budget cycle for the division to be successful.

The plan also serves to highlight the programs and services offered for the division's membership. This list of offerings is arranged in a way that demonstrates the connection of each Division III program to the NCAA Strategic Plan and explains when a program or initiative is funded from Division III dollars or a different Association budget. To bring further transparency to the division's operations, the plan justifies every line of the Division III budget against the philosophy statement or NCAA Constitution. Finally, the plan includes the division's budget policies and a note on its history, which tracks the evolution of the division's entire strategic initiatives program.

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DIVISION III PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

The purpose of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) is to assist its members in developing the basis for consistent, equitable competition while minimizing infringement on the freedom of individual members to determine their own unique objectives and programs. The philosophy statement articulates principles that represent a commitment to Division III membership and shall serve as a guide for the preparation of legislation by the division and for planning and implementation of programs by institutions and conferences.

(a) Division III members affirm the purposes and fundamental policy of the NCAA, as set forth in Constitution Article 1 with emphasis on:

- (1) Division III members shall establish and maintain an environment in which a student-athlete's activities are conducted with the appropriate primary emphasis on the student-athlete's academic experience.
- (2) Division III intercollegiate athletics shall be conducted in a manner designed to protect, support, and enhance the physical and mental health and safety of student-athletes.
- (3) Division III members shall be committed to the creation of diverse and inclusive environments with respect for and sensitivity to the dignity of every person.
- (4) Division III athletics shall be conducted in a manner free of gender bias.

(b) NCAA Constitution Article 2 establishes the independent authority of Division III to organize itself and determine its own governing structure and membership.

- (1) Institutional presidents and chancellors have the ultimate responsibility and final authority for the conduct of Division III intercollegiate athletics at the national, conference and institutional levels.
- (2) Institutional and conference members determine policy at the national level through the Division III governance and legislative processes.
- (3) Key institution and conference constituents who play an integral role in the governance and operation of Division III at the national, conference and institutional levels include, but are not limited to athletics direct reports, athletics diversity and inclusion designees, athletics health care administrators, coaches, conference commissioners, directors of athletics, faculty athletics representatives, presidents and chancellors, senior compliance administrators, senior woman administrators, and student-athletes.
- (c) Division III members abide by the following principles that help to define and distinguish the division and its policies and legislation.

(1) Student-Athlete Collegiate Experience.

(i) Primarily focus on intercollegiate athletics as a four-year undergrad experience.

(ii) Seek to establish and maintain an environment in which a student-athlete's athletics activities are conducted as an integral part of their educational experience.

(iii) Assure that student-athletes are supported in their efforts to meaningfully participate in nonathletic pursuits to enhance their overall educational experience.

(2) Student-Athlete Athletics Experience.

(i) Support student-athletes in their efforts to reach the highest levels of athletics performance, with a primary emphasis on conference and regional competition, while providing access to national championships.

(ii) Prioritize the experience of the participants, and the internal constituency (e.g., students, alumni, institutional personnel) rather than on the entertainment needs of spectators or the general public.

(iii) Develop and maintain an environment that promotes sportsmanship and a positive culture for student-athletes, coaches, and administrative personnel, recognizing the role intercollegiate athletics can play in human development. Ensure spectators contribute to a positive sporting experience in support of all participants.

(3) Member Responsibility and Oversight.

(i) Encourage participation and provide equitable opportunities with support for gender and ethnic/racial diversity. Give equal emphasis to men's and women's sports.

(ii) The administration of an institution's athletics program (e.g., hiring, compensation, professional development, certification of coaches) should be integrated into the campus culture and educational mission.

(iii) Assure all teams are provided with appropriate facilities, competent coaching, and competitive opportunities.

(iv) Assure student-athletes are treated similarly to the student-body in areas that include, but are not limited to, admissions, enrollment, financial aid, academic and career support, academic performance, and degree completion.

(v) Assure that financial aid is not awarded to any student on the basis of athletics leadership, ability, participation or performance.

Division III Positioning Statement

Follow your passions and discover your potential. The college experience is a time of learning and growth. For Division III student-athletes, this happens most importantly in the classroom and through earning an academic degree. The Division III experience provides for participation in a competitive athletics environment. Student-athletes push themselves to achieve excellence and build upon their academic success with new challenges and life skills within an environment that fosters health and wellness. Student-athletes are encouraged to pursue the full spectrum of opportunities available during their time in college. In this way, Division III provides an equitable and inclusive environment for student-athletes to take responsibility for their own paths, follow their passions and discover their potential through a comprehensive educational experience.

Division III Attributes

Proportion: appropriate balance of academics, athletics, and additional collegiate opportunities.

Comprehensive Learning: opportunity for broad-based education and success.

Passion: playing for the love of the game, competition, enjoyment, self-improvement, and our teammates and communities.

Responsibility: development of accountability through personal commitment and choice.

Sportsmanship: fair and respectful conduct toward all participants and supporters.

Citizenship: dedication to developing responsible leaders and global citizens.

Reasons to Believe

Comprehensive educational experience. Division III institutions develop student-athlete potential through a holistic educational approach that includes rigorous academics, competitive athletics, and opportunities to pursue other interests and passions.

Competitive athletic programs. Student-athletes participate in an intense, competitive athletics environment. Student-athletes do not receive any monetary incentive (athletics scholarship) to play sports in college and play for a love of the game.

Integrated campus environment. A quarter of all Division III students participate in athletics. These student-athletes are integrated into the campus culture and educational missions of their institutions:

Commitment to inclusive environments. Division III prides itself on creating inclusive, diverse, and equitable environments for its student-athletes.

Academic focus. Student-athletes most often attend a Division III institution because of the excellent academic programs.

Available financial aid. 80% of all student-athletes in Division III receive some form of grant or non-athletics scholarship. Student-athletes have equal opportunity and access to financial aid as the general student body – but are not awarded aid based on athletics leadership, ability, performance, or participation. Without the obligation of an athletics scholarship, student-athletes can emphasize academics, athletics, and other opportunities of college life appropriate to the necessary commitment and their own passions.

Commitment to athletics participation. Division III institutions are committed to a broad-based program of athletics because of the educational value of participation for the student-athlete. The division averages 19 sports per institution; more than any other division. It also emphasizes integrating competitive men's and women's sports into higher education so that the educational experience of the student-athlete is paramount.

National championship opportunities. Division III has over 200,000 student-athletes competing annually in 37 different national championships. These competitions provide an opportunity for student-athletes to compete at the highest level and fulfill their athletics potential.

NOTE: Strategic initiatives are divided between championships and Enrichment Fund initiatives and programs. Most strategic initiatives support the Division III student-athlete experience. The strategic priorities are not listed in priority order; all are of equal value. **Text in red highlights key initiatives during year two of the 2024-26 biennium.**

DIVISION III STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2024-26 BUDGET BIENNIUM [YEAR 2: 2025-26]

Maintain Fiscal Integrity. All programs and budget priorities shall be managed in a manner that ensures they are fiscally responsible, sustainable and reflect the division's priorities. Further:

- Maintain and annually evaluate the divisional operating budget for the current budget cycle (2025-26).
- Continue to monitor the division's current mandated reserve.
- 1. **Provide Quality Division III Championships. FY26 budget equals \$37.5 million.** The Division III experience provides for participation in a competitive athletics environment, and Division III is committed to conducting quality championships with fair selection processes and appropriate access. Strategic priorities support student-athletes in their efforts to reach high levels of athletics performance, which may include opportunities for participation in national championships, by supporting institutions as they provide all teams with adequate facilities, competent coaching, and appropriate competitive opportunities. The Division III Championships Committee is responsible for continual assessment of policies and NCAA legislation related to the championships program including the appropriateness of bracket sizes, regional alignment and select criteria processes. Championship funding enhancements will start at the sport committee level with recommendations to the Championships Committee, endorsement to the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee and ultimate approval by the Management and Presidents Councils. **Incorporate approved FY26 budget enhancements (e.g., joint men's basketball championships, increased per diem, flexibility to protect highly ranked teams, livestreaming of preliminary rounds of NCAA team championships) and recommendations from the Deloitte consultant analysis. Budget plan for the next budget cycle (2026-28).**
- 2. **Provide Division III Conference Office Support. FY26 budget equals \$4.5 million.** These funds support the Strategic Initiatives Conference Grant Program, annual commissioner meeting with NCAA staff and a grant to support officiating resources.
 - The Strategic Initiatives Conference Grant Program is divided into five tiers.
 - Tier One: Professional Development and Student-Athlete Advisory Committee support. All institutions may annually access conference grant dollars to support campus and conference SAAC meetings, programs, and initiatives as well as professional opportunities for key constituent groups (e.g., senior woman administrators, staff and administrators of color, sports information directors, athletic trainers). Funding also is available to offset conference office travel. All conferences will optimally use the full allocation of funds each year.

- Tier Two: Student-Athlete Well Being Initiatives. Funds are available for a wide-variety of student-athlete well-being initiatives with an emphasis on programming related to diversity, equity and inclusion, academic experiences, identity and integration and sportsmanship initiatives.
 - Tier Three: Technology and Officiating Improvement. Funding is available for conference offices to improve technology and support of officiating improvements.
 - Tier Four: Funding is available to support the division's strategic priority of diversity, equity, and inclusion at the conference and/or institutional level.
 - Tier Five: Third-Party Review. Aids conference offices to provide documentation of a third-party external review of grant fund usage to the national office annually.
 - **Continue to monitor divisional challenges with officiating, including the quality and pipeline of officials. Maintain funding, via the conference grant program, to enhance officiating, and evaluate additional grant funds provided for FY26.**
 - All conferences will be represented annually; commissioners will be provided with the opportunity to discuss Division III hot topics, governance, and championships issues. Additional funding is provided through Tier One of the Strategic Initiatives Conference Grant Program to supplement a portion the conference office's travel costs.
- 3. Effectively Advance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. FY26 budget equals \$2.7 million.**
- Create partnerships and review the objectives and establish meaningful goals for the division's programs supporting equity and inclusion. Partner with Division III conferences and institutions to support innovative programs that promote inclusion.
 - Continue professional development and networking opportunities for underrepresented groups (e.g., SWA Program, Institute for Administrative Advancement, Student Immersion Program).
 - Continue to fund the Division III diversity grants – pathway to excellence, strategic alliance matching and coaching enhancement.
 - Support the office of inclusion in promoting resources for the athletics diversity and inclusion designee.
 - Support the Management and Presidents Council DEI subcommittee that absorbed the work of the LGBTQIA+ and Diversity and Inclusion Working Groups.
 - Continue to provide the LGBTQ OneTeam program that provides education to the membership on ways to create a safe and inclusive environment for LGBTQ individuals and allies. Maintain the annual LGBTQ of the Year awards. Continue to promote the LGBTQ non-discrimination policy guide.
 - Promote the Inclusive Leaders Program that provides education on improving the recruitment and retention of students of color.
 - Establish strategies to increase and diversify the pool of candidates for Division III committee service and membership job searches.

- Maintain the division’s database of underrepresented individuals that have participated in an NCAA program. Continue to send out a quarterly Diversity and Inclusion newsletter.
 - Monitor NCAA emerging sports (e.g., triathlon, acrobatics and tumbling, stunt, flag football).
 - **Monitor, with the office of inclusion and the membership, new emerging sports for women and specifically, vote on the women’s flag football as an emerging sport and vote to establish a national collegiate championship for stunt and acrobatics and tumbling at the 2026 Convention.**
 - Ensure a gender equitable experience for all student-athletes.
- 4. Ensure Student-Athlete Support. FY26 budget equals \$654K.**
- Maintain the promotion and use of the Injury Surveillance Program, SSI’s data collection system, by the Division III membership.
 - Continue to sponsor a regular and representative academic reporting program to compare the academic success of student-athletes and the general student body. Continue to emphasize the academic success of Division III student-athletes as compared to other students. Focus on solutions and best practices to address graduation rates of teams and demographic groups that are lower than their counterparts who do not participate in intercollegiate athletics. Maintain the annual student-athlete graduation rate submission.
 - Maintain and enhance the partnership with the College Sports Communicators by providing professional development funding and opportunities (e.g., Emerging Elite Program, Division III Day at the CSC Convention and CSC Student Program), overseeing a recognition system awarded three times per year, and providing funds to support the Division III-specific Academic All-America program.
 - Amplify the student-athlete voice. Collaborate with Division III SAAC to provide opportunities for effective student-athlete engagement and leadership.
 - Fund student-athletes to attend the annual NCAA Student-Athlete Leadership Forum. The Forum is an opportunity for college athletes, coaches and administrators to collectively learn about themselves and grow as the next generation of leaders. Fund DISC assessments that are an important resource that institutions and conference offices use to help student-athletes, coaches and administrators learn more about their behavioral styles and how their individual styles come together in a team environment.
 - Support Gameday the DIII Way, the Division III sportsmanship and game environment initiative. Promote existing tools and resources (e.g., facilitator training and on-line educational modules).
 - Monitor and promote institutional commitment to the Board of Governor’s policy on sexual assault violence prevention education and annual requirements.

- Continue to create specific programming for student-athletes attending the annual Convention to help better engage and educate on the Division III philosophy.
 - Promote the division's mental health program, Mental Health First Aid training, that is available to all Division III institutions, at no charge, through August 2027. Support the Sport Science Institute's resources related to mental health. Codify the division's mental health pilot related to waivers for mental health into legislation.
 - Promote sports wagering resources and research the opportunity to create a safe harbor for those seeking help to address problem gambling.
5. **Maintain the Value of Division III Athletics. FY26 budget equals \$335K.** The division continues to serve as a conscious alternative to the sport-specialization youth culture, and as an accessible and fulfilling educational and athletics destination. It also emphasizes a fuller, more integrated academic experience in all divisional endeavors.
- Communicate the distinct Division III philosophy as articulated in the Philosophy Statement and supported by the Strategic Positioning Platform.
 - Emphasize, promote, and steward the Division III brand, identity, and unique philosophy as articulated in the division's Strategic Positioning Platform to prospective student-athletes and their families, guidance counselors and high school and club coaches. Support conferences and institutions to better tell the Division III story to a variety of internal and external target audiences with the following identity activation initiatives: Division III week, national and customizable videos. Maintain a recognition award for athletics communication directors to recognize outstanding work that tells the Division III story.
 - Emphasize the values of Division III to effectively manage its membership growth. Maintain a cross-divisional governance staff and Membership Committee liaison group to monitor divisional membership issues.
 - Monitor the federated process for Division III playing rules. Ensure communication between playing and sport rule committees and inform the membership of key rule changes to encourage feedback. Monitor new playing rules committee structures.
 - Continue to support athletic trainers and factors impacting their hiring and retention. Provide institutional funding to offset athletic training costs. Assist with resources and professional development.
 - Continue the strategic partnership with Special Olympics. Maintain the activity reporting program to better tell the partnership's story from a division-wide perspective.

- Continue to create specific programming for delegates attending the annual Convention (e.g., educational sessions, Issues Forum, and technology to support all sessions) to help better engage and educate the membership. Properly engage and educate the membership on legislative proposals.
- 6. Provide Professional Development for Division III Constituents. FY26 budget equals \$602K.**
- **In partnership with the NCAA Executive Staff and divisional Association-wide governance staffs, enhance Division III specific presidential programming to educate and engage all Division III chancellors and presidents.** Continue to selectively forward issues of presidential importance to the division's presidents and chancellors. **Create a Division III specific engagement program.**
 - Maintain in-person, full-day orientation programs for new athletics directors and commissioners to assist these individuals in understanding and promoting the division.
 - Strengthen the advocacy of Division III faculty for the values of the athletics experience by offering annual professional development training and networking opportunities to FARs. Maintain the Faculty Advisory Group to provide quarterly updates to the Division III Management Council.
 - Partnership with National Association of Division III Athletics Administrators. The governance structure will provide financial support to NADIIIAA for its professional development offerings.
 - The division will fund professional development opportunities for female athletics administrators in a manner most accommodating to applicant individuals (e.g., Women Leaders in Sports Institutes, SWA Program).
 - Continue to maintain and enhance Division III University – an on-line learning management system. **Create and add new division-specific educational modules.**
 - Support a day-long professional development program for the division's athletics communication and sports information directors in conjunction with the annual College Sports Communicators (CSC) Convention – DIII Day. Maintain the Emerging Elite Program to provide professional development to athletics communication staff. **Consider institutional grant funding, with the next budget cycle, to offset communication and technology costs.**
 - Provide funding for the DIIICA and NADIIIAA executive leadership groups to come to Indianapolis in Aug./Sept. to discuss current hot topics in Division III and plan communication strategies for the upcoming year. Emphasize communication, shared accountability, and collaboration in leading the division.
 - **Evaluate the effectiveness of a live stream option for the annual Regional Rules Seminar to enhance compliance education.**

7. Enhance Formal Accountability of the Governance Structure and National Office Support. FY26 budget equals \$78K.

- Continue to distribute the annual performance scorecard to committee members for regular accountability of key Division III programs and committee staff liaisons.
- **Monitor, and address as needed, the enrollment and related financial challenges within higher education, and the related challenges affecting the Division III membership. Monitor the impact on conference office stability and the impact of conference realignments.**
- Continue to make membership communication a priority. Provide clear, concise, and consistent communication. Strengthen relationships with the leadership of the DIIICA and NADIII.AA. Provide effective transparency and opportunities for input in the work of governing bodies. **Conduct a comprehensive review of communication initiatives and platforms to better identify and reach target audiences as well as streamline and improve efficiency.**

8. Support Association-wide initiatives.

- Support the Association in its efforts to engage Congress to introduce federal legislation to address threats (e.g., Name, Image and Likeness, student-athlete compensation, select litigation).
- Monitor the implementation of the House settlement agreement and strategically plan for any impacts to the division.
- Support relevant issues identified through the Association's Business Review (e.g., fan database, purchasing collective, post-eligibility insurance) and couple with recommended opportunities identified by the Deloitte analysis.
- **Monitor legal threats and cases against the Association and analyze and strategically plan for impacts to the division.**
- Continue to partner with the Sport Science Institute regarding priority health and safety issues, including mental and physical health. Provide Division III representatives for on-going summits. Provide timely and consistent communication to the membership regarding new SSI interassociation guidelines and best practices.

Appendix A
Division III Budget Justification

Projected NCAA Division III 2025-26 Budget Breakdown	Division III Philosophy Statement and Constitutional Principles Justifying Funded Programs
Revenue: Division III 3.18% Revenue \$46,057,953 Additional Revenue Membership Dues NA for FY26	<i>Division III Institutions...</i>
Championships Expenses: Total Championships Operational Expenses \$37,523,999 Total Championships Supplemental \$1,756,000	Support student-athletes in their efforts to reach high levels of athletics performance, which may include opportunities for participation in national championships, by providing all teams with adequate facilities, competent coaching and appropriate competitive opportunities. (Division III Philosophy Statement – section r) Supports live stream production on ESPN+ (football, volleyball, basketball). Provides hosts of team championships a stipend to offset livestream costs. Supports maintaining livestreaming at no cost.
Conference Office Expenses: Strategic Initiatives Conference Grant Program \$4,376,703 Conference Commissioners/SID Meeting \$40,000 Grant funding to support officiating resources NA for FY26	Place special importance on the impact of athletics on the participants rather than on the spectators and place greater emphasis on the internal constituency (e.g., students, alumni, institutional personnel) than on the general public and its entertainment needs; (Bylaw 20.11-(b)) The purpose of the NCAA is to assist its members in developing the basis for consistent, equitable competition while minimizing infringement on the freedom of individual institutions to determine their own special objectives and programs. (Bylaw 20.11) With the on-going crisis in the recruitment and retention of officials, this two-year grant will provide funding for the D3CA to establish relationships and build resources. All funding (\$40K) provided in FY25.
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Expenses: Pathway to Excellence Grant \$1,600,000 Strategic Alliance Matching Grant \$708,600 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Programs \$275,000 Coaching Enhancement Grant \$100,000 LGBTQ Programming \$85,000	Support underrepresented constituent groups; This two-year grant provides \$30K annually plus professional development. Support underrepresented constituent groups; This five year grant provides 75% of the salary in year one; 50% in year two and 25% in year three. The recipient must fully fund the position for years four and five. Support underrepresented constituent groups; Support underrepresented asst. coaches. The two-year matching grant provides \$7,500 in salary and benefits and \$1,500 annually in professional development. Funding for the annual LGBTQ of the Year recognition (\$30K) and update the OneTeam Program. Partner with office of inclusion.
Student-Athlete Support Expenses: Mental Health First Aid \$930,000 Student-Athlete Leadership Forum \$400,000 Convention Programming including specific student-athlete programs \$100,000 Increased national SAAC committee \$45,000 Division III Academic All-America (College Sports Communicators) \$44,000	Through Aug. 2027 institutions may receive a one-time free mental health first aid training for 30 individuals. Seek to establish and maintain an environment in which student-athlete’s athletics activities are conducted as an integral part of the student-athlete’s educational experience, and in which coaches play a significant role as educators. (Bylaw 20.11) Continue to create specific programming for student-athletes attending the annual Convention to help better engage and educate on the Division III philosophy. Provide funds to pay expenses for every conference to have a representative on national SAAC and attend two in-person meetings (NCAA Convention and the July national SAAC meeting). Colleges and universities in Division III place highest priority on the overall quality of the educational experience and on the successful completion of all students’ academic program (preamble to philosophy statement).

Projected NCAA Division III 2025-26 Budget Breakdown	
Expenses, continued:	
Campus Based Student-Athlete Leadership Programming	\$20,000
CSC Student Program	\$15,000
Value of Division III Expenses:	
Branding and Identity Initiatives	\$300,000
Special Olympics Partnership	\$35,000
Professional Development Expenses:	
Division III Health and Safety Grant	\$860,000
Athletic Trainer Initiatives	\$85,000
Emerging Elite Program	\$85,000
FAR Institute	\$75,000
NADIIIAA Partnership	\$75,000
17	
New Athletics Director Orientation	\$70,000
Women Leaders Enhancement Grant	\$30,000
Division III University	\$20,000
New Commissioner Orientation	\$15,000
CSC DIII Day	\$12,000
NADIIIAA and D3CA leadership meeting	\$10,000
Misc. Division III Initiatives	NA
Conference Rules Seminar	Association-wide
Division III National Office Expenses:	
Division III Cancellation Insurance	\$61,000
Working Groups	\$5,000
NCAA staff professional development	\$7,000
Total Division III Expenses	\$50,609,779

The purpose is to provide behavioral assessments to student-athletes, coaches and administrators. The assessment aids participants with understanding their individual behavioral styles and preferences, a common language when addressing these topics and methods to better relate to others. It also provides additional strategies to build more effective relationships on teams and in the workplace.

Programming for students interested in sports information/athletics communication.

These initiatives provide branding and promotion support in the form of PSA videos, championships webcasting enhancements and resources.

Institutions seek to establish and maintain an environment in which student-athlete's athletics activities are conducted as an integral part of the student-athlete's educational experience (preamble to philosophy statement).

Provide each institution a \$2,000 grant to offset athletic training expenses.

Resources to support the Division III Athletic Trainer Working Group recommendations.

Resources to support the professional development of athletics communication/sports information directors. Colleges and universities in Division III place highest priority on the overall quality of the educational experience and on the successful completion of all students' academic programs. They seek to establish and maintain an environment in which student-athlete's athletics activities are conducted as an integral part of the student-athlete's educational experience (preamble to philosophy statement)

The purpose of the NCAA is to assist its members in developing the basis for consistent, equitable competition while minimizing infringement on the freedom of individual institutions to determine their own special objectives and programs. (Bylaw 20.11)

Create in-person, orientation programs for new athletics directors to assist with the knowledge, resources and philosophy of the division.

Support ethnic and gender diversity for all constituents; (Bylaw 20.11-(p))

Funding to create new modules for Division III University.

Create in-person, orientation programs for new commissioners to assist with the knowledge, resources and philosophy of the division.

This initiative supports sports information directors to receive professional development.

The executive leadership groups from NADIIIAA and D3CA come to Indianapolis in Aug./Sept. to discuss current hot topics in Division III and plan communication strategies for the upcoming year.

This includes contracting costs, as well as money earmarked to support future initiatives.

The Association shall assist the institution in its efforts to achieve full compliance with all rules and regulations and shall afford the institution, its staff and student-athletes fair procedures in the consideration of an identified or alleged failure in compliance.

Intercollegiate athletics programs shall be administered in keeping with prudent management and fiscal practices to assure the financial stability necessary for providing student-athletes with adequate opportunities for athletics competition as an integral part of a quality educational experience.

This initiative exists to provide opportunities for working groups/task forces in the future.

Allows annual professional development for NCAA Division III staff.

- * The \$5 million event cancellation insurance protects the budget in case of a catastrophic event that would reduce or eliminate, for one year, the division's share of media rights revenue.
- ** Intentionally overspending the operating budget by approximately \$2.2 million to reduce the excess above and beyond the mandated reserve.
- *** Spending an additional \$4 million in supplemental spend (livestreaming preliminary rounds of team championships, mental health training, ESPN+ production, and grants to assist athletic trainers) to reduce the excess above and beyond the mandated reserve.

Appendix B

History of the Division III Strategic Plan and Budget Policies

History

The original Division III strategic plan was unveiled in 1998 as the division embarked on its new federated structure. The Division III Management Council Strategic Planning Subcommittee developed the framework for the plan with broad participation of the Presidents Council, Division III and Association-wide committee structure, and the Division III membership. The 2004 version of the Division III Strategic Plan was developed by a joint subcommittee of the Management and Presidents Councils consistent with the Association-wide Strategic Plan adopted by the NCAA Executive Committee in April 2004. The 2004 plan contained many of the existing initiatives and priorities to ensure that the programs and results remain consistent with Division III objectives. However, significant changes occurred as the 2005 and 2006 plans linked the relationship to the Division III philosophy with each Association-wide goal and outlined a series of outcome measures for each goal. Another significant change occurred in 2006-07 as the Division III Strategic Initiatives Grant Program resources were funneled directly to Division III Conferences and the Association of Independents. With this change, many strategic initiatives previously administered at the NCAA national office moved to the local control of conferences and institutions. The localized program encourages collaboration and involvement of all Division III constituent group representatives in the planning, decision-making and accountability of programming and funding to achieve the goals established in the Division's Strategic Plan. Presidential oversight and accountability with the process and budget allocations, consistent with the legislated leadership role of presidents within conference governance, is paramount.

In 2008-09, the strategic plan underwent a format change to create a forward-looking document that highlights the goals and expectations of a budget biennium. Much of the reporting done in previous plans was moved into a Division III Annual Report, and standard committee operations are now reflected in each committee's policy and procedure guide (available on each committee's home page on ncaa.org). The plan clearly articulates the division's funding priorities, and explains when an initiative is funded by Division III, and when it is funded by a broader Association-wide budget. The plan also includes an appendix to show the philosophical or constitutional justification for all programs funded with Division III dollars.

In 2009-10, the plan was updated to highlight the division's near-term strategic priorities. Most 2009-10 priorities resulted from a series of presidentially authored white papers on membership growth published in September 2008. For 2010-12, the plan was updated based on the Division's release of a Strategic Positioning Platform, and clearly defined the near- and medium-term goals the division needed to accomplish to be successful in embodying the platform.

For 2012-15, the plan was updated to reflect the Association's move to a three-year budget cycle.

After the 2012-15 budget cycle, the plan returned to a two-year budget cycle and emphasizes budget accountability and management.

With the start of the budget cycle in 2021, the Councils approved a one-time, three-year budget cycle (2021-24) to align with the current CBS/Turner broadcast agreement that ends in 2023-24. In FY25, the division will return to its two-year budget cycle as well as adjust its mandated reserve policy from 50% of the annual revenue to a flat 15 million annually in addition to a five million event cancellation insurance policy.

In 2022, the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee recommended a new format for the strategic plan that better reflects the division's commitment to the student-athlete experience.

Division III Budget Policies

The Division will maintain the following budget policies. SPFC must recommend, with final approval from the Management and Presidents Councils, to change the policies.

- The division will have a two-year budget cycle unless a specific request by SPFC to alter.
- The budget will reflect the annual spend on championships and the Enrichment Fund with a priority on enhancing the student-athlete experience (approximately 80% of the budget annually will fund the division's 28 national championships).
- Only consider new budget enhancements in the last year of a current budget cycle unless SPFC determines there is extenuating circumstances.
- Annual mandated reserve that is 50% of the annual revenue through FY24. In FY25, the mandated reserve moved to a flat \$15 million.
- Annually evaluate the need to purchase \$5 million in event cancellation insurance.

Division III Budget Initiatives (in priority order)

- a. Contractual obligations.
- b. Championships.
 - (1) Bracketing.
 - (2) Per diem allotment.
 - (3) Experience funding.
 - (a) Game operations (e.g., travel, officials, web streams, marketing, etc.).
 - (b) Student-athlete experience (e.g., trophies, mementos, banquets, etc.).
- c. Conference strategic initiatives grant.
- d. Diversity grants.
- e. Enrichment Fund programs.

Division III 2025-26 Facts and Figures

MEMBERSHIP

Division III is the NCAA's largest division (approximately 39% of total membership).



Source: 2025 Sports Sponsorship and Demographics Forms

STUDENT-ATHLETE COMPOSITION

On average, student-athletes comprise **31%** of the student body at Division III institutions. (This percentage ranges from 1.0% to more than 94%.)



Source: 2025 Sports Sponsorship and Demographics Forms

DIVISION III STUDENT-ATHLETES

- Former Division III student-athletes report thriving at greater rates on measures of purpose, social, community, and physical well-being than their nonathlete peers.
- Former Division III student-athletes earned a postgraduate degree (41%) at a higher rate than their nonathlete peers (37%).
- 87% of former Division III student-athletes agreed or strongly agreed that they were challenged academically in college, as compared to 83% of nonathletes.
- 63% of former Division III student-athletes held a leadership position in a club or organization, as compared to 38% of nonathletes.
- 87% of Division III student-athletes agree or strongly agree that being an athlete has helped them fit in socially at their college, and 82% report a sense of belonging there.
- Most Division III student-athletes agree or strongly agree that their coaches and teammates create an inclusive environment for all team members (78%).
- Over 90% of Division III student-athletes report that their college athletics experience had a positive or very positive effect on personal competencies such as work ethic, responsibility, teamwork, and goal setting.

Source: Division III Gallup Study (2020) and Division III Growth, Opportunities, Aspirations and Learning of Students in college (GOALS) Study (2019)

UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT



Source: 2025 Sports Sponsorship and Demographics Form

SPORTS SPONSORED PER INSTITUTION

19 average number of sports that Division III schools sponsor.

Source: 2025 Sports Sponsorship and Demographic Form

ATHLETICS PARTICIPATION

(Including emerging sports)

Approximately **37.7%** of NCAA student-athletes compete at Division III institutions.

	Division III	NCAA Overall
Men	124,691 (59%)	317,794 (57%)
Women	85,761 (41%)	240,439 (43%)
Total	210,452	558,233

*Numbers include student-athletes that may participate in more than one sport.

Source: 2025 Sports Sponsorship and Demographic Forms

PRIORITY INITIATIVES

- Provide quality Division III Championships.
- Provide Division III conference office support.
- Effectively advance opportunities and access.
- Ensure student-athlete support.
- Maintain the value of Division III athletics.
- Provide professional development for Division III constituents.
- Enhance formal accountability of the governance structure and national office support.
- Support Association-wide initiatives.

Source: 2025-26 NCAA Division III Strategic Plan

DIII-SPONSORED CHAMPIONSHIPS

Men's Championship Sports (14)

Baseball, Basketball, Cross Country, Football, Golf, Ice Hockey, Lacrosse, Soccer, Swimming and Diving, Tennis, Indoor Track and Field, Outdoor Track and Field, Volleyball, Wrestling

Women's Championship Sports (14)

Basketball, Cross Country, Field Hockey, Golf, Ice Hockey, Lacrosse, Rowing, Soccer, Softball, Swimming and Diving, Tennis, Indoor Track and Field, Outdoor Track and Field, Volleyball

National Collegiate Championships (10)

Men - Gymnastics, Water Polo; Women - Beach Volleyball, Bowling, Gymnastics, Water Polo, Wrestling; Men and Women - Fencing, Rifle, Skiing

Division III 2025-26 Budget Overview



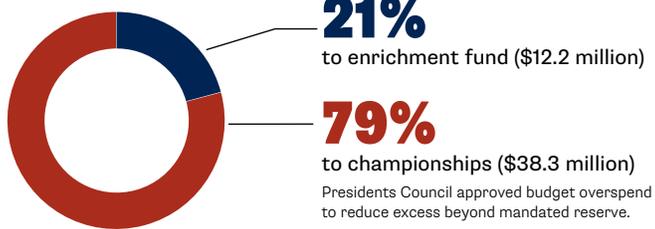
REVENUE



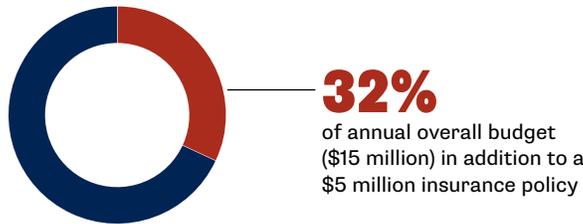
Source: 3.18% of NCAA operating revenue allocation

BUDGET ALLOCATION

2025-26 Allocation



Mandated Annual Reserve



VALUE OF MEMBERSHIP

With an annual budget of **\$46 million** and annual membership dues of **\$2,000 or less**, the estimated annual per institution value of Division III membership is **\$107,847**.

ASSOCIATION-WIDE BENEFITS

Division III members also benefit from Association-wide services and support. The NCAA funds these services with more than \$200 million dollars annually.

Legal Services, Communication	\$71.9 M
Insurance Programs, Drug Testing, Student-Athlete Leadership	\$68 M
Technology and National Office Support	\$49.5 M
Membership Support (e.g., Committees and Interpretations)	\$27.6 M
Post Eligibility Insurance	\$26 M
Educational Programs	\$6 M

CHAMPIONSHIPS

(28 DIVISION III SPECIFIC)

	Men's Budget	Women's Budget
Baseball	\$3,715,541	NA
Basketball	\$1,792,755	\$1,800,503
Cross Country	\$847,583	\$868,151
Field Hockey	NA	\$845,062
Football	\$3,475,453	NA
Golf	\$897,101	\$716,544
Ice Hockey	\$771,476	\$708,554
Lacrosse	\$1,463,151	\$1,540,586
Rowing	NA	\$574,301
Soccer	\$1,879,163	\$1,875,412
Softball	NA	\$2,495,057
Swimming and Diving	\$895,839	\$954,489
Tennis	\$1,026,951	\$1,087,093
Indoor Track and Field	\$1,104,624	\$1,030,630
Outdoor Track and Field	\$1,388,110	\$1,305,821
Volleyball	\$673,031	\$1,696,353
Wrestling	\$884,878	NA
Overall Totals	\$20,815,656	\$17,498,556

Source: NCAA Financial Statements

ENRICHMENT FUND

2025-26 Budget

Conference Office Support

Strategic Initiative Conference Grants	\$4,376,703
Conference Commissioners Meeting	\$40,000

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Pathway to Excellence Program	\$1,600,000
Strategic Alliance Matching Grant	\$708,600
DIII Diversity Initiatives	\$275,000
Coaching Enhancement Grant	\$100,000
LGBTQIA+ Inclusion Program	\$35,000

Student-Athlete Support

Championships Media	\$1,756,000
Mental Health	\$930,000
Health and Safety	\$860,000
Student-Athlete Leadership Forum	\$400,000
Annual Convention	\$105,000
CSC Academic All-American Program	\$44,000
Campus-Based Student-Athlete Leadership Programs	\$20,000
CSC Student Program	\$15,000

Value of Division III

Branding and Promotion	\$283,000
Special Olympics Partnership	\$35,000

Professional Development

Emerging Elite Program	\$85,000
Athletic Trainers Initiatives	\$85,000
New AD and Commissioner Orientations	\$85,000
ADR Professional Development	\$75,000
FAR Program	\$75,000
NADIII A Partnership	\$75,000
Regional Rules Seminar Live Streaming	\$30,000
SWA Enhancement Grant Program	\$30,000
Membership Learning Management System	\$20,000
College Sports Communicators DIII Day Administrator and Commissioner Meeting	\$12,000
NADIII A and DIIICA	\$10,000

Division III National Office Support

Division III Event Cancellation Insurance	\$61,000
Additional Working Groups	\$10,000
NCAA Staff Professional Development	\$7,000

Overall Total **\$12,243,303**

Source: NCAA Financial Statements

Our Three Divisions

The NCAA's three divisions were created in 1973 to align like-minded campuses in the areas of fairness, competition and opportunity.

DIVISION	 DIVISION I	 DIVISION II <i>MAKE IT YOURS</i>	 DIVISION III DISCOVER DEVELOP DEDICATE
ACTIVE SCHOOLS*	361 (33%)	293 (27%)	422 (39%)
MEDIAN UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT	8,800	2,100	1,700
STUDENTS WHO ARE ATHLETES	1 in 22 	1 in 7 	1 in 5 
AVERAGE NUMBER OF TEAMS PER SCHOOL	19	17	19
PERCENTAGE OF NCAA STUDENT-ATHLETES IN EACH DIVISION	 37%	 24%	 38%
ATHLETICS SCHOLARSHIPS	Multiyear, cost-of-attendance athletics scholarships available. 57% of athletes receive athletics aid.	Partial athletics scholarship model. 62% of athletes receive athletics aid.	No athletics scholarships. 80% of athletes receive nonathletics aid.
DID YOU KNOW?	 Division I student-athletes graduate at a higher rate than the general student body.	 Division II is the only division with schools in Alaska, Puerto Rico and Canada.	 Division III's largest school has 28,974 undergraduates. <i>The smallest? 339.</i>

*The number of schools for each division is current as of the 2025-26 academic year. All other figures are based on 2024-25 data. Percentages shown for schools and student-athletes represent numbers at active NCAA schools, so they do not add up to 100%.

How Is Each Division Governed?

NCAA schools develop and approve legislation for their own divisions. Groups of presidents and chancellors lead each division in the form of committees with regularly scheduled meetings. For more information, visit on.ncaa.com/governance.

What Are the Eligibility Requirements in Each Division?

Division I and II schools require your initial **academic** and **athletics eligibility** to be certified by the Eligibility Center. While Division III schools set their own academic standards on campus, the Eligibility Center certifies the amateur status of Division III **international student-athletes** (first-year enrollees and transfers). All other Division III student-athletes are certified on campus.



HOW THE NCAA WORKS:

Division III

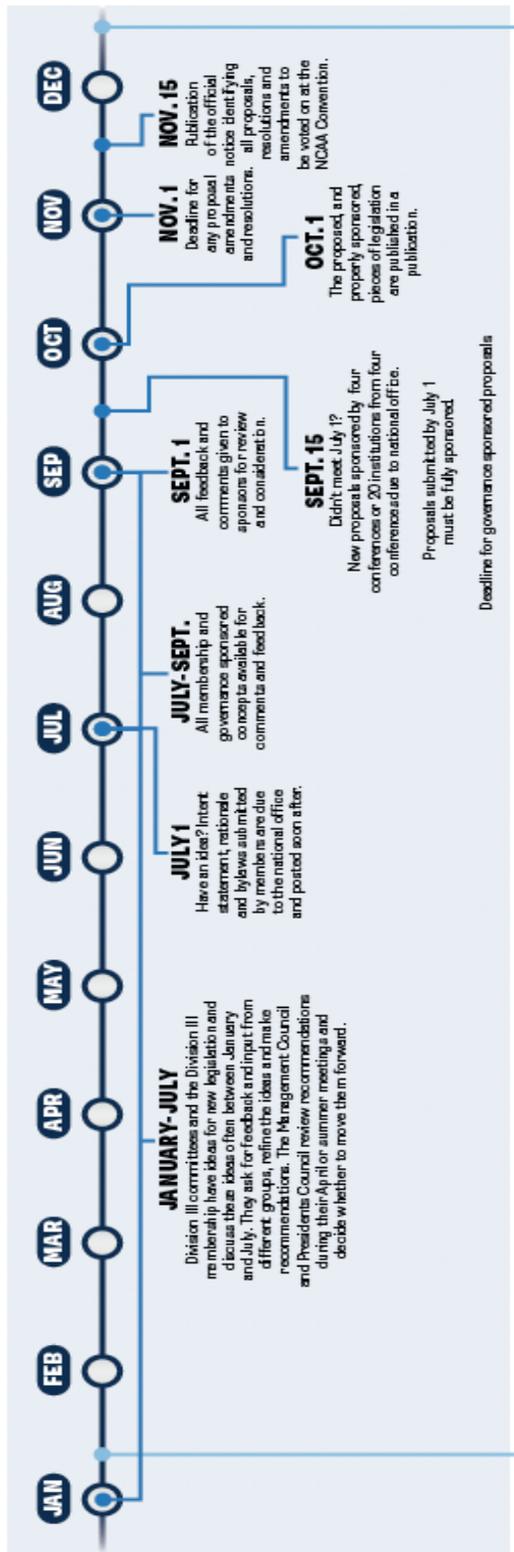
The Division III philosophy maintains that a student-athlete's athletics are an integral part of a well-rounded college experience. The athletic experience is designed to complement time spent in the classroom and pursuing other activities – some related to coursework, others extracurricular.

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 8.0 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 2026, 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 proposals take effect on the date specified in the legislation, usually Aug. 1 of that year.

The NCAA mission and Division III philosophy statement articulate principles that represent a commitment to the Division III student-athlete experience. It outlines the principles and expectations institutions and conferences strive for regarding the student-athlete collegiate and athletics experience.

NCAA Mission.

Provide a world-class athletics and academic experience for student-athletes that fosters lifelong well-being.

Student-Athlete Collegiate Experience.

- Primarily focus on intercollegiate athletics as a four-year undergraduate experience.
- Seek to establish and maintain an environment in which a student-athlete's athletics activities are conducted as an integral part of their educational experience.
- Assure that student-athletes are supported in their efforts to meaningfully participate in nonathletic pursuits to enhance their overall educational experience.

Student-Athlete Athletics Experience.

- Support student-athletes in their efforts to reach the highest levels of athletics performance, with a primary emphasis on conference and regional competition, while providing access to national championships.
- Prioritize the experience of the participants, and the internal constituency (e.g., students, alumni, institutional personnel) rather than on the entertainment needs of spectators or the general public.
- Develop and maintain an environment that promotes sportsmanship and a positive culture for student-athletes, coaches, and administrative personnel, recognizing the role intercollegiate athletics can play in human development. Ensure spectators contribute to a positive sporting experience in support of all participants.

The governance structure, with input from the membership, has identified the following strategic priorities and vision for the division that directly impact student-athletes.

Promote Association-wide initiatives.

- Engage Congress to introduce federal legislation addressing current threats to collegiate athletics.
- Support key initiatives to advance the division (e.g., fan database, purchasing cooperative, post-eligibility insurance, officiating resources).
- Monitor and proactively address legal, state and governmental challenges.

Enhance the championships experience.

- Expand championships opportunities through new sport sponsorships (e.g., women's wrestling).
- Increase branding through a comprehensive live streaming strategy.
- Identify opportunities to increase financial support for participating institutions and conferences.
- Seek sponsorships to generate revenue.

Effectively advance opportunities and access for under-represented groups.

- Provide professional development opportunities, promote educational programs and maintain grant funding.

Support the student-athlete experience.

- Provide resources and funding to support athletic training and athletic communication departments.
- Provide mental health training to head coaches and athletic trainers and provide relief through the waiver process based on a student-athlete's mental health.
- Promote the use of the Injury Surveillance Program to provide division specific data to inform playing rule changes.
- Support sportsmanship and game environment initiatives.
- Promote institutional commitment to sexual assault violence prevention education.

Division III, home to more than 200,000 student-athletes, provides an equitable and inclusive environment for student-athletes to participate in a competitive athletics environment, take responsibility for their own paths, follow their passions and discover their potential through a comprehensive educational experience.

DIII Resources Webpage

Learn more about NCAA Division III membership requirements, governance structure, and compliance resources designed to support institutional administrators here

<https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2021/2/19/membership-d3.aspx>



Gameday the DIII Way

The NCAA Division III Sportsmanship Initiative, known as Gameday the DIII Way, supports campus administrators, coaches, and student-athletes in creating athletics environments that reflect the core values of Division III. Through training materials, implementation guides, and campus engagement resources, the initiative helps institutions promote respect, integrity, and leadership among all participants and fans. It also encourages collaboration across athletics and student affairs to ensure that competition remains an extension of the educational experience.



De-escalation Techniques: Promoting Peaceful Resolution

Division III has launched a new e-learning course to help coaches, administrators, and game day staff promote respect and manage conflict at athletic events. Through real-life scenarios, participants will learn practical de-escalation strategies to handle tense situations and encourage positive interactions.

How to access:

1. Log in to **NCAA My Apps** using your email and password.
2. Click the “**NCAA Learning Portal**” tile.
3. In the search bar, type “**De-escalation Techniques: Promoting Peaceful Resolution.**”
4. Click **Start Learning Now** to begin the course.





IPP DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

What is the IPP data management system?

- The IPP data management system consolidates data currently being submitted by Division III institutions into a more user-friendly format with reporting functionality.
- IPP provides leaders better visibility into their institutional data.
- The goal: to facilitate better informed decisions and strategic planning on campus.

How can IPP help me?



ACADEMICS: Review graduation rates data, including trends by gender, race / ethnicity and sport.



STUDENTS: View the data of your student-athletes and compare their characteristics with those at peer institutions; view how your student-athletes compare with your entire undergraduate population in regard to gender and reported ethnicity/racial groups; compare sports sponsorship with peer institutions.



LEADERSHIP: See breakdown of assistant and head coaches and administrators by gender, sport and race/ethnicity and compare their characteristics with peer groups and your conference.



FINANCIAL: View how expenses are trending; research compensation data for head and assistant coaches and administrators to compare against peer groups; and better understand the expense implications of adding a sport(s) to your athletics program.

Why should I use IPP?

- No extra work on your end. The data you annually submit to the NCAA is already in the system.
- Secured, powerful platform provides information you can rely on.
- Peer comparison feature lets you compare your school, privately, in all data categories to existing peers (for example, conference and all Division III) and to other peer groups of your own choosing.





Division III Commissioners Association

The Division III Commissioners Association (DIIICA) serves as a collaborative leadership body dedicated to advancing the interests of student-athletes and the broader Division III community. The association takes an active role in addressing key issues that shape the division, fostering shared learning, collective action, and the development of impactful initiatives.

D3CA Executive Committee

Name	Position	Conference
Keri Alexander Luchowski	President	North Coast Athletic Conference
Corey Borchardt	Vice President	Upper Midwest Athletic Conference
Jennifer Dubow	Past-President	Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference
Brad Bankston	Member	Old Dominion Athletic Conference
Katie Boldvich	Member	Landmark Conference
Dan McKane	Member	Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference
Sarah Otey	Member	University Athletic Association
Chris Roekle	Member	Coast-To-Coast Athletic Conference

In order to maximize its impact and productivity, the DIIICA has several active sub-committees including Awards, Assessment, Championships, Conference Grant, Governance and Officiating. Conference assistant directors and athletics communications directors have also become very active and meet every other year with the DIIICA. The organization also works very closely with the NCAA leadership in addition to several other affiliated organizations such as NACDA, NADIIIAA, Women Leaders in College Sports and the Division III Independents. This broad-based approach allows all memberships to work in concert to improve communications and ultimately enhance the service to student-athletes in their journey to “Discover, Develop, and Dedicate.”

DIIICA Dennis Collins Award:

Created in 2019 to honor the legacy of Collins who served as president of the DIIICA, who he helped form in 1989. He was the first Executive Director of the North Coast Athletic Conference and served from 1984 until his passing in 2009. There was no recipient for the 2024-2025 academic year.

DIIICA Daniel T. Meritorious Service Award:

Awarded annually to an individual, who, over time, has made significant and substantial contributions to Division III athletics consistent with the purposes of the Division III Commissioners Association. Candidates shall be a current or former conference or institutional representative, including, but not limited to, conference executives, athletics administrators, faculty athletics representatives and academic administrators. In 2024, the honor was given to Anne Bready King, Russell Sage College.

National Association of Division III Athletic Administrators



The National Association of Division III Athletics Administrators (NADIII AA) is an association composed of more than 700 athletics administrators from over 350 institutions and 44 conferences competing at the NCAA Division III level. The partnership between the NCAA and the NADIII AA supports professional development programming for Division III athletics administrators by funding grants and program expenses for the NADIII AA Summer Forum held in conjunction with the Annual NACDA Convention.

The NADIII AA website provides members with useful information and resources regarding the Association and the administration of intercollegiate athletics consistent with philosophy and practices of Division III of the NCAA. The NADIII AA also provides a listserv and digital community for its members to exchange information on best practices, job openings, scheduling opportunities, and other topics of interest.

NADIII AA Community Service Award: Each of the selected institutions and conferences are recognized for the impressive community service projects performed by its student-athletes during the year. The awards program, established in 2001, is sponsored by NADIII AA and is intended to recognize the many contributions Division III student-athletes regularly make to their campuses and local communities. Recognition is given for projects in three categories: One-Time Activity, Community Partnerships, and Special Olympics Activity. In addition to presenting commemorative trophies to the four winning institutions, NADIII AA will make a \$1,000 contribution to the general scholarship fund at each of these institutions. The awards are presented during the NADIII AA Reception held in conjunction with the NCAA Convention annually. The One-Time Activity category winner was awarded to Springfield College, the Community Partnerships category winner is SUNY-Oswego and the winners of the Special Olympics Activity Category is Alfred State and Kenyon College.

Emerging and Transitioning Administrator Awards: Each year NADIII AA presents an Emerging Administrator Award and a Transitioning Administrator Award. The awards are presented annually to a new athletic administrator and to an administrator who has transitioned from another role in athletics with seven or fewer years of service as an administrator who has demonstrated achievement and leadership in intercollegiate athletics within their institution or conference. The award includes a \$1,000 professional development grant. The 2025 Transitioning Athletic Administrator was awarded to Charles Dean III, from Claremont-Mudd-Scripps and the 2025 Emerging Athletic Administrator was awarded to Allison Manwell, from Wabash College.

National Association of Division III Athletic Administrators

Lifetime Achievement Award: The NADIII AA Executive Committee proudly presents the 2025 Richard A. Rasmussen Lifetime Achievement Award to Jeff Martinez, director of athletics at the University of Redlands. Named after former NADIII AA Executive Director Dick Rasmussen, this award recognizes individuals who have made a lasting and meaningful impact on Division III athletics throughout their careers.

Martinez, who has served at Redlands since 1983 and will retire in May 2025, has exemplified leadership, dedication, and service to Division III. His career spans four decades of contributions as an athletic trainer, coach, and administrator. He chaired the NCAA Division III Management Council (2012–13) and Championships Committee, and also served on the SAAC, CSMAS, and Academic Issues Sub-Committee. Under his guidance, Redlands has achieved competitive and academic success, hosted multiple NCAA Championships, and expanded opportunities for women’s sports, including the addition of women’s golf and women’s flag football.

Through his collaborative leadership and commitment to student-athlete well-being, Jeff Martinez has left a lasting legacy on Division III athletics and the University of Redlands community.

NADIII A Professional Development: Each year NADIII AA sponsors professional development workshops in conjunction with the NCAA Convention and the Annual NACDA Convention.

Learn More Here





W O M E N L E A D E R S I N C O L L E G E S P O R T S

Women Leaders in College Sports is the premier leadership organization that **develops, connects, and advances** women working in college sports and beyond. We are re-shaping the leadership landscape by elevating the women leaders of today and cultivating the women leaders of tomorrow.

JOIN OUR INSPIRED COMMUNITY OF MORE THAN 4,500 WOMEN AND MEN, AND YOU CAN IMMEDIATELY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OUR MEMBER BENEFITS!

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP OFFERINGS:

Women Leaders offers year-round leadership programs and experiences that will elevate your performance and position you for growth and advancement. Our Transformational Leadership Experiences include:

- Leadership Institutes for women at every stage of their career
- Mentorship Program
- National Convention
- Performance Catalyst series, and more.

Plus, take advantage of our Leadership Hub - a dynamic and expansive resource center with content, tools, inspiration, and more!

ACCESS TO A POWERFUL NETWORK:

Meet fellow women leaders through:

- 18 Member Circles - virtual communities where you can connect with other women leaders, share resources and learn from one another.
- Member-led Happy Hours, a perfect opportunity to grow your professional community in your region
- Our best-in-class, three-day National Convention, attended every year by more than 1,000 strong and passionate leaders from across the country!

RESOURCES TO ADVANCE:

- Access the Career Connect platform – an exclusive career platform to assist you with your job searches and/or hiring of the top talent in sports. Browse open positions, and stay on top of job opportunities at every level by creating and updating your Career Connect profile.
- Executive-level members can join our Executive Circle, where you can connect with more women at the senior level.

Plus, so many  more benefits for every career level!

JOIN TODAY!

womenleadersincollegesports.org/join





W O M E N L E A D E R S IN COLLEGE SPORTS

CAREER ROAD MAP

No career path is ever the same—nor is it straight or clear. But this Career Road Map will be your guide to take advantage of the benefits you receive as a Women Leaders member—the best career and leadership training, access to a powerful network, and the resources to advance women at every stage of their careers.

Entry Level: Get Involved!

For student-athletes, grad students, interns, and entry-level staffers:

- Become a Women Leaders in College Sports [member!](#)
- Apply to attend the NCAA/Women Leaders [Women's Leadership Symposium](#)
- Follow [@WomenLeadersCS](#) on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#)
- Subscribe to the [Women Leaders Podcast](#)
- Join our [Rising Stars program](#)
- Join a [Member Circle](#) to connect with other members
- Attend a [regional Happy Hour](#)
- Find a mentor through our [mentorship program](#)
- Attend the [Women Leaders National Convention](#) (do this at every phase of your career!)
- Create your [Career Connect](#) Profile and search/apply for jobs
- Attend a [New Member Accelerator Call](#)

Mid Level: Be Visibly the Best at Your Current Job

For women working in intercollegiate athletics approximately three to six years:

- Apply to attend the NCAA/Women Leaders [Institute for Advancement](#)
- Apply and serve on a Women Leaders [committee](#)
- Host a [regional Happy Hour](#)
- Become a mentor through our [mentorship program](#)
- Become a Circle Lead for one of our 18 [member circles](#)
- Continue to update your [Career Connect](#) Profile
- Browse our [Leadership Hub](#) for resources to help push you career forward

Senior Level: Raise Your Game and Establish Your “It” Factor

For women working in intercollegiate athletics approximately seven to 10 years:

- Attend the Women Leaders in College Sports [Leadership Enhancement Institute](#)
- Identify your areas of expertise, and submit your name to speak at Women Leaders programming
- Serve as a leader of one of our [committees](#) or [Member Circles](#)
- Apply to serve on an NCAA or other national committee
- Serve as faculty for our leadership programming
- Continue to update your [Career Connect](#) Profile

Executive Level: Your Path to be an Athletic Director or Commissioner

For women working in intercollegiate athletics approximately 10-plus years:

- Attend the Women Leaders in College Sports [Executive Institute](#)
- Apply for NCAA Pathways program
- Master the AD areas of competency, including fundraising, facilities, and executive presence
- Serve as faculty for our leadership programming
- Update your [Career Connect](#) profile to “Executive” level
- Inquire about our [Executive Circle](#)

Sitting Leaders: Lift as you Rise

For women in the top seats of intercollegiate athletics:

- Serve on the Women Leaders [Board of Directors](#) and [national committees](#)
- Attend Women Leaders NEXT for your division
- Shine your light, share your talent, and be an agent of change
- Give back to the profession—lift as you rise, guiding younger administrators

360 Proof

360 Proof is a comprehensive, evidence-based program that helps institutions reduce the consequences of high-risk alcohol use and enhance collaboration between athletics and other campus departments focused on student well-being

<https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2022/8/31/360-proof.aspx>





IMPROVE THE MENTAL WELLBEING OF STUDENT-ATHLETES WITH MHFA

As an **NCAA**® head coach or athletic trainer, you're a trusted figure in the lives of your student-athletes. You have the power to make a difference during practice, competition and in your student-athlete's mental wellbeing journey. That's why the NCAA engaged the National Council for Mental Wellbeing to provide Division III head coaches and athletic trainers with fully funded **Mental Health First Aid** (MHFA) training.

Mental health affects performance

1 IN 3

U.S. adults ages 18-25 experienced a mental illness during the COVID-19 pandemic.

(Source: [NAMI](#))

About

9.2 MILLION

young adults ages 18 to 25 experienced a substance use disorder in the past year.

(Source: [SAMHSA](#))

Over

50%

of coaches reported feeling inadequately prepared to help student-athletes with mental health concerns.

(Source: [NCAA](#))

Over

80%

of coaches said they spend more time on supporting student-athletes' mental health, as it is their top concern.

(Source: [NCAA](#))

The mental health and substance use challenges student-athletes face are real and often go unnoticed until they reach a breaking point. In your role, you're in a unique position to notice these challenges early and help prevent them from escalating. Whether you're observing performance issues, changes in behavior or personal struggles, your intervention could be life changing.

What is MHFA?

MHFA's interactive, evidence-based training provides the skills you need to support student-athletes through mental health challenges, reduce stigma and promote a healthy, positive team environment. In the MHFA for Higher Education course, you and your staff will learn how to:

- Recognize common signs and symptoms of mental health and substance use challenges.
- Respond with the five-step MHFA Action Plan (ALGEE).
- Interact with a person in crisis.
- Connect athletes with the help they need.
- Take care of your own mental wellbeing through self-care.

Who qualifies for the funded training?

Up to 30 individuals at each NCAA Division III active member institution with a specific focus on:

- Head coaches
- Athletic trainers

Course details

Staff will attend a 7.5 hour, in-person training session with expert Instructors on your school's campus. Upon completion, they will be certified in MHFA for Higher Education!

Sources:

NAMI: <https://www.nami.org/about-mental-illness/mental-health-by-the-numbers/>

SAMHSA: <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/report/2023-nsduh-detailed-tables>

NCAA: https://ncaaorg.s3.amazonaws.com/research/other/2020/2022RES_NCAA-SA-Well-BeingSurveyPPT.pdf

NCAA: <https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2023/1/25/ncaa-coach-well-being-study.aspx>

>> Secure your MHFA training today!

Be the difference in the lives of your student-athletes. To schedule a fully funded MHFA for Higher Education training for your NCAA Division III Athletics staff, please visit MHFA.org/NCAA to learn more and complete an inquiry form.



While Division III has a diverse membership of varying sizes and institutional missions, most of the following guidelines represent attributes that are found in successful Division III athletics programs and reflect real goals that, if achieved, should enhance an institution's operations.

Guiding Principles for the Model Athletics Program

1. Integration and Institutional Control. A model Division III athletics program is integral to the educational mission of the institution, is fully integrated as an athletics department in the institution's budget and management operations, and is committed to the principle of institutional control. The administration of an institution's athletics program (e.g., hiring, compensation, professional development, certification of coaches) should be integrated into the campus culture and education mission, and strive to incorporate the core attributes of the Division III mission and philosophy.
2. Chancellor or President Oversight. A model Division III member institution's chancellor or president sets forth a vision for the institution's intercollegiate athletics program, ensures that adequate resources exist for the athletics department to carry out this vision, emphasizes the importance of the institution's compliance system and the roles of various departments (e.g., financial aid office) in this system, and ensures that the athletics programs support the institution's educational mission by financing, staffing and controlling the programs through the same general procedures as other departments of the institution.
3. Athletics Direct Report. At many Division III member institutions, the president or chancellor has designated oversight of intercollegiate athletics to another individual (e.g., vice president). Within a model Division III member institution that has this structure, the athletics direct report should be consulted for input on key institutional and conference operational and strategic issues facing the athletics program.
4. Director of Athletics. A model Division III athletics program shall feature a full-time administrator that takes responsibility for the academic and athletics success of the athletics department. As the department's manager, the Director of Athletics shall implement the institution's vision for intercollegiate athletics consistent with the institution's mission and philosophy. The Director of Athletics is also responsible for creating an environment that prioritizes sportsmanship and civility. The Director of Athletics should provide its staff members with professional development opportunities. Although not a requirement, as a best practice it is recommended that the Director of Athletics should serve as a primary athletics administrator and should not have other major responsibilities (e.g., should not also serve as a coach). [Attachment A]

5. Associate/Assistant Director of Athletics. A model Division III athletics program should have at least one associate or assistant director of athletics. This individual could have a variety of responsibilities ranging from compliance, budget management, scheduling and/or facility oversight.
6. Senior Woman Administrator (SWA). A model Division III athletics program shall include the active involvement of the senior woman administrator in decision making regarding key issues and in the general operations and management of the athletics department. The SWA is a senior level administrator who has the appropriate title (e.g., assistant, associate athletics director). [Attachment B]
7. Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR). A model Division III athletics program shall include the active involvement of the faculty athletics representative as the key institutional liaison to the athletics department and should be supported and funded by the institution to perform these functions. The involvement of the FAR should include eligibility or academic related duties. The FAR should also serve as a key contact for student-athletes. [Attachment C]
8. Coach's Role. A model Division III athletics program shall feature an environment where head coaches understand their responsibility in establishing a culture of compliance with conference and NCAA rules. The actions of coaches should exhibit fairness, openness, honesty in their relationships with student-athletes. A model athletics program also features, a coaches policies and procedures manual.
9. Athletic Trainers. A model Division III athletics program shall feature an adequate number of certified athletic trainers who are able to provide for the safety and well-being of the student-athletes. A model athletics program also features athletic trainers who are integral to compliance with CPR, first aid and AED certification requirements. Best practices, procedures and policies should adhere to the NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook.
10. Athletics Communication Director. A model Division III athletics program shall feature an individual responsible for promoting the institution's intercollegiate athletics program and for building key relationships with the media and the community. This individual should work with the department in establishing web communication and social media strategic planning.
11. Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) Involvement. A model Division III athletics program shall feature an active institutional SAAC that represents the concerns and ideas of the institution's student-athletes in all sports and is committed to the overall well-being of the student-athlete. Every team should have at least one representative on the campus SAAC, and the institution should have at least one student-athlete representative on the conference SAAC. A model athletics program also should have a student-athlete handbook.

12. Continuing Education and Professional Development. A model Division III athletics program shall be committed to sending its key personnel to educational events (e.g., NACDA, NACWAA, NCAA Regional Rules Seminar) and to the annual NCAA Convention to enhance the success of the institution and to further the professional development of coaches and administrators. In addition, the athletics department should look for regional and national seminars to send coaches and student-athletes for enhanced leadership skills.
13. Academic Success. A model Division III athletics program shall be committed to the academic success of its student-athletes and ensures the academic performance of student-athletes is, at a minimum, consistent with that of the general student-body. A model program has regularly scheduled meetings with the director of athletics, admissions and financial aid directors.
14. Admissions. A model Division III athletics program ensures that athletics recruitment complies with established institutional policies and procedures applicable to the admission process. The institution should also ensure that admission policies for student-athletes comply with policies and procedures applicable to the general student-body.
15. Financial Aid. A model Division III athletics program ensures that athletics ability, participation, or leadership are not considered in the formation of institutional financial aid packages and that athletic department personnel are not involved in the arrangement or modification of student-athlete financial aid packages. A model program has regularly scheduled meetings with the director of athletics, admissions and financial aid directors.
16. Inclusion. A model Division III athletics program shall be committed to the principle of inclusion. The athletics department shall promote an atmosphere of respect for and sensitivity to the dignity of every person. The department shall also value the opinions of all, initiate a leadership role on campus in this area, and, through diverse hiring pools, strive for gender and ethnic diversity in the institution's administrative and coaching positions.
17. Compliance. A model Division III athletics program shall feature a designated compliance coordinator whose primary responsibility is the oversight of the institution's compliance system, the coordination of the institution's rules education and the monitoring of rules compliance. Although not a requirement, as a best practice it is recommended that the individual with compliance responsibilities should not be a coach. The department should commit to a regular self-analysis or a regular external assessment to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the institution's compliance systems. A model Division III athletics program that has multidivisional classification should have policies and procedures in place to monitor compliance and education regarding NCAA Division I legislative requirements.

18. Citizenship/Leadership/Sportsmanship. A model Division III athletics program shall encourage all student-athletes, coaches and spectators to respect each other, practice civility, encourage teamwork and understand citizenship responsibilities during the conduct of intercollegiate practice and competitions. An athletics department should develop a policy on sportsmanship and fan behavior for home events. A model program will emphasize that a “family friendly” environment should exist at all athletics department events.
19. Game Management. A model Division III athletics program shall have game-day operations or event management procedures. A designated person should have oversight responsibilities related to game management to create a positive atmosphere and ensure that individuals who violate the code must be held accountable.
20. Finances and Sports Sponsorship. A model Division III athletics program shall be administered with prudent management and fiscal practices to ensure financial stability. Sufficient operating and travel budgets should be maintained to allow for the effective operation of the athletics department. The model program should also feature participation opportunities that are consistent with the institution’s mission and the interests of the institution’s student-athletes. The current Division III sports-sponsorship averages are 18 varsity sports .
21. Fundraising. A model Division III athletics program provides for an individual with responsibilities in athletics fundraising and development. If that individual is the athletics director, an additional assistant athletics director may be necessary for the day-to-day operations of the department. If the function is handled outside the athletics department, the institution’s development office should provide for an individual for athletics fundraising and development.
22. Communication/Campus Relationships. A model Division III athletics program shall feature a communication strategy to keep other key campus departments (e.g. registrar, financial aid) up to date regarding athletics department issues.
23. Strategic Plan for Intercollegiate Athletics. A model Division III athletics program shall feature a strategic vision for an integrated athletics model that specifies the goals and objectives for the intercollegiate athletics experience and identifies how athletics enhances the mission of the campus.
24. Assessment. A model Division III athletics program shall feature an instrument (e.g., student-athlete exit interview) that is used as an assessment each year to measure the student-athletes’ experience. In addition, the athletics department should feature annual performance evaluations for coaches and administrators.

DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS

Role of the Director of Athletics.

1. Report directly to the chancellor or president (or have access to the chancellor or president if reporting directly to an athletics direct report) and have the primary responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the department and the supervision of the athletics department staff.
2. Oversee the organization and management of all athletics department personnel, policies and procedures.
3. Be the champion and primary caretaker for the institution's athletics department's strategic plan and compliance with Title IX.
4. Promote effective communication among all institutional constituents (e.g., chancellor or president, staff, administrators, faculty, student-athletes, media public).
5. Take an active role in conference and national affairs.
6. Maintain communication with outside organizations that are vital to the athletics department's operations, such as the NCAA, NACDA, NACWAA, CoSIDA, etc.
7. Provide professional growth opportunities for athletics department staff.
8. Coordinate fundraising and development activities for the department or communicate with other units on campus that have this responsibility.
9. Be accountable for the compliance and fiscal stability of the athletics department.
10. Oversee the annual assessment policies and procedures.

SENIOR WOMAN ADMINISTRATOR (SWA)

The highest-ranking female administrator involved in the management of an institution's intercollegiate athletics program. [NCAA Constitution 4.02.4] The following should not be used to create a job position or list of responsibilities for the individual who fills this role; rather this document is merely intended to encourage the involvement of female administrators in meaningful ways in the decision-making process in intercollegiate athletics. The designation of the SWA is intended to enhance representation of women's interests, experience and perspective at the institutional, conference and national levels.

The Role of the SWA.

A model athletics department may find it valuable to use the SWA in the following ways:

1. As a key decision-maker instrumentally involved with the athletics department.
2. As a participant on the senior management team.
3. As a team member working within the group structure to accomplish goals.
4. As a strategizer of ways to support and manage gender equity and Title IX plans and issues.
5. As an advocate of issues important to female and male student-athletes, coaches and staff.
6. As an educator on issues concerning both men and women.
7. As a role model and resource for students, coaches, administrators and others.
8. As an administrator leading student-athletes in successfully balancing academics and athletics by providing leadership.
9. As a reviewer of the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA) Report.

Institutional Benefits.

The SWA aids senior management with a broad-based, well versed, wide range of experiences in sport and in the world of intercollegiate athletics. The institution also obtains an experienced, female voice and perspective, and a role model who is conscious about equity and gender matters.

Examples of responsibilities model athletics departments have assigned to their SWAs

1. Sport program supervision.
2. Budget management.
3. Fundraising.
4. Administration and governance of the athletics program.
5. Recruitment and hiring of key department and/or institutional personnel.
6. Monitoring implementation of gender-equity plan.
7. Spokesperson for the needs and interests of women within the intercollegiate athletics department.
8. Role model for student-athletes, educating them on issues affecting intercollegiate athletics.
9. Serving as an active member in appropriate professional organizations (e.g., NACWAA, NACDA).

FACULTY ATHLETICS REPRESENTATIVE (FAR)

Each member institution is required to appoint a faculty athletic representative (FAR). [Constitution 6.1.3]

Role on Campus.

Faculty athletics representatives can be only as effective as their institutional circumstances permit. Circumstances that would tend to support a meaningful role for the faculty athletics representative include:

1. A position description, which clearly specifies both authority and responsibility
2. A commitment of institutional resources so that the FAR has sufficient time, clerical assistance, discretionary travel privileges and similar support and
3. Recognition by both the chancellor or president and the faculty governance structure of the importance of a significant faculty athletics representative role in the institutional governance and oversight of the intercollegiate athletics program.

Faculty Athletics Representative Credentials and Duties.

1. The working relationship between the chancellor or president and the faculty athletics representative is a critically important determinant of the effectiveness of the faculty athletics representative in contributing to the local control of the intercollegiate athletics program.
2. The basis of this relationship should be a model of institutional control in which significant responsibilities for administration and oversight are assigned to the faculty athletics representative, as well as to the director of athletics.
3. It is important that the chancellor or president recognize that the range of activities and the scope of the responsibilities of the FAR elevate this position above the level of the typical faculty service appointment, and it is recommended that those who hold this position have permanent tenure.

Essential Faculty Athletics Representative Responsibilities.

1. The FAR should ensure, either directly or indirectly, that student-athletes meet all NCAA, conference and institutional requirements for eligibility for practice and intercollegiate competition. Eligibility checks should be periodically reviewed and audited by the FAR. Academic eligibility certifications should be performed by persons outside of the department of athletics.

2. The FAR should be involved in institutional compliance activities or responsibilities, along with campus entities outside the athletics department. Such entities include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Office of student financial aid,
 - b. Office of undergraduate admissions,
 - c. Office of the registrar; and
 - d. Offices of the academic vice president and the deans of several colleges.
3. The FAR should work in concert with the director of athletics to ensure a comprehensive and effective rules education and compliance program on the campus.
4. The FAR should be knowledgeable about the NCAA and conference rules related to academic eligibility, transfer requirements, and restrictions and enforcement procedures. He or she should participate, or otherwise be fully informed about, institutional investigations of allegations of rules violations. No infractions report to either the NCAA or a conference should leave the campus until it has been reviewed by the FAR.
5. The FAR should have direct contact with student-athletes on a systematic and periodic basis. He or she should participate in new student-athlete orientation activities and should interact frequently with the student-athlete advisory committee.
6. Student-athletes should recognize the FAR as a source of information and an advocate for student-athlete well-being
7. The FAR should be a senior advisor outside of the athletics department to the CEO on matters related to intercollegiate athletics. Together, with the director of athletics, the FAR should formulate and recommend institutional positions on NCAA legislation and other matters affecting, or related to, intercollegiate athletics on the campus.
8. The FAR should be an active member of the campus intercollegiate athletics board or committee.

Athletic Trainer Recruitment and Retention

This report highlights the recommendations of the Division III Athletic Technology Working Group, which examined how technology can enhance efficiency, communication, and data use across Division III governance and operations. It provides key findings and strategies to support future improvements in technology-driven decision-making.



Communication Best Practices

A Guide for Chancellors, Presidents and Commissioners

The guide outlines best practices for college and conference leaders, particularly presidents/chancellors and commissioners. To improve communication, clarify governance roles, and support informed decision-making in the NCAA Division III space.



Guide to Strategic Athletics Communication on Campus

This guide offers athletics communications professionals at Division III institutions practical strategies to align messaging, engage stakeholders, and effectively tell the student-athlete story. It provides best-practice insights into roles, branding, and communication planning to support the division's identity and mission.



LGBTQ Nondiscrimination Policy Guide

This guide offers Division III institutions and conferences a template and toolkit for creating inclusive, LGBTQ-friendly athletics policies that align with broader nondiscrimination commitments. It includes sample policy language, questions to evaluate current practices, and guidance on fostering environments where all participants feel safe, respected, and valued.



Five Ways to Have an LGBTQ-Inclusive Athletics Department

The NCAA's Five Ways to Have an LGBTQ-Inclusive Athletics Department resource offers practical strategies for creating welcoming and equitable athletics environments. It provides guidance for administrators and coaches on fostering inclusion through policy development, education, and day-to-day leadership practices that support all student-athletes.



The Diverse Workforce

Recruitment and Retention Basics for Division III Athletics Departments

This guide provides best practices to help Division III athletics departments recruit, hire, and retain diverse and inclusive staff. It offers practical steps for each stage of the hiring process, from preparation and selection to onboarding and long-term retention, supporting equity and inclusion across campus athletics.



The Highly Engaged FAR

Recommendations for the Campus, the Conference, and the FAR

This guide provides practical strategies for Faculty Athletics Representatives (FARs) to strengthen their engagement within Division III. It highlights ways FARs can better support student-athletes, collaborate across campus and conferences, and contribute to NCAA governance. The booklet also outlines best practices for institutions to foster a well-supported and highly engaged FAR role.



Health, Safety & Performance

<https://www.ncaa.org/sports/health-safety>



Mental Health Best Practices: Understanding and Supporting Student-Athlete Mental Health

SECOND EDITION

An Inter-Association Consensus Document

Copyright 2016, Revised 2020, Updated 2024

**Note: Schools are legislatively required to make mental health services and resources available to their student-athletes consistent with this document.*



SPORT SCIENCE
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The Mental Health Best Practices: Understanding and Supporting Student-Athlete Mental Health, Second Edition, is an inter-association consensus document developed in collaboration with the NCAA Mental Health Advisory Group and the Committee for Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports. The recommendations in the Mental Health Best Practices, Second Edition, reflect core consensus of the NCAA Mental Health Advisory Group and are recognized in Association-wide legislation.



Organizations represented on the NCAA Mental Health Advisory Group include:

External Organizations

- Alliance of Social Workers in Sports.
- American Medical Society for Sports Medicine.
- American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine.
- Asian American Psychological Association.
- Association for Applied Sport Psychology.
- Athlete Ally.
- College Athletic Trainers' Society.
- Clinical/Counseling Sport Psychology Association.
- Faculty Athletics Representatives Association.
- Higher Education Mental Health Alliance.
- International Society for Sport Psychiatry.
- National Alliance on Mental Illness.
- National Athletic Trainers' Association.
- Sleep Research Society.
- Society for Sport, Exercise and Performance Psychology.
- Society of Indian Psychologists.
- The JED Foundation.
- The Trevor Project.
- United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee.

NCAA

- Division I Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (2).
- Division II Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (2).
- Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (2).
- Board of Governors Student-Athlete Engagement Committee.
- Division I governance.
- Division II governance.
- Division III governance.
- CSMAS.

Overview

PURPOSE

Recognizing mental health as an important dimension of overall health, the NCAA membership's commitment to student-athlete mental health and well-being is codified in the NCAA Constitution, which states that intercollegiate athletics programs shall be conducted in a manner designed to protect, support and enhance the mental and physical health of student-athletes. Further, the NCAA Constitution speaks to the Association's development of guidance based on the consensus of the medical, scientific, sports medicine and sport governing communities for student-athlete mental and physical health. Mental Health Best Practices: Understanding and Supporting Student-Athlete Mental Health, Second Edition, (Mental Health Best Practices) provides Association-wide recommendations to support and promote student-athlete mental health and well-being. These recommendations reflect core consensus and are recognized in Association-wide legislation, which requires schools to make mental health services and resources available to its student-athletes. Provision of services and resources should be consistent with the Mental Health Best Practices.

The Mental Health Best Practices are not intended to provide guidance about the clinical and/or medical care of individual student-athletes with mental health symptoms and disorders; it is expected that primary athletics health care providers and licensed mental health providers will provide evidence- and consensus-based health care that is consistent with standards of care for ongoing licensure in their profession. Rather, the Mental Health Best Practices provide the membership with recommendations for team, athletics, campus and community-based approaches to supporting, promoting and managing student-athlete mental health concerns. Additionally, these recommendations provide guidance on how member schools may prepare for and respond to mental health emergencies.

STRUCTURE

This document highlights historical background on the Mental Health Best Practices, discusses important foundational principles for understanding and supporting student-athlete mental health and provides member schools with four best practices that provide the building blocks for each member school's mental health services, resources and education:

1. Creating Healthy Environments that Support Mental Health and Promote Well-Being.
2. Procedures for Identification of Student-Athletes with Mental Health Symptoms and Disorders, Including Mental Health Screening Tools.
3. Action Plans that Outline Referral Pathways of Student-Athletes to Qualified Providers.
4. Licensure of Providers who Oversee and Manage Student-Athlete Mental Health Care.

Each best practice contains "core components" that should be considered for incorporation into each member school's approach to supporting student-athlete mental health and well-being, as well as "additional elements to consider" that may also be of benefit for member schools to consider in their approach.

Approaches to supporting student-athlete mental health and well-being will vary by school due to differences in student-athlete needs, as well as differences in local and state resources.

Please also see the Resource page, which contains additional resources that may be considered to support implementation of the Mental Health Best Practices.

Background

HISTORY

In 2013, upon the recommendation of the **NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports**, a multidisciplinary **Mental Health Task Force** was convened to discuss considerations for the mental health of NCAA student-athletes. In 2014, the NCAA published **Mind, Body and Sport: Understanding and Supporting Student-Athlete Mental Wellness**, which was based on consensus from the task force. In 2016, the NCAA, in association with 25 endorsing sports medicine, scientific and mental health organizations, released the **NCAA Inter-Association Consensus Document: Best Practices for Understanding and Supporting Student-Athlete Mental Wellness**, which provided member schools with recommendations for supporting and promoting student-athlete mental health and well-being. The Mental Health Best Practices were updated in 2017 and 2020. In 2019, Association-wide legislation was adopted requiring member schools to make mental health services and resources available consistent with the Mental Health Best Practices.

In 2020, upon the recommendation of CSMAS, the NCAA Sport Science Institute and Office of Inclusion hosted the **Diverse Student-Athlete Mental Health and Well-Being Summit** with the goal of developing foundational statements addressing diverse student-athlete mental health and well-being. Following the Diverse Student-Athlete Mental Health and Well-Being Summit, CSMAS determined the need for further update of the Mental Health Best Practices, with additional consideration for the mental health and well-being of student-athletes of color, LGBTQ+ student-athletes, student-athletes with disabilities and international student-athletes. To address this, CSMAS created the **Mental Health Advisory Group**

in 2021, empowering the MHAG to advise CSMAS on emerging developments in mental health science and policy, including considerations for updating the Mental Health Best Practices. In 2023, the MHAG provided CSMAS consensus-based recommendations for updating the Mental Health Best Practices. These recommendations, along with membership feedback, have been incorporated into the **NCAA Inter-Association Consensus Document: Best Practices for Understanding and Supporting Student-Athlete Mental Wellness, Second Edition**.





Fig. 1: The spectrum of mental health represents many possible states of well-being. Resilience and thriving may indicate optimal mental wellness, while impaired function and performance may indicate a student-athlete in need of mental health support.

FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORTING STUDENT-ATHLETE MENTAL HEALTH

The following evidence- and consensus-based foundational principles provide important context related to student-athlete mental health. This includes information on risk and protective factors that can impact student-athlete mental health. These foundational principles help inform how each best practice can be operationalized by member schools.

- **Mental health is an important dimension of overall student-athlete health and optimal functioning.** Adapting the [World Health Organization's definition of mental health](#) to athletes, mental health is a state of well-being that enables student-athletes to cope with complex stressors associated with their various roles and to realize their abilities in athletics, academics, other personally important domains and to contribute to their community. Mental health exists on a continuum, with mental wellness and thriving on one end of the spectrum and mental health symptoms, conditions and disorders that disrupt a student-athlete's athletic, academic and/or psychosocial functioning at the other¹⁻⁷.
- **Emerging adulthood is a particularly important time for supporting mental health.** Emerging adulthood is a critical developmental period in an individual's life course; it is comprised of physical growth, ongoing brain development, changes in social environment and establishing health-related behaviors that persist into adulthood⁸⁻¹⁰. Emerging adulthood is also a common time for mental health challenges to emerge⁹. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention report that more than one in five adults live with a mental health condition and rates of emerging adults with poor mental health are increasing⁸. Even in the absence of a clinically diagnosable mental health disorder, student-athletes may have impaired overall well-being because of sub-clinical mental health symptoms such as anxiety, depression, disordered eating, insomnia or substance misuse¹⁻⁷.

- **Mental health risk and protective factors occur across settings and over time.** Every student-athlete enters the college sport environment with different resiliencies and vulnerabilities because of different individual, family, community and societal experiences and exposures over the course of their life^{1,5-7,11-15}. While data from the [2022 ACHA-NCHA survey](#) suggests collegiate sport participation may be a possible protective factor for mental health, student-athletes continue to report mental health concerns¹⁶.

Sport settings differ for each student-athlete and include risk and protective factors for mental health at multiple levels: individual, team, athletics department, campus and societal factors¹⁵⁻⁶. At its best, sport can help college student-athletes learn important mental skills, build strong team relationships and experience growth and confidence that they can carry with them outside of sport. It can also be a setting for destigmatizing mental health help-seeking and helping connect student-athletes with the mental health resources they need to thrive.

- **Coaches play an important role in student-athlete mental health and well-being.** Coaches have the potential to play a critical role in creating healthy, positive team environments that support mental health and promote help-seeking behavior⁵⁻⁶. The mental health and well-being of coaches and staff can be a contributing factor to healthy team environments. Promoting and supporting the mental health and well-being of coaches and staff is an important consideration for creating healthy, positive team environments that support student-athlete mental health.

- **Mental and physical health are inextricably linked.** Student-athletes who experience anxiety or depression, misuse substances or have disordered eating behaviors may be at elevated risk of injury to musculoskeletal and/or other body systems^{2,3,11,13,17-19}. Additionally, the student-athlete's psychological response to injury may impact their mental health; injured student-athletes are at elevated risk of experiencing symptoms of depression or anxiety, substance misuse or disordered eating behaviors^{2,11}. Insomnia and sleep disorders can be both an indicator of and risk factor for mental health disorders and may also compromise academic and athletic performance^{3,20}.

- **Discrimination, maltreatment and psychosocial trauma negatively impact mental health.** Experiences of highly acute or chronic stressors can have lasting psychosocial impacts that elevate risk of mental health difficulties^{3,14,19}. This includes the chronic, or in some cases acutely traumatic stressor of discrimination. Discrimination is unjust differences in treatment related to race, ethnicity, nationality, gender identity and presentation, sexual orientation, disability or other personal characteristics and identities²¹. Student-athletes who experience discrimination based on their identities, which are intersectional, are at increased risk of poor mental health. In addition to discrimination, student-athletes may also have experienced other traumatic or chronic stressors that negatively impact their mental health^{3,7,22-25}. This includes but is not limited to non-accidental violence such as harassment, bullying, abuse, neglect, interpersonal violence, sexual violence, hazing or other forms of maltreatment, as well as experiences of childhood adversity^{14,19}.

Member schools can play an important role in limiting the impact of such stressors by creating an inclusive and equitable sport environment that is responsive to the heightened needs of individuals who have experienced or are experiencing discrimination, maltreatment and/or traumatic or chronic psychosocial stressors. Diversity in licensed mental health provider characteristics, such

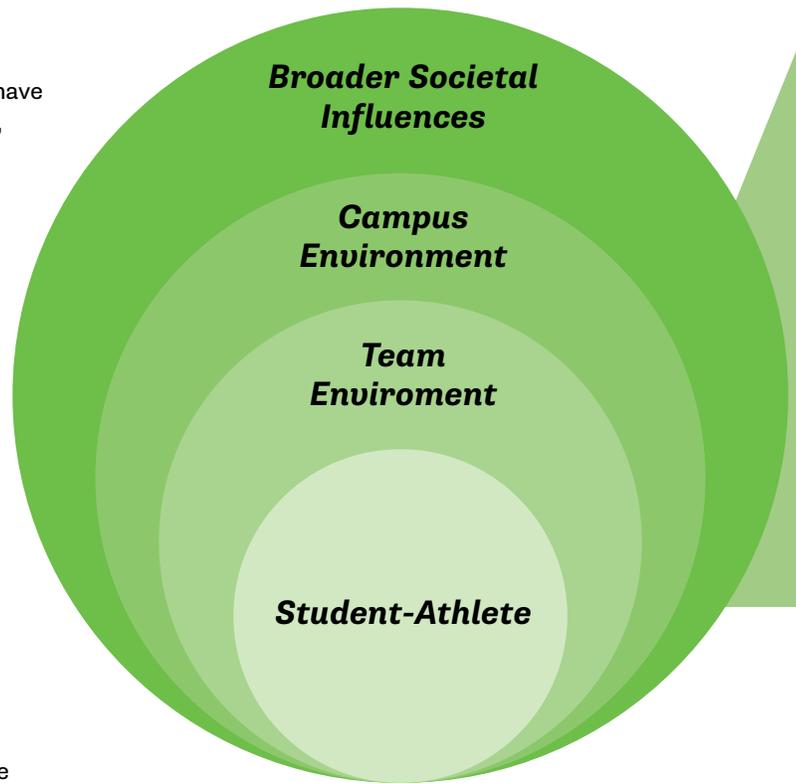


Fig. 2: Student-athletes exist in a multitude of intersecting environments that may impact their mental health and wellness. The team environment includes coaches and teammates, while societal influences may include state and federal laws.

as aspects of provider identity, clinical competencies and modalities of care, can play an important role in best meeting the mental health needs of all student-athletes.

- **Social media is an evolving and concerning risk factor for poor mental health.** According to the [U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on Social Media and Youth Mental Health](#), youth have "nearly universal" social media use, with 95% of youth reporting using social media⁹. Initial research has suggested that while social media use may have some potential benefits, it also poses risk factors for youth and may perpetuate systemic racism and discrimination^{1,9-10}. For student-athletes, it is possible these risk factors are magnified by their intersection with other rapidly evolving areas of college sports, such as opportunities for student-athletes to be compensated for their name, image and likeness, as well as sports wagering^{3,26}. For example, some student-athletes may experience greater external pressures related to performance, body image and self-presentation that have implications for identity, stress and interpersonal relationships. Further research is needed on this topic.

- **Collaboration and continuous improvement are essential.** Student-athlete mental health and well-being is best served through a collaborative process that engages the full complement of available campus and community resources, which may include athletics, campus health, counseling services, disability services and community agencies^{3,5,27}. Identifying and integrating available resources, fostering strong working relationships across these areas and building a collaborative model of care is critical to maximizing the support of student-athlete wellness.

A commitment to continuous improvement is needed to meet the changing mental health needs of student-athletes^{3,5,27}. Continuous improvement can be viewed as an ongoing cycle of implementation, information gathering and subsequent changes based on evaluation of that information. Diversity, equity and inclusion should be an intentional consideration across all continuous improvement activities; student-athlete input and the inclusion of under-represented voices are important to continuous improvement efforts. Resources and needs will change over time, as should approaches to mental health promotion and prevention. Additional considerations for continuous improvement are noted within each best practice.



Mental Health Best Practices

Best Practice 1

Create Healthy Environments That Support Mental Health and Promote Well-Being

Recommendation: Schools should have a written plan related to mental health promotion efforts that is responsive to risk and protective factors at multiple levels, including individual, team, athletics department, campus and societal factors. This plan should be developed in collaboration with a licensed mental health care provider. Diversity, equity and inclusion are important influences on mental health and well-being that should be addressed in this plan.

CORE COMPONENTS:

- **Plan is developed in collaboration with a licensed mental health care provider.** The athletics environment can help support positive mental health and psychological well-being among all student-athletes by normalizing care-seeking and fostering experiences and interactions that promote personal growth, self-acceptance, autonomy and positive relations with others¹⁷. While many stakeholders may be involved in identifying school-specific needs and opportunities for mental health promotion, a licensed mental health care provider should be included in development and approval of this plan.
- **Plan is multilevel.** Risk and protective factors for mental health occur at multiple levels (individual, team, athletics department, campus and societal), meaning a multilevel approach is needed when creating a health-promoting environment. This means that educating only one group of stakeholders or addressing only one form of pressure or support is not sufficient for optimizing student-athlete mental health and well-being.
- **Plan addresses diversity, equity and inclusion.** Diversity, equity and inclusion are critical for health-promoting environments and should be considered across campus settings. Attention should be paid to creating an inclusive environment for all student-athletes, including underrepresented groups, by considering how individuals can be supported through team, athletics and campus culture, as well as how policies and practices related to staffing can create an inclusive environment.

ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER:

- **Train and support coaches.** Coaches play a critical role in creating healthy, positive team environments that support mental health help-seeking when necessary. Schools should consider providing coaches annual professional development related to their role in mental health promotion. Relevant topics may evolve to meet emergent coach needs and could include mental health first aid; mental health literacy; trauma-informed coaching; cultural sensitivity; empathic listening; and resources for promotion and support of coach mental health.
- **Attend to the unique needs of student-athletes who have experienced or are experiencing psychosocial trauma.** Athlete-facing staff may be better positioned to meet the needs of student-athletes who have experienced or are experiencing discrimination, maltreatment and/or forms of psychosocial trauma if they have a working knowledge of trauma-informed approaches. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), key principles of a trauma-informed approach include an emphasis on: (1) safety; (2) trustworthiness and transparency; (3) peer support; (4) collaboration and mutuality; (5) empowerment, voice and choice; and (6) cultural, historical and gender issues.
- **Focus on sleep.** Student-athletes, coaches and others who work with student-athletes or who oversee practice, competition and travel schedule for student-athletes, may benefit from annual education about the importance of sleep for health and performance and strategies for improving sleep hygiene.
- **Provide guidance and support related to social media and Name, Image and Likeness.** Guidance and support related to social media and NIL is an important consideration for helping student-athletes navigate these evolving spaces and opportunities in a way that is supportive of good mental health. Regular feedback from student-athletes about the guidance and support they receive related to social media and NIL is an important consideration for continuous improvement to ensure student-athlete needs are being met.

- **Engage families and prospective student-athletes.** Athletic prospective student-athletes and the families of prospective student-athletes may benefit from receiving information about the campus and athletic department mental health resources and their mental health promotion and prevention initiatives.
- **Support student-athletes experiencing a transition in sport.** Transition in or from sport, including but not limited to injury, transfer, being cut from a team and/or graduation, can increase risk for psychological distress among student-athletes. Member schools should consider developing a written plan for how student-athletes are supported in preparing for a successful transition in or from sport. Examples include identifying programming and practices across a student-athlete's career that can help build a well-rounded identity, as well as help student-athletes learn how to apply positive mental skills learned in sport to non-sport challenges.
- **Considerations for continuous improvement strategies.** Ongoing continuous improvement helps to ensure each member school's written health promotion plan meets the evolving needs of student-athletes and may include monitoring and responding to the dynamic multilevel risk and protective factors for student-athlete mental health and well-being. Diversity, equity and inclusion should be an intentional consideration across all continuous improvement activities, as should the inclusion of student-athlete input.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

For additional resources to assist with creating healthy environments that support mental health and promote well-being, please see:

- Mental Health Best Practices Checklist.
- Resource page.



Procedures for Identification of Student-Athletes with Mental Health Symptoms and Disorders, Including Mental Health Screening Tools

Recommendation: Identification of student-athletes with mental health symptoms and disorders may occur in multiple settings; however, screening for mental health symptoms and disorders is one important way to identify student-athletes who may benefit from further support. Using a validated screening tool, all student-athletes should be screened for psychological distress at least once annually. Screening tools should be used in consultation with the primary athletics health care provider and/or licensed mental health provider.

CORE COMPONENTS:

- Screening tools used in consultation with primary athletics health care provider and/or licensed mental health provider.** Examples of validated screening tools are provided for consideration on the resources page. Decisions related to mental health screening tools should be made in consultation with the primary athletics health care providers and the licensed mental health care providers who are qualified to oversee and manage mental health care services to student-athletes. Such decisions may include what mental health signs and symptoms or disorders student-athletes are screened for, how often and when they receive screening, who responds to screening tools and how screening tools are incorporated into referral pathways (please see Building Block 3 for additional discussion).
- Use validated screening tools.** Screening should use validated questionnaires or other validated clinical approaches. Validated means there is reputable scientific evidence that the tool measures what it says it is supposed to measure.
- Screen for psychological distress.** There are many mental health symptoms and disorders and other aspects of mental health and well-being that can be measured using validated screening tools. At a minimum, screening should be used to identify individuals experiencing psychological distress who would benefit from further evaluation.
- Screen all student-athletes at least once annually.** Schools may opt for screening at differing and/or multiple time periods; however, all student-athletes should be screened for mental health symptoms at least once annually. For example, screening could occur routinely in conjunction with a pre-participation examination, with additional screening considered during high stress times such as exams, while experiencing injury or after a traumatic event.

ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER:

- **Screen for specific mental health disorders and risk factors.** Schools may select different approaches to screening based on needs and resources. In addition to identifying student-athletes experiencing psychological distress who would benefit from further evaluation, other screening measures may be considered. Use of disorder-specific screening tools may provide greater sensitivity in the initial screening phase. Additionally, screening that addresses social determinants of health can help identify risk factors for psychological distress, such as screening for food or housing insecurity, racism and sexual violence.
- **Consider populations in which screening tools have been validated.** While all screening methods should use validated questionnaires or other validated clinical approaches, additional priority may be considered to screening approaches that have evidence of validity in diverse and/or athlete populations.
- **Work with student-athletes to foster trust.** To increase student-athlete trust and buy-in of mental health screening, member schools may consider sharing information about screening-related activities with student-athletes on an annual basis. Such information sharing may include the purpose of screening and what happens after screening is completed, noting mental health as a component of health and safety and providing reassurance that screening is not performed for reasons of determining athletic performance opportunities, eligibility or scholarship status. As part of this process, respect for student-athlete privacy in the data collection process must be considered.
- **Address mental health literacy.** In addition to screening, all athlete-facing staff at member schools have the potential to help identify individuals at risk of mental health difficulties. Completion of an evidence-based mental health literacy training is an important way

to help staff build skills in identification of the signs and symptoms of mental health disorders.

- **Considerations for continuous improvement strategies.** Ongoing continuous improvement is needed to ensure mental health screening is meeting student-athlete and member school needs. Continuous improvement may include monitoring trends in how and when student-athletes are screened for psychological distress and identifying opportunities for screening-related process improvement and responding accordingly.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

For additional resources to assist with creating health-promoting environments that support mental health and promote well-being, please see:

- Mental Health Best Practices Checklist.
- Resource page.



Mental Health Action Plans that Outline Referral Pathways of Student-Athletes to Qualified Providers

Recommendation: All member schools should have written and rehearsed mental health action plans with well-defined pathways to mental health care, addressing both routine and emergency mental health care needs. While mental health action plans will look different across schools as a result of differences in organizational structures and in campus and community resources for mental health care, all mental health action plans should address the full spectrum of care from identification of student-athletes with mental health symptoms and disorders to ongoing treatment, follow-up and reentry when indicated.

CORE COMPONENTS:

- **Action plans address full spectrum of care.** Mental health action plans should discuss ways in which student-athletes with mental health symptoms and disorders are identified and referred to licensed and qualified mental health care providers for further evaluation, ongoing treatment, follow-up and reentry when indicated. Referral pathways should include student-athlete self-referral as well as the time frame and logistics for which member schools respond to validated mental health screening tools.
- **Action plans address emergency mental health care needs.** Emergency Mental Health Action Plans include the full spectrum of care for student-athletes with emergency mental health care needs. Emergency mental health care needs should be defined in the action plan and include but are not limited to suicidal and/or homicidal ideation; victims of sexual assault with clarification regarding exemption from mandated reporting in this context; highly agitated or threatening behavior; acute psychosis or paranoia; acute delirium/confused state; and acute intoxication or drug overdose.
- **Action plans address routine mental health care needs.** Routine Mental Health Action Plans include the full spectrum of care for student-athletes with non-emergent mental health care needs.
- **Action plans are written and rehearsed.** All member schools should have written documentation of their action plans, as well as plans for when and how action plans will be rehearsed.

ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER:

- **In developing the action plan, recognize that student-athletes may have experienced or be experiencing psychosocial trauma.** An important consideration for developing mental health action plans is incorporating trauma-informed practices. This means prioritizing student-athlete safety and trust, striving to provide athletes with choice and opportunities for empowerment in the care process and attending to racial, cultural, historical and gender factors that may impact identification, referral and treatment of mental health concerns.
- **Conduct regular outreach about the action plan.** Annual outreach about mental health action plans to all stakeholders is an important consideration for successful implementation. Important aspects of supporting learning and skill building about mental health action plan implementation include knowing one's role in the action plan and being able to successfully apply one's role within mock practice scenarios individually and as part of the action plan team. Outreach about mental health action plans, including scenarios for rehearsals, should consider centering on the experiences and needs of higher risk student-athletes.
- **Make sure the action plan is easily usable.** Schools should consider preparing a brief visual summary of mental health action plans. Examples of visual communication strategies include decision trees and flow charts. This brief visual summary should include emergency services numbers (e.g., 911 and 988).
- **Create a post-crisis action plan.** An important aspect of mental health action plans is addressing how student-athletes, coaches and others in the athletics department will be supported in a crisis or other highly stressful or traumatic event, including discriminatory events, death by suicide, campus violence, natural disaster and other traumatic events. Suicide contagion, defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as, "the process by which suicide or suicidal behavior influences an increase in the suicidal behaviors of others," is an important consideration in post-crisis plan creation³⁰.
- **Consider non-clinical aspects of care.** Member schools may benefit from having action plans consider the possible role of a multidisciplinary team to assist in addressing non-clinical needs of student-athletes, such as care coordination, addressing non-clinical psychosocial needs and addressing co-morbid physical health needs. For example, a student-athlete may have

a comorbid musculoskeletal injury, nutritional disorder or other physical health care needs. The composition of care teams will vary by student-athlete need and campus and community resources. Coordinating and managing mental health care should be distinguished from more formal evaluation and treatment of student-athletes with mental health disorders or mental illness.

- **Consult with campus disability services.** Consulting with campus disability services may be advantageous in better understanding how disability-related accommodations or more accessible practices may mitigate the impact of mental health symptoms and disorders. When student-athletes indicate that they are anxious or depressed or exhibit concerning behaviors, disability services may be able to determine a reasonable accommodation or advise on more inclusive and accessible strategies.

- **Considerations for continuous improvement strategies.** To ensure action plans are responsive to student-athlete and school needs, a commitment to continuous improvement is needed. This means regularly reviewing action plan implementation, obtaining regular feedback about awareness and understanding of mental health action plans and learning how action plans are experienced by different groups of student-athletes and other stakeholders, with an emphasis on experiences of individuals with diverse identities.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

For additional resources to assist with creating health promoting environments that support mental health and promote well-being, please see:

- Mental Health Best Practices Checklist.
- Resource page.



Licensure of Providers Who Oversee and Manage Student-Athlete Mental Health Care

Recommendation: Formal evaluation and treatment of student-athletes with mental health symptoms and disorders should be performed by a licensed mental health provider acting within the scope of activities covered by their clinical licensure. The licensed provider who is qualified to provide mental health services may be employed by the athletics department, sports medicine department or by an administrative unit outside of athletics such as student health services or campus counseling. The provider may also be a local, off-campus provider or telehealth provider.

CORE COMPONENTS:

- **Licensure of mental health care provider.** Formal evaluation and treatment of student-athletes with mental health symptoms and disorders should be performed by qualified mental health providers acting within the scope of their licensure. The licensed provider must adhere to all guidelines for ethical practice of their respective association and state licensing boards.

ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER:

- **Recognize accessibility and the value of choice.** Student-athletes may benefit from having accessible options for mental health care. Where there are multiple options for licensed mental health care providers, important considerations for who provides care include student-athlete needs and preferences, as well as provider characteristics. Provider characteristics may include, but are not limited to, aspects of their identity, clinical competencies and modalities of care.

- **Work toward a diverse and culturally responsive staff.** Schools should consider reviewing their policies and practices for recruiting, hiring and retaining licensed mental health providers to prioritize cultural sensitivity issues that address diversity, equity and inclusion. Such cultural sensitivity issues include, but are not limited to race, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity and disability status. Professional development training in cultural humility related to minoritized identities may be helpful, as well as professional development opportunities related to the culture of sport and athletics.
- **Considerations for continuous improvement strategies.** As part of ongoing continuous improvement efforts, schools should consider engaging in regular audits of wait times for student-athletes to access mental health care and engage in efforts to increase timely access to care. Regular feedback from student-athletes about their experiences is an important component of continuous improvement, being mindful that approaches to collecting student-athlete data must respect for student-athlete privacy in data collection.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

For additional resources to assist with creating health promoting environments that support mental health and promote well-being, please see:

- Mental Health Best Practices Checklist.
- Resource page.

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Checklist

MENTAL HEALTH BEST PRACTICES CHECKLIST: BEST PRACTICES FOR MEMBER SCHOOLS IN SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING STUDENT-ATHLETE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

This checklist serves as a supplement to the Mental Health Best Practices, Second Edition, and is intended to aid membership in implementation of Mental Health Best Practices; it is not intended to serve as a stand-alone document. Completion of the Mental Health Best Practices Checklist should be done in accordance with the best practice recommendations and foundational principles discussed in the Mental Health Best Practices.

Best Practice 1:

Create Healthy Environments That Support Mental Health and Promote Well-Being

CORE COMPONENTS:

- A written plan that is developed in collaboration with a licensed mental health care provider.
- Plan includes multiple levels for mental health promotion programming, such as:
 - Individual student-athletes.
 - Teams and the personnel that comprise them.
 - Athletics departments.
 - Campus culture and policy.
 - Community, state and federal culture and policy.
- Plan considers diversity, equity and inclusion throughout all aspects of health promoting environments.

ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER:

- Train and support coaches about mental health and their role in mental health promotion. Relevant topics may include mental health first aid, mental health literacy, trauma-informed coaching, cultural sensitivity, empathic listening and resources for supporting and promoting coach mental health.
- Provide opportunity for athlete-facing staff to have a working knowledge of trauma-informed approaches.
- Provide annual education about the importance of sleep for health and performance and strategies for improving sleep hygiene.
- Provide guidance and support related to social media and NIL.
- Engage recruits and their families through sharing information about mental health resources and mental health promotion initiatives.
- Develop a written plan to support student-athletes in preparing for a successful transition in or from sport.
- Consider continuous improvement processes that consider dynamic multilevel risk and protective factors of student-athlete mental health and well-being.

Best Practice 2:

Procedures for Identification of Student-Athletes With Mental Health Symptoms and Disorders, Including Mental Health Screening Tools

CORE COMPONENTS:

- Use validated screening tools as part of a process to identify student-athletes experiencing psychological distress.
- Screen all student-athletes at least once annually, with consideration for pre-participation examination screening as a baseline.
- Screening is used in consultation with a licensed mental health care provider.

ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER:

- In addition to screening for psychological distress, screen for specific mental health disorders and risk factors.
- Use screening tools that have athlete-relevant cut points and/or screening tools that have been validated diverse populations.
- To foster trust with student-athletes, share screening information with student-athletes on an annual basis, including the purpose of screening and what happens after screening.
- Have athlete-facing staff complete evidence-based training in mental health literacy.
- Consider continuous improvement strategies that help ensure mental health screening is meeting student-athlete and member school needs.

Best Practice 3:

Mental Health Action Plans That Outline Referral Pathways of Student-Athletes to Qualified Providers

CORE COMPONENTS:

- Have written action plans for routine and emergency mental health care needs.
- Action plans address the full spectrum of mental health care, including:
 - How student-athletes with mental health symptoms are identified.
 - When and how they are referred for mental health care, including evaluation, ongoing treatment, follow up and reentry when indicated.
 - Who is involved in the identification, referral and care process.
- Action plans provide well-defined considerations for what constitutes a routine and/or emergency mental health condition.
- Action plans discuss opportunities for regular outreach, including communication, rehearsal and ongoing continuous improvement.

ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER:

- Recognize that student-athletes may have experienced or be experiencing maltreatment and/or psychosocial trauma by prioritizing student-athlete safety and trust, empowering athletes in the care process and attending to cultural and individual identity factors.
- Conduct annual outreach about action plans to all stakeholders involved.
- Provide a brief visual summary of the action plan(s).
- Include post-crisis support in the action plan(s).
- Consider non-clinical aspects of care.
- Consult with campus disability services.
- Continuous improvement strategies could consider how action plans are understood, implemented and experienced.

Best Practice 4:

Licensure of Providers Who Oversee and Manage Student-Athlete Mental Health Care

CORE COMPONENTS:

- Formal evaluation and treatment of student-athletes with mental health symptoms should be performed by qualified mental health care providers acting within the scope of their clinical licensure.

ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER:

- Recognize the value of accessible providers and student-athlete choice of provider in the care process.
- Prioritize cultural sensitivity in recruitment, hiring, retention and professional development of licensed mental health care providers.
- Continuous improvement strategies could consider student-athlete experiences with accessing and utilizing mental health services, while being mindful of student-athlete privacy.



Resource Page

Additional resources for consideration in support of the Mental Health Best Practices can be found online using the QR code at right or by visiting ncaa.org/mentalhealth. Resources include educational materials and implementation strategies to supplement concepts discussed in the Mental Health Best Practices.



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Concussion Safety

What Is a Concussion?

Concussion is a mild traumatic brain injury that results from either a direct blow to the head or an impulsive force to the body that causes significant head motion. Concussion symptoms can result immediately or develop over many hours.

Additional information on concussion diagnosis, management and prevention in collegiate athletes, including a complete definition of concussion, can be found [here](#).

How Can I Tell If an Athlete Has a Concussion?

You may notice the athlete has a change in behavior or balance following a hit or impact, or other manifestations such as:

- Appears dazed or stunned.
- Forgets an instruction.
- Is confused about an assignment or position.
- Is unsure of the game, score or opponent.
- Appears less coordinated, unsteady on feet or wobbly.
- Answers questions slowly.
- Loses consciousness.

The athlete may tell you he or she is experiencing ...

- A headache, head pressure or that he or she doesn't feel right following a blow to the head.
- Nausea.
- Balance problems or dizziness.
- Double or blurry vision.
- Sensitivity to light or noise.
- Feeling sluggish, hazy or foggy.
- Confusion, concentration or memory problems.

What Happens If an Athlete Gets a Concussion and Keeps Practicing or Competing?

- Due to brain vulnerability after a concussion, an athlete may be more likely to suffer another concussion while symptomatic from the first one.
- In rare cases, repeat head trauma can result in brain swelling, permanent brain damage or even death.
- Continuing to play after a concussion increases the chance of sustaining other injuries too, not just concussion.
- Athletes with a concussion have reduced concentration and slowed reaction time. This means they won't be performing at their best.
- Athletes who delay reporting concussion may take longer to recover fully.



What Is the Recovery Time for a Concussion?

- Each athlete is different, but emerging information indicates that most athletes fully recover from concussion.
- Some athletes experience persisting post-concussive symptoms, which are managed with exercise and targeted treatment.
- If an athlete's symptoms persist, they may also have another treatable condition unrelated to their concussion. If the athlete is experiencing any ongoing symptoms, they should seek medical care with the team physician.

What Do I Need to Know About Repeated Head Impacts?

- Research into the new concept of repeated head impacts is evolving rapidly.
- Most head impacts in sport occur at low levels well below the force needed to cause a sports-related concussion.
- The medical and scientific community continues to conduct research to determine if long-term exposure to head impacts may be deleterious to brain health.
- While many questions remain unanswered, the NCAA Concussion Checklist recommends that efforts should be made to reduce head impact exposure in both practice and game settings.

No two concussions are the same. Symptoms may appear several hours after the initial impact or even the next day. Symptoms may also evolve over several days. All possible concussions must be evaluated by an athletic trainer or team physician (or physician designee) with concussion experience.

Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (“CTE”)

- In recent years, there has been ongoing research into CTE, and more research is needed to answer important questions.
- According to the Centers for Disease Control website, research-to-date suggests that CTE is associated with long-term exposure to repeated head impacts at levels that would cause brain injury.
- According to the CDC, there is no strong scientific evidence that shows that getting one or more concussions (or other mild traumatic brain injuries) or occasional hits to the head leads to CTE.

More research is needed to better understand:

- The causes of CTE, including the role of repeated head impacts.
- Other potential risk factors for CTE, including the role of a person’s sex, genetics, medical history, and environmental and lifestyle factors.
- How the CTE pathology develops, and what symptoms CTE pathology may cause.
- Why some people develop CTE and others do not.

You can find more information on the emerging CTE research at various sources including the [CDC](#), [NINDS](#) and the [Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport](#).

Did You Know?

- Most contact or collision teams have at least one student-athlete diagnosed with a concussion every season.
- Your school has a concussion management plan, and team physicians and athletic trainers are expected to follow that plan during a student-athlete’s recovery.
- NCAA rules require that team physicians and athletic trainers have the unchallengeable authority to make all medical management and return-to-sport decisions for student-athletes.
- We’re learning more about concussion every day. To find out more about the largest concussion study ever conducted, which is being led by the NCAA and U.S. Department of Defense, visit ncaa.org/concussion.



What Can I Do to Keep Athletes Safe?

	Preseason	In-Season	Time of Injury	Recovery
What can I do?	Create a culture in which concussion reporting is encouraged and promoted.	Know the signs and symptoms of concussions.	Remove athletes from play immediately if you think they have a concussion and refer them to the team physician or athletic trainer.	Follow the recovery and return-to-sport protocol established by team physicians and athletic trainers.
Why does it matter?	Athletes who don’t immediately seek care for a suspected concussion take longer to recover.	The more people who know what to look for in a concussed athlete, the more likely a concussion will be identified.	Early removal from play can mean a quicker recovery and help avoid further, potentially serious injury.	Team physicians and athletic trainers have the training to follow best practices related to the concussion recovery process.
Tips and strategies	Be present when your team physician or athletic trainer provides concussion education material to your team. Tell your team that this matters to you.	Check in with your team physician or athletic trainer if you want to learn more about concussion safety.	Provide positive reinforcement when an athlete reports a suspected concussion.	Tell athletes that health decisions, including clearance for unrestricted return to sport are determined by the team physician and athletic trainer.

You play a powerful role in setting the tone for concussion safety on your team. Let your team know that you take concussion seriously and reporting the symptoms of a suspected concussion is an important part of your team’s values.



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SLEEP AND WELLNESS FOR COLLEGIATE ATHLETES

WHY does sleep matter for collegiate athletes?

Athletic performance ▶ Poor sleep is associated with delayed response time, fatigue and poor decision-making.

Injury risk and recovery ▶ Athletes who are sleep deprived have an elevated risk of musculoskeletal injury and delayed recovery following injuries.

Academic performance ▶ Sleep deprivation impairs cognitive performance and is linked to lower GPA.

Mental health ▶ Inadequate sleep increases the risk for mental health symptoms and disorders, and mental health symptoms and disorders may reduce sleep quality and quantity.

Are student-athletes getting *ENOUGH* sleep?

On average, in-season student-athletes are getting **6.27 hours of sleep nightly**¹ while 8 hours of sleep are recommended.

61% of student-athletes report daytime fatigue at least three or more days in the past week², while 19% of male and 23% of female student-athletes reported difficulty sleeping at least eight of the past 30 days¹.



WHAT are recommendations for restorative sleep?

1. **Try to maintain a regular sleep schedule**, including on weekends. If this is not possible, establish a bedtime routine that can be practiced regularly.
2. **Seek bright light during the day**, especially in the morning, and try to **avoid bright and blue light at night**. This is especially important later at night, when bright and blue light can further delay sleep onset.
3. The **bedroom should be cool** (less than 68 degrees), **dark and comfortable**.
4. **Caffeine** (e.g., coffee, energy drinks and certain types of sodas and teas) **should be avoided at least six hours before bedtime**. Nicotine is also a stimulant and should be avoided. Alcohol may reduce time to fall asleep, but it can adversely impact sleep quality and should be avoided close to bedtime.
5. Consumption of **excessive food and liquids at night should be avoided**, as these may disrupt sleep.
6. **Avoid obsessive clock watching**. Often, looking at the clock at night can increase mental activity and anxiety, and make resuming sleep more difficult.
7. Individuals who have difficulty falling asleep should **generally avoid naps**. However, sleep-deprived individuals may find that short-duration napping during the day may improve performance and functioning.
8. **Beds should be used for sleep-related activities only**. Other activities such as reading and watching TV, especially if lying awake and unable to sleep, should be done out of the bed. Those who have difficulty falling asleep should get out of bed for a period of time and try again later. This practice (called stimulus control) is supported by strong evidence that it will help prevent insomnia and improve sleep quality over time.

¹ NCAA. NCAA GOALS Study, 2015 [data file]. Indianapolis: IN: NCAA, (2016-01-05).

² American College Health Association. *American College Health Association-National College Health Assessment, Fall 2015, Spring 2016, Fall 2016, Spring 2017, Fall 2017* [data file]. Hanover, MD: American College Health Association [producer and distributor], (2018-11-15).

Harm Reduction Considerations for Gambling & Sports Betting in Collegiate Sports

This document discusses harm reduction strategies in the context of gambling and sports betting in collegiate sports and provides relevant resources. The information provided is resultant from discussions of the NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports.

Gambling & Sports Betting in Collegiate Sports

Gambling and sports betting are widespread on college campuses.

- Results of the [NCAA Sports Betting Activities Survey \(2023\)](#) showed over half of 18-22 year-olds in the United States have engaged in sports betting, with 62% of those bettors identifying as degree-seeking students.
- Results from the [NCAA Student-Athlete Gambling and Sports Betting Behaviors Study \(2024\)](#), indicate 22% of student-athletes participating in men's sports and 5% of student-athletes participating in women's sports have gambled on sports in the past year.

Collegiate populations, specifically men, have the highest incidence of sports betting and are more likely to be predisposed to problem gambling than the general population.

- Six to 10 percent of college students are predisposed to problem gambling compared to ~2-3% of the general population.

Gambling and sports betting can present risk at multiple levels of collegiate sport.

- At the individual level, student-athletes who gamble may experience problematic gambling behaviors or develop gambling disorder, a mental health condition recognized by the American Psychological Association, which often co-occurs with other mental health conditions (e.g., anxiety, depression and sleep disturbances).
- Student-athletes, including those who do not gamble, may experience harassment from sports bettors. The [NCAA Online Abuse in NCAA Championships Study \(2024\)](#) found that 12% of online harassment directed at student-athletes, coaches and officials was related to sports betting.

Generally, policy prohibitions on gambling, without other interventions, are ineffective at reducing gambling-related behavior, and it is unclear how deregulation could impact gambling behaviors.

Gambling and sports betting can present risk at multiple levels of collegiate sport.

Harm-Reduction Strategies

As noted in its discussions on other health promotion topics (e.g., cannabinoids), the NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports has identified harm-reduction strategies as particularly useful when prohibitions and/or penalties have proven ineffective.

Broadly speaking, harm-reduction strategies foster prevention, risk reduction and health promotion.

- Harm-reduction strategies acknowledge actual behaviors (e.g., some student-athletes do bet on sports) and attempt to meet individuals where they are.
- Abstinence can be one approach included in harm-reduction strategies.

Research has demonstrated that harm-reduction approaches offer more effective and long-term benefits for college-aged individuals not seen with abstinence-only approaches.

Emerging adulthood is a critical developmental period that includes establishing lifelong health-related behaviors and harm-reduction strategies can serve as an important tool to support the development of those behaviors.

Harm-reduction strategies are and will remain important in supporting student-athlete health and well-being, regardless of deregulation of NCAA sports-betting legislation.

Research has demonstrated that harm-reduction approaches offer more effective and long-term benefits for college-aged individuals not seen with abstinence-only approaches.



Applying Harm-Reduction Strategies to Gambling & Sports Betting

Harm-reduction strategies applicable to gambling and sports betting, as discussed by CSMAS, include:

Stigma Reduction

Significant stigma exists around the self-reporting of problem gambling behaviors, which can exacerbate harm. Use of stigma-reducing language when discussing gambling and sports betting can impact individual's likelihood to seek help.

- The National Council on Problem Gambling provides examples of [person-first language in discussing gambling disorders](#).
- [Words Matter – Terms to Use and Avoid When Talking about Addiction](#) includes two resources (one for providers and one for patients) from the National Institute on Drug Abuse that provides information and tips to reduce stigma and negative bias when discussing addiction.
- The [NCAA Guidance on Inclusive Language](#) offers considerations for using language to foster environments of belonging.

Education

Provide or increase education (for student-athletes, administrators and coaches) on gambling and sports betting and its potential risks to individuals, teammates and their broader community.

CSMAS noted NCAA research that demonstrated student-athletes are less likely to wager on sports if they receive education on the topic.

- Consider providing education at multiple points throughout the academic year and through different methods (e.g., in-person training, learning module, via coach, peer educators, flyers, etc.). More information on available educational resources is included in the Mental Health Best Practices section below.

Mental Health Best Practices

Implement the [NCAA Mental Health Best Practices](#) (and other mental health resources) with consideration for gambling and sports betting.



FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

The foundational principles of the Mental Health Best Practices discuss important risk and protective factors that may play a role in student-athlete mental health.

In the context of gambling and sports betting, examples may include, but are not limited to:

- Emerging adulthood is a critical developmental period in which health-related behaviors are established, and it is also a common time for mental health challenges to emerge.
- Student-athletes who experience discrimination, harassment, bullying and/or other forms of maltreatment are at elevated risk of having negative mental health outcomes.
- Social media poses risk factors, including the perpetuation of systemic racism and discrimination.

The foundational principles of the Mental Health Best Practices discuss important risk and protective factors that may play a role in student-athlete mental health.



BEST PRACTICE 1: CREATING HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

Incorporate gambling and sports betting into written multilevel (e.g., community, campus, athletics, team, individual) health promotion plans that are developed in collaboration with a licensed mental health provider.

Examples of this could include, but are not limited to:

Provide guidance and support to student-athletes related to social media use and work with campus partners in developing protocols for threat reporting.

- Signify Group [Threat Matrix](#) provides services to investigate online harassment in college sports.
- [Moonshot](#) provides services regarding threat monitoring and online violence prevention.

Educate student-athletes and coaches on gambling and sports betting and its intersection with student-athlete mental health.

- The [NCAA Draw the Line Campaign](#) prioritizes student-athlete education on the effects of sports betting.
- The [NCAA Sports Betting webpage](#) provides educational resources, including e-modules for student-athlete and coaches.
- The NCAA works with [EPIC Global Solutions](#) to provide educational programs for members of the Association.
- The [Summary of Findings – Slides for Member Schools](#) provides key findings from the Trends in NCAA Student-Athlete Gambling and Sports Betting Behaviors Study.

Provide staff education on culturally sensitive and trauma-informed practices.

The [NCAA Mental Health Best Practices webpage](#) offers resources for supporting and promoting student-athlete mental health, including [SAMHSA's Trauma Informed Care in Behavioral Health Services](#).

Incorporate gambling and sports betting into written multilevel health promotion plans that are developed in collaboration with a licensed mental health provider.





BEST PRACTICE 2: SCREENING AND IDENTIFICATION

While validated screening tools are not intended to be diagnostic, screening student-athletes for psychological distress at least once annually may help identify student-athletes experiencing problem gambling behavior, gambling disorder and/or related mental health conditions. Consider sports betting and gambling disorder in processes for identifying and screening student-athletes for mental health symptoms.

Examples of this could include, but are not limited to:

Collaborate with the primary athletics health care provider and/or licensed mental health provider to identify validated screening tools for psychological distress.

- The [International Olympic Committee Sport Mental Health Assessment Tool 1](#) is an assessment tool to identify athletes experiencing or at risk of experiencing mental health symptoms, including additional screening options for problem gambling.

Consider additional resources or screening to identify problem gambling behavior during times that are associated with higher participation in sports betting activities.

- The National Council on Problem Gambling provides online access to a [problem gambling self-assessment](#).

Consider additional resources for the identification of student-athletes who have experienced social media harassment or abuse related to sports betting.

While validated screening tools are not intended to be diagnostic, screening student-athletes for psychological distress at least once annually may help identify student-athletes experiencing problem gambling behavior, gambling disorder and/or related mental health conditions.



BEST PRACTICE 3: MENTAL HEALTH ACTION PLANS

Incorporate routine and emergency presentations of mental health symptoms related to sports betting into Mental Health Action Plans.

Examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- Determine the timeframe and logistics for responding to validated screening tools for problem gambling behavior.
- Establish pathways for referral of student-athletes with sports-betting related mental health symptoms, including self-referral, to a licensed mental health provider.
- Define what constitutes a mental health emergency related to gambling and sports betting and the logistics for responding.
- Conduct regular outreach about Mental Health Action Plans, including scenarios for rehearsal that incorporate sports betting related mental health symptoms.

Incorporate routine and emergency presentations of mental health symptoms related to sports betting into Mental Health Action Plans.



BEST PRACTICE 4: LICENSURE OF PROVIDERS

Formal evaluation and treatment of student-athletes with mental health symptoms and disorders, including those related to sports betting and/or problem gambling, should be performed by a licensed mental health provider acting within the scope of activities covered by their clinical licensure.

Examples may include:

- Formal evaluation of a student-athlete experiencing signs of anxiety, depression, and/or psychological distress after being harassed by a bettor.
- Formal evaluation of a student-athlete with signs of problem gambling behaviors.
- Ongoing management and treatment of a student-athlete with gambling disorder and comorbid substance use disorder.



Division III Grants, Programs, and Scholarships

Division III Professional Development Programs

- Athletic Communicators Emerging Elite Program
- Athletics Director Report Professional Development Program
- CSC Student Program
- Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR) Institute
- Institute for Administrative Advancement
- New Athletics Director Orientation
- Senior Woman Administrator Program
- Student Immersion Program



Division III Conference Strategic Initiatives Grant Program

NCAA Division III awards about \$4.2 million annually to conferences and the Association of Division III Independents to support educational initiatives that advance the Division III strategic plan. Grants encourage collaboration among presidents, athletics leaders, and student-athletes, with annual allocations typically ranging from \$84,000 to \$140,000 per conference.





2025-26 Division III Grants, Programs and Services: “Show Me the Money”
Please send all questions to DIIGovernance@ncaa.org

Opportunity	Description	Application/Deadline	Program Benefits
Division III Pathway to Excellence Grant	<p>This two-year grant is designated for Division III institutions and conference offices to hire 10-month full-time employees. Funding will cover the hired employee's salary (\$30,000) and \$3,000 to cover professional development activities. The institution or conference office will be responsible for providing an additional in-kind contribution of at least \$3,700 per year. Click here for additional details.</p>	<p><u>Application Period:</u> September to January</p>	<p>Attendance at in-person orientation at the NCAA (Aug.).</p> <p>Attendance at the NCAA Convention after year one.</p> <p>Attendance at Emerging Leaders in Sports.</p> <p>Designated mentor.</p> <p>Networking opportunities.</p>
Division III Strategic Alliance Matching Grant Program	<p>The Strategic Alliance Matching Grant provides funding for Division III institutions and conference offices for full-time professional positions in athletics administration. Each Division III institution and conference office selected to receive a matching grant will be funded for three years, with diminishing contributions by the NCAA. The NCAA will fund 75% of the position during the first year, 50% the second year and 25% during the third year. Click here for additional details.</p>	<p><u>Application Period:</u> September to January</p>	
Division III Coaching Enhancement Grant	<p>The Division III Coaching Enhancement Grant provides financial assistance to member schools committed to increasing representation in newly created assistant coaching positions for any NCAA-sponsored sport. This grant supports efforts in athletics coaching across Division III institutions. Click here for additional details.</p>	<p><u>Application Period:</u> September to January</p>	
Conference Grant Program (Strategic Initiatives Grant)	<p>NCAA Division III allocates over \$4 million annually directly to conference offices and Division III Independents to administer educational programs and services that best meet local needs in support of the Division III strategic plan. Click here for grant details and Tier amounts.</p>	<p><u>Requisition Forms due:</u> July 15</p> <p><u>Impact Forms due:</u> Aug. 1</p> <p><u>Third-party forms due:</u> Oct. 15</p>	<p>Annual funding of \$74,000 to \$142,000 per conference.</p> <p>Funding for professional development programs, SAAC, membership fees, officiating, championship enhancements, and initiatives.</p>

Opportunity	Description	Application/Deadline	Program Benefits
Division III FAR Institute	The mission of the Division III Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR) Institute is to provide a professional development opportunity for Division III FARs with the potential to positively impact their campus, conference, and the division. The NCAA funds travel, hotel, and meals for the 30-member cohort. Click here for more information.	Held annually. <u>Nomination Period:</u> July 1 to Aug. 15	Registration for FARA Fall Forum. Program held in conjunction with FARA Fall Forum. Networking opportunities.
Division III Athletics Direct Report Institute	The purpose of the Institute is to engage Division III ADRs in best practices to oversee and manage athletics departments, and to improve the relationships between ADRs and their presidents, athletics directors, and conference commissioners to enhance effectiveness of the ADR at the campus, conference, and national levels. The ADR Institute will accept up to 15 participants each year. All Division III ADRs, with no more than two years of experience in the ADR role are eligible to attend. Applications are accepted via Program Hub. The NCAA funds travel, hotel, and meals. Click here for more information.	<u>Nomination Period:</u> Aug. 1 to Sept. 15	Fee waiver to the NCAA Convention. Introduction to Division III governance structure. Networking opportunities.
Division III Senior Woman Administrator Program	The program's goal is to provide professional development and networking opportunities for SWAs, in particular those seeking to become athletics directors and/or conference commissioners. The NCAA funds travel, hotel, meals, and applicable registration fees for 30 participants. Click here for more information	<u>Nomination Period:</u> June 1 to July 15 (fall program with Women Leaders) Oct. 15 to Dec. 1 (spring program)	One-year membership fee waiver for Women Leaders in Sports for the year preceding the program. Access to Women Leaders Summer Institutes. Networking opportunities.
Division III Student Immersion Program	Students from various groups, preferably juniors and seniors, with a strong interest in a career in Division III athletics (coaching and/or administration) are encouraged to apply. The goal is to build a pipeline of candidates, with an interest in Division III coaching and/or administration, to elevate the participant's leadership skills. The NCAA funds travel, hotel, meals, and NCAA Convention registration fee for 40 participants. Click here for more information.	<u>Nomination Period:</u> Aug. 1 to Sept. 15	Opportunity to apply for the NCAA Career in Sports Forum. For seniors, resumes sent to Division III membership.

Opportunity	Description	Application/Deadline	Program Benefits
Athletic Communicators Emerging Elite Program	<p>The Athletic Communicators Emerging Elite program's goal is to provide professional development and networking opportunities for athletic communicators, particularly those early in their careers seeking to advance to a director-level position or those who have recently become a director. Topics discussed will cover a variety of professional development areas that may include leadership training, networking, positioning yourself to oversee a staff, collaborating with others, navigating expanded responsibilities and more. Click here for more information.</p>	<p><u>Nomination Period:</u> August to September</p>	<p>Professional development and networking with NCAA staff in Indianapolis.</p> <p>Opportunity to attend CSC Convention with one-time registration fee waiver.</p>
Division III Institute for Administrative Advancement	<p>The Division III Institute for Administrative Advancement seeks to provide professional development and networking opportunities for mid-level administrators in Division III athletics. Overall, the goal is to prepare participants to excel within their current role and ultimately, advance their position within Division III athletics. The Institute is held in conjunction with the NACDA Convention in June. The NCAA funds travel, hotel, meals, and applicable registration fees for 30 participants. Click here for more information.</p>	<p><u>Nomination Period:</u> Feb. 1 to Mar. 15</p>	<p>Participation in the MOAA Symposium.</p> <p>One-year membership fee waiver for the Minority Opportunities Athletic Association (MOAA).</p>
Division III College Sports Communicators Student Program	<p>Student-athletes, preferably juniors and seniors, with a strong interest in a career in Division III athletics communication are encouraged to apply. The goal is to build a pipeline of candidates, with an interest in Division III athletics communication. The NCAA funds travel, hotel, meals, and applicable registration fees for 16 participants. Click here for more information.</p>	<p><u>Nomination Period:</u> Feb. to mid-March</p>	<p>Participation in CSC Convention.</p> <p>Access to mentors and networking opportunities.</p>
Division III New AD Orientation	<p>The Division III New AD Orientation is a year-long program to help new directors of athletics with their transition to the position and/or Division III. There will be an in-person luncheon at the NCAA Convention and a two-day program at the NACDA Convention where the cohort will engage with veteran ADs, commissioners, and NCAA staff. Additionally, participants will be paired with a mentor AD from NADIIIAA after the completion of the summer program. The NCAA funds travel, hotel, meals, and applicable registration fees (i.e., NACDA registration). Click here for more information.</p>	<p><u>Selection Period:</u> August</p>	<p>Participation in the NACDA Convention and NADIIIAA Summer Forum.</p> <p>One-year membership fee waiver for NACDA/NADIIIAA.</p>

Opportunity	Description	Application/Deadline	Program Benefits
<p>Division III New Commissioner Orientation</p>	<p>The Division III New Commissioner Orientation is a year-long program to help new commissioners with their transition to the position and/or Division III. Throughout the year, the cohort will receive NCAA resources. There will be a fall introductory webinar, and an in-person orientation in February at the NCAA national office. The cohort will engage with veteran commissioners and NCAA staff. The NCAA funds travel, hotel and meals for the in-person program.</p>	<p><u>Selection Period:</u> August</p>	<p>Access to NCAA staff and resources to help guide a new commissioner.</p>
<p>National Association of Division III Administrators (NADIIIAA) Partnership</p>	<p>A partnership between the NCAA and NADIIIAA supports professional development programming for Division III athletics administrators. The partnership includes grants and programming to support the NADIIIAA Summer Forum in conjunction with NACDA Convention. Division III athletics administrators that are members of the NADIIIAA may apply for grants to support travel and lodging expenses. Click here for more information.</p>	<p><u>Grant Period:</u> Feb. 1 to Mar. 15</p>	<p>\$75,000 pool. Attendance to NACDA Convention and NADIIIAA Summer Forum. Networking opportunities.</p>
<p>Female Administrator Enhancement Grant</p>	<p>This grant in the form of a scholarship enhances the role of the Senior Woman Administrator (SWA) in Division III to support professional development. A partnership between the NCAA and Women Leaders in Sports provides Division III women the opportunity to attend the annual professional development opportunities. Click here for more information.</p>	<p><u>Grant Period:</u> Feb. 1 to Mar. 15</p>	<p>\$30,000 pool. Attendance to Women Leaders Summer Institutes. Networking opportunities.</p>

NCAA DIVISION III ANNUAL LIST OF REQUIRED FORMS AND ACTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONS

Form	Description	Who Signs or Is Responsible	Destination	Due Date	NCAA Contact
Student-Athlete Eligibility					
Drug-Testing Consent	Student-athlete must sign form to affirm their awareness of the NCAA drug- testing program and agree to allow the NCAA to test in relation to any participation in NCAA championships.	Student-Athletes and Compliance Director	Athletics Director's Office	Before student-athlete's first outside competition.	forms@ncaa.org
HIPAA/Buckleby Amendment Consent/Waiver Form	Signing of the authorization/consent shall be voluntary and is not required by the institution for medical treatment, payment for treatment, enrollment in health plan or for any benefits (if applicable) and is not required for the student-athlete to be eligible to practice or compete.	Student-Athletes and Compliance Director	Athletics Director's Office	Before student-athlete's first outside competition (voluntary).	forms@ncaa.org
International Student-Athlete Amateurism through the NCAA Eligibility Center	Each international student-athlete (per Bylaw 12.1.1.1) must receive a finalized Division III amateurism decision from the NCAA Eligibility Center.	International Student-Athletes and Compliance Director	Eligibility Center	Before student-athlete's first competition.	ecinfo@ncaa.org
Student-Athlete Affirmation of Eligibility	Must be completed for each sport to include the names of the student-athletes who have completed and signed the Student-Athlete Statement and Drug Testing Consent.	Athletics Director and Head Coaches	Athletics Director's Office	Before student-athlete's first outside competition.	forms@ncaa.org

NCAA DIVISION III ANNUAL LIST OF REQUIRED FORMS AND ACTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONS

Form	Description	Who Signs or Is Responsible	Destination	Due Date	NCAA Contact
Student-Athlete Statement	Student-athlete must sign form to affirm, to the best of their knowledge, they are eligible to compete in intercollegiate competition.	Student-Athletes	Athletics Director's Office	Before student-athlete's first outside competition.	forms@ncaa.org
General					
<u>Campus Sexual Violence Annual Attestation</u>	The policy, which was adopted by the Board of Governors in 2017, reinforces efforts of the Association in addressing campus sexual violence. By completing the attestation form, an institution attests that it has satisfied the policy requirements.	Chancellor/president, director of athletics, and campus Title IX coordinator.	NCAA national office (instructions emailed early September)	First Friday in November to attest to prior academic year.	Morgan Adcock webhelpdesk@ncaa.org
<u>Coaches Rules Test</u>	All head coaches and athletics administrators with compliance responsibilities must take the rules test annually. Institutions must file a secondary violation for failure to adhere to this annual requirement.	Compliance Director	NCAA national office via the NCAA Learning Portal (My Apps)	Available August 1	Brittany Higgins d3coachesexam@ncaa.org
Division III Financial Aid Reporting Program	Institution must submit an annual electronic report that includes data regarding the financial aid packages awarded by the institution to first year and incoming transfer student-athletes and to other incoming students.	Director of Athletics and Financial Aid Administrator.	NCAA national office (My Apps)	Between June 1 and mid-September	Eric Hartung ehartung@ncaa.org

NCAA DIVISION III ANNUAL LIST OF REQUIRED FORMS AND ACTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONS

Form	Description	Who Signs or Is Responsible	Destination	Due Date	NCAA Contact
<u>Division III In-Region Scheduling Waiver Requirement Form</u>	Institutions that are unable to meet the in-regional scheduling requirement in team sports must complete this form on an annual basis to be eligible for championships selection.	Athletics director	Division III Championships Committee	Fall sports: March 1 Winter sports: May 1 Spring sports: July 1	Laura Peterson lpeterson@ncaa.org
Membership Dues	Institutions and conferences are invoiced via email annually.	Director of athletics, fiscal staff members	NCAA national office	September 1 <i>Cannot vote at NCAA Convention if membership dues have not been paid.</i>	Mark Aiken maiken@ncaa.org
<u>NCAA Convention and Assignment of Delegate</u>	Annual Association-wide meeting of all NCAA member institutions and conferences to discuss pertinent issues and vote on legislation. A voting delegate from your institution must attend and cast a vote during the Division III Business Session.	Initial contact is sent to the chancellor or president, with a copy to the athletics director.	NCAA national office	January Dates vary. <i>Delegates may not vote if membership dues have not been paid.</i>	Eric Hartung ehartung@ncaa.org
<u>NCAA Directory</u>	Institutions should update directory contact information for administrators and head coaches as personnel changes take place to keep the institution's page current.	Athletics department staff	NCAA national office via the NCAA website (<u>My Apps</u>)	As needed	Sadie Martinez smartinez@ncaa.org

NCAA DIVISION III ANNUAL LIST OF REQUIRED FORMS AND ACTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONS

Form	Description	Who Signs or Is Responsible	Destination	Due Date	NCAA Contact
<u>NCAA Membership Financial Reporting System</u>	Report on the revenues, expenses, and capital expenditures of the institution's athletics department. Institution will submit the required data or the EADA Certificate of Completion.	Initial contact is sent to the chancellor or president, with a copy to the athletics director.	NCAA national office (<u>My Apps</u>)	January 15	Andrea Worlock <u>aworlock@ncaa.org</u>
<u>NCAA Graduation Rates</u>	A compilation of student and student-athlete graduation rates.	Designated Institutional Personnel	NCAA national office (<u>My Apps</u>)	June 1 <i>Institutions are not eligible for championships if data is not submitted.</i>	Sadie Martinez <u>smartinez@ncaa.org</u>
<u>NCAA Regional Rules Seminars</u>	Annual rules compliance seminars. In select years, members of certain Division III conferences are permitted to use attendance at a Conference Rules Seminar to fulfill the once-in-three-year requirement.	Athletics Director, compliance or other administrators are optional.	NCAA national office	May/June Dates vary. <i>Once in 3 years</i>	Brittany Higgins <u>NCAARegionalRulesSeminars@ncaa.org</u>
<u>Sports Sponsorship and Demographic Report</u>	Institutions must update contact information for administrators and head coaches. They must report information for sports sponsored last year and for the upcoming academic year. Athletics department citizenship and ethnicity information is collected. Information is required for championships eligibility.	Athletics Director	NCAA national office via the NCAA website (<u>My Apps</u>)	June 30 (Due date may vary slightly each year) <i>Institutions are not eligible for championships if data is not submitted.</i>	Sadie Martinez <u>smartinez@ncaa.org</u> Keke Liu <u>kliu@ncaa.org</u>

Staying Compliant with Division III Rules

This resource is intended to facilitate communication between the intercollegiate athletics department and all campus constituencies (e.g., admissions, advancement, financial aid, registrar, etc.) with a role in the institution’s athletics compliance process. Institutions that engage in frequent cross-campus conversations will improve compliance with NCAA Division III legislation.

The graphic below shows the departments that the athletics compliance administrator should meet with throughout the year and suggested educational topics to discuss. Links to most frequently violated rules, the infractions process and resources are also provided. The goal is to educate the campus community and promote NCAA compliance.



ADVANCEMENT
 Review/educate about:
 athletics fundraising policies;
 permissible awards
 and benefits; and
 scholarships and donations.



ADMISSIONS
 Review/educate about:
 advertisements; athletics staff
 involvement; electronic
 communications; and [prospective student-athlete](#) visits.



REGISTRAR
 Review/educate about:
 good academic standing;
[graduation rate reporting](#);
 monitoring full-time enrollment;
 and satisfactory progress
 requirements.

Athletics Compliance



FINANCIAL AID
[\(access here\)](#)
 Review/educate about:
 athletics staff involvement
 policies; financial aid from
 outside sources; and institutional
 scholarships and grants.



OTHER DEPARTMENTS
 Review/educate with the following
 departments (not exhaustive):
 academic departments;
 alumni relations; board of trustees;
[boosters](#); chancellor/president;
 communications; and
 student activities.

Enforcement trends and processes
[Resources](#)
[Infractions process](#)

NCAA Division III annual list of required forms and due dates
[\(access here\)](#)

- Sport sponsorship and demographic form**
(August 1)
- Financial aid report – mandatory**
(September 15)
- NCAA financial reporting form – voluntary**
(January 15)
- Regional Rules Seminars**
(May and June – once in three years)
- NCAA graduation rates**
(June 1)



NCAA Division III Waiver Tip Sheet

The NCAA academic and membership affairs staff frequently receives questions regarding the correct waiver case type. While staff can change incorrectly submitted case types, the institution still must resubmit the waiver and may be required to submit additional information based on the new case type. This additional step delays the waiver review process and an institution's receipt of a staff decision. This document is meant to serve as a guide for the most common waiver situations.

Which waiver do I need to file?

Correct Requests/Self-Reports Online Case Types and Scenarios
<p>Extension of Eligibility Waiver.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student-athlete needs a 10-semester/15-quarter extension.
<p>Legislative Relief Waiver.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student-athlete is unable to participate due to participation in organized competition prior to initial collegiate enrollment. • Student-athlete is unable to use a transfer exception. • Student-athlete is unable to participate due to being enrolled less than full-time. • Student-athlete is unable to participate as a postbaccalaureate or graduate student. • Any other request of relief from the legislation not mentioned. <p>*Note: Please review the DIII Management Council Subcommittee for Legislative Relief Information Standards, Guidelines and Directives to see if your assertions for waiver relief require specific documentation and satisfy established waiver criteria for an approval.</p>
<p>Membership Requirements Waiver.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institution is unable to attend NCAA Convention (annual) or the NCAA Regional Rules Seminar (once in three years) due to unusual circumstances. • Institution or Conference seeks an extension of the deadline for completing the Institutional Self-Study Guide or Conference Self-Study Guide due to extenuating circumstances. • Institution with enrollment of less than 1,000 undergraduate students failed to sponsor at least five men's and five women's sports for reasons beyond the institution's control.

- Institution with enrollment of more than 1,000 undergraduate students failed to sponsor at least six men's and six women's sports for reasons beyond the institution's control.
- Institution failed to sponsor at least three men's and three women's team sports for reasons beyond the institution's control.
- Institution failed to sponsor at least one sport per gender in each sport season (fall, winter, spring) for reasons beyond the institution's control.
- Institution is a single-gender institution transitioning to a coeducational institution and seeks a three-year waiver of minimum sports sponsorship requirements for the recently added gender.
- Any other request for relief from the legislation in Bylaw 20.

Progress-Toward-Degree Waiver.

- Student-athlete is unable to use a transfer exception because the student-athlete did not meet applicable progress-toward-degree requirements at the previous Division I or II NCAA institution.

Hardship Waiver

- Student-athlete would like to regain a season of participation because the student-athlete competed limitedly and suffered an incapacitating injury or illness in the first half of the season.
- Institutions that are members of a conference file this waiver first with the conference office and may appeal the decision to the NCAA staff if the waiver is denied.
- Independent institutions file hardship waivers directly through RSRO to be reviewed by NCAA staff.

Season of Competition Participation Waiver.

- Student-athlete would like to regain a season of participation because the student-athlete competed limitedly while eligible and extenuating circumstances (other than injury or illness to the student-athlete) occurred that prevented the student-athlete from completing the season (e.g., life-threatening injury or illness sustained by immediate family member, extreme financial difficulties, dropped sport).

Reminder: Case precedent (from the past three years) for cases submitted through RSRO can be found in RSRO by using the search tab. Case precedent searches conducted in Legislative Services Database for the Internet (LSDBi) will not return any results.

*Note: NCAA Division III Management Council Subcommittee for Legislative Relief Information Standards, Guidelines and Directives can be found at the following link: <http://www.ncaa.org/compliance/waivers/legislative-relief-waivers>

RSRO Online Training - Assistance in Submitting a Waiver: Click on the following: http://s3.amazonaws.com/ncaa/web_video/d3/articulate/rsro-training/story_html5.html

Which NCAA staff will process the waiver and who should I call if I have questions about a waiver before I submit through RSRO?

Case Type(s)	NCAA Staff Responsible for Processing Case Type	Contact Phone Number
Extension of Eligibility, Hardship and Season of Participation	GMS Student-Athlete Reinstatement (SAR) Team	317-917-6003 Ask to speak to a member of the Student-Athlete Reinstatement team.
Legislative Relief	GMS Division III Team	317-917-6003
Membership Requirements	GMS Division III Team	317-917-6003 Ask to speak to a liaison for the Division III Membership Committee.
Progress-Toward-Degree	GMS Student-Athlete Academic Waiver (SAAW) Team	317-917-6003 Ask to speak to a member of the Student-Athlete Academic Waiver team for the applicable division (I or II).
For waivers not referenced in the chart above.	GMS Division III Team	317-917-6003

Staying Compliant with Financial Aid Requirements

This resource is intended to facilitate communication across all campus constituencies (e.g., director of athletics, director of financial aid, development office, admissions office and athletics compliance) with a role in the institution's financial aid awarding process. The NCAA Division III Financial Aid Committee recommends that Division III institutions engage in these conversations regularly to help ensure compliance with Bylaw 15.

Please have the following resources on hand for all discussions:

- NCAA Division III Manual – Bylaw 15: Financial Aid
- Annual Financial Aid School Profile Report
- Institutional Financial Aid Policies and Procedures
- Institutional Awards Applications and Descriptions
- NCAA Division III Financial Aid Reporting Program Policies and Procedures Worksheet

1. Financial aid cannot be granted based on a student-athlete's athletics participation. This means institutions should not consider athletics leadership, ability or performance when formulating a financial aid package. [Bylaw 15.3.1-(a)]

Discussion Questions:

- » Is the financial award based on the student-athlete's financial need?
- » What criteria are used for awarding non-need based aid?
- » Do we have a non-need based award policy?
- » Is there an application process for non-need based awards?
- » Who makes non-need based award decisions and are athletics personnel involved?
- » Are extracurricular activities considered in awarding non-need based aid?
- » Are leadership positions considered in non-need based awards?

» When considering extra curricular activities and leadership positions in awarding non-need based aid, may athletics be a component?

» What criteria are included in our award matrix?

2. Financial aid procedures should be the same for all students. Student-athletes and non-athletes should be treated the same. [Bylaw 15.3.1-(b)]

Discussion Questions:

- » What methods are used to determine financial need for need-based aid?
- » Is there a policy directing the proportion of financial need that will be met by institutional gift aid?
- » What are our policies and procedures for awarding non-need based aid and do they differ for any student subpopulation?
- » What policies and procedures inform our award matrix?
- » How do our policies and procedures remove athletics from consideration in the admissions rating system before a financial aid award?

3. The financial aid packages for student-athletes should resemble similar packages offered to nonathletes. [Bylaw 15.3.1-(c)]

Discussion Questions:

- » Do student-athletes appear to receive preferential financial aid packaging?

» Do specific athletics teams appear to benefit from preferential, specific institutional awards or grants?

» What is the percentage of student-athletes in the student body and what percentage of total institutional aid do student-athletes receive?

» Is there a difference in proportion in the amount given to student-athletes when compared to the rest of the student population?

» What considerations do we make when awarding institutional aid?

4. Athletics staff members are not allowed to have any role in determining institutional aid and are not permitted to modify or arrange financial aid packages. [Bylaw 15.3.4]

Discussion Questions:

- » What role do athletics department staff members play in the awarding of financial aid?
- » Are athletics staff members on our financial aid committee?
- » Do we have members of the athletics staff also employed by the admissions department? If so, do employees of the admissions department play a role in the financial aid award process?

For additional resources:

- Contact your conference office
- File an interpretive request in RSRO
- Call the AMA Interpretations Line at 317-917-6003

NCAA Division III

Financial Aid from Outside Sources Analysis

This resource is intended to assist financial aid administrators in reviewing outside aid awards. The NCAA Division III Financial Aid Committee recommends that Division III institutions utilize this document as a first step in ensuring compliance with the financial aid from outside sources legislation (NCAA Division III Bylaw 15.1.2.2.), which allows student-athletes to receive

financial aid from an outside source that considers athletics provided certain criteria are met. For additional financial aid resources please contact your athletics department or conference office, file an interpretive request in Requests-Self Reports Online (RSRO) or call the Academic and Membership Affairs (AMA) Interpretations Line at 317/917-6003.

Start here and work your way down the page to determine if the outside aid you are examining meets the requirements of Bylaw 15.1.2.2.

- Does the award limit the recipient to attend your institution only?
- Does the donor of the award have a direct connection with your institution?
- Can the award be made on more than one occasion?



If NO to all...

The award is **PERMISSIBLE**

If YES to any...

Was athletics participation, leadership, ability or performance considered in the determination of the award recipient?



If NO...

Receipt of the award would be **PERMISSIBLE**

If YES...

Receipt of the award would be **IMPERMISSIBLE**

TERMS TO KNOW

Direct Connection: A direct connection is present when the donor of an outside award is also a representative of athletics interest (*NCAA Bylaw 13.02.9*) for the institution the recipient plans on attending.

Donor: The individual or entity funding the outside scholarship.

Multi-Year Disbursement: It is permissible for outside financial aid (where athletics is considered) to be disbursed over multiple years provided the award is made on one occasion only. For example, a student-athlete receives a \$5,000 scholarship that is renewable each year until he/she graduates. There are no renewal criteria and the student-athlete does not have to do anything to continue to receive the scholarship each year. In total, he/she receives \$20,000 from this organization.



COMMUNICATION, CONTACTS AND EVALUATIONS

CONTACTS (Bylaw 13.1)

- Off-campus contacts are not permitted until a PSA has completed his or her sophomore year of high school.
- No number limit on off-campus contacts.
- Contact (including telephone calls if at the event or aware of the competition) may not be made with a PSA before any athletics competition in which the PSA is a participant until the PSA has been released by the appropriate institutional authorities. **Exception:** An athletics staff member may have on-campus contact prior to competition with a PSA, provided the PSA is not scheduled to compete on that day on the institution's campus.
- Contact may occur with relatives, guardian(s) or individual of comparable relationship of a contactable PSA at the site of a PSA's practice or competition (including during the competition).

RECRUITING MATERIALS (Bylaw 13.4)

- There are no restrictions on the timing of providing recruiting materials or letters to PSAs.
- Institutions are permitted to provide any official academic, admissions, athletics and student-services publications or electronic media published or produced by the

institution and other information of a general nature that is available to all students.

EVALUATIONS (Bylaw 13.1)

- There are no restrictions on the number or timing on evaluations of a PSA participating in practice or competition.

PERMISSION TO CONTACT (Bylaw 13.1.1.2)

- Athletics recruitment of any type of an NCAA or NAIA four-year college student-athlete is not permitted without first obtaining written permission from the student's current institution, regardless of who makes the initial contact.
- A student-athlete transferring from a Division III institution to another Division III institution can sign the self-release form for proper permission.
- Permission to contact is not required for a two-year college prospect.

CELEBRATORY SIGNING FORM (Bylaw 13.9)

- Institutions may use a standard, nonbinding athletes celebratory signing form after a PSA has been accepted for enrollment. The standard form shall be made available by the NCAA national office. The form is located on the Legislative Services Database (LSDBI).



Division III

DISCOVER | DEVELOP | DEDICATE

Athletics Recruiting/Communication Quick Reference Guide

This document is designed to provide a quick reference of NCAA Division III recruiting rules. It is not to serve as a substitute for the legislation in the NCAA Division III Manual. Division III recruiting rules apply to athletics-based recruiting and are not meant to limit an institution's admissions office from the recruitment of prospective students generally.

NCAA.org/d3



NCAADivisionIII



@NCAADIII



NCAADivisionIII

CAMPUS VISITS

	Official visits	Unofficial visits
Number of Visits Permitted	One financed visit per institution.	Unlimited.
First Opportunity to Visit	January 1 of the prospective student-athlete's (PSA) junior year in high school.	Any time.
Permissible Length of Visit	Shall not exceed 48 hours. The 48-hour period begins at the time the PSA arrives on campus.	No time limitations.
Meals	Three on-campus meals per day for the PSA and individuals accompanying the PSA. Dessert or after-meal snack also is permitted. May provide meals while in transit to and from visit.	One on-campus meal for the PSA only.
Lodging	Campus or within 30-mile radius of campus and comparable to student life. May include other guests if no additional cost. May provide a separate room for parents/guardians. May provide lodging while in transit to and from visit.	None, unless lodging is generally available to all visiting prospective students.
Entertainment	Maximum of \$40 each day (no cash to the PSA) within a 30-mile radius of campus. \$40 must cover PSA, the PSA's parents, guardian(s), spouse or individual of comparable relationship and student host.	None.
Complimentary Admissions to Home Athletics Event	Admission for the PSA and any individual accompanying the PSA (no limit on the number of tickets). No special seating.	Admission for the PSA and any individual accompanying the PSA (no limit on the number of tickets). May not reserve additional game tickets. May not arrange special parking. No special seating.
Transportation	Round-trip (e.g., airfare, mileage) cost for the PSA only (including other individuals traveling in same automobile). The PSA may receive special on-campus parking. Transportation to view home practice and competition sites in the PSA's sport or other home institutional facilities.	Transportation to view home practice and competition sites in the PSA's sport or other home institutional facilities.

See *Bylaws 13.5, 13.6 and 13.7 for more information.*

SOCIAL MEDIA TIMING

When	Athletics may	Athletics may not
Before the PSA submits a financial deposit to the institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send private/direct messages to the PSA (or PSA's family) using social media. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send a public message to the PSA (or PSA's family) on social media. Post information about the PSA on social media. Like the PSA's post (or a post the PSA is tagged in). Follow, friend, retweet, tag or post to the PSA's page/timeline.
After the PSA submits a financial deposit to the institution, but before May 1 of the senior year in high school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send private/direct messages to the PSA (or PSA's family) using social media. Use social media to announce the PSA's commitment to attend the institution, without tagging the PSA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send a public message to the PSA (or PSA's family) using social media. Like the PSA's post (or a post the PSA is tagged in). Follow, friend, retweet, tag or post to the PSA's page/timeline.
After the PSA submits a financial deposit to the institution, and it is after May 1 of the senior year in high school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send private/direct messages to the PSA (or PSA's family) using social media. Use social media to announce the PSA's commitment to attend the institution. Send a public message to the PSA (or PSA's family) using social media. Like the PSA's post (or a post the PSA is tagged in). Follow, friend, retweet, tag or post to the PSA's page/timeline. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send private/direct messages to the PSA (or PSA's family) using social media. Use social media to announce the PSA's commitment to attend the institution. Send a public message to the PSA (or PSA's family) using social media. Like the PSA's post (or a post the PSA is tagged in). Follow, friend, retweet, tag or post to the PSA's page/timeline.

See *Bylaws 13.02.11 and 13.10 for more information.*

ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSIONS (Bylaw 13.02.11)

- No restrictions on the number or timing of telephone calls (including videoconferencing and videophones) and private electronic correspondence (electronic mail, text messages, private communication through social networking site) to PSAs.

Social Media Use in Division III Recruiting

You may, at any time, **take actions of approval** on social media content created by users of the platform. For example, content created by:

- Prospects and their families
- Club/HS teams and coaches
- Outside groups

ACTIONS OF APPROVAL DO NOT GENERATE CONTENT, WHICH IS WHY THEY ARE PERMISSIBLE AT ANY TIME.

Commenting, tagging or otherwise linking the prospect to a social media post generates content, and that content is governed by the electronic transmissions and publicity legislation. That means:

BEFORE DEPOSIT AND JAN. 1

Limited to private communication and actions of approval.

AFTER DEPOSIT AND BEFORE JAN. 1

May announce the prospect's commitment with a post, picture and general information but may not tag/link them to the post.

AFTER DEPOSIT AND JAN. 1

No restrictions on social media interaction.

WHAT ACCOUNTS ARE SUBJECT TO DIII SOCIAL MEDIA REGULATIONS?

ATHLETICS DEPARTMENTS

Official athletics department accounts are subject to DIII social media regulations.

TEAMS

Team accounts, and unofficial accounts representing an institution's team, are subject to DIII social media regulations.

COACHES

A coach's personal social media account is subject to DIII social media regulations.

STUDENT-ATHLETES

Generally, peer-to-peer interactions are not subject to DIII social media regulations. However, if the SA is instructed to reach out to the prospect for the purposes of recruitment, their account must follow the regulations.

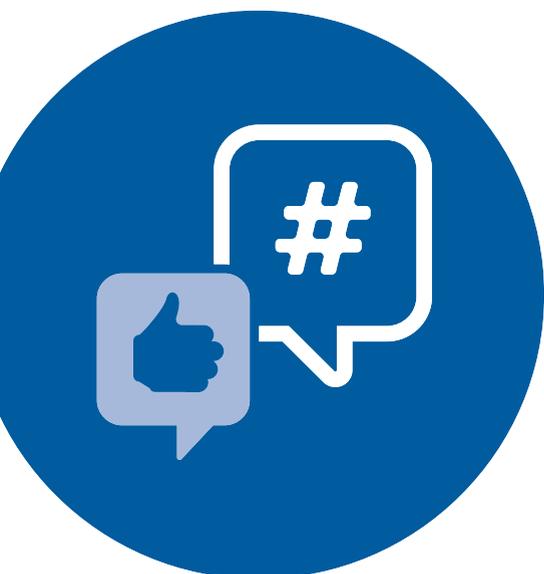
NON-ATHLETICS INSTITUTIONAL ACCOUNTS

May interact with prospects on social media without restriction, as long as they are not directed to do so by athletics and they interact similarly with all prospective students.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND VISITS TO CAMPUS

PSAs can take pictures during their visits to your institution and post those photos to social media at any time. And while you cannot direct the PSA to post the pictures, you can interact with the posts as permitted by the public communications timeline.

**SIMPLY PUT:
TAP, DON'T TYPE IF IT
IS BEFORE JAN. 1 AND
FINANCIAL DEPOSIT.**

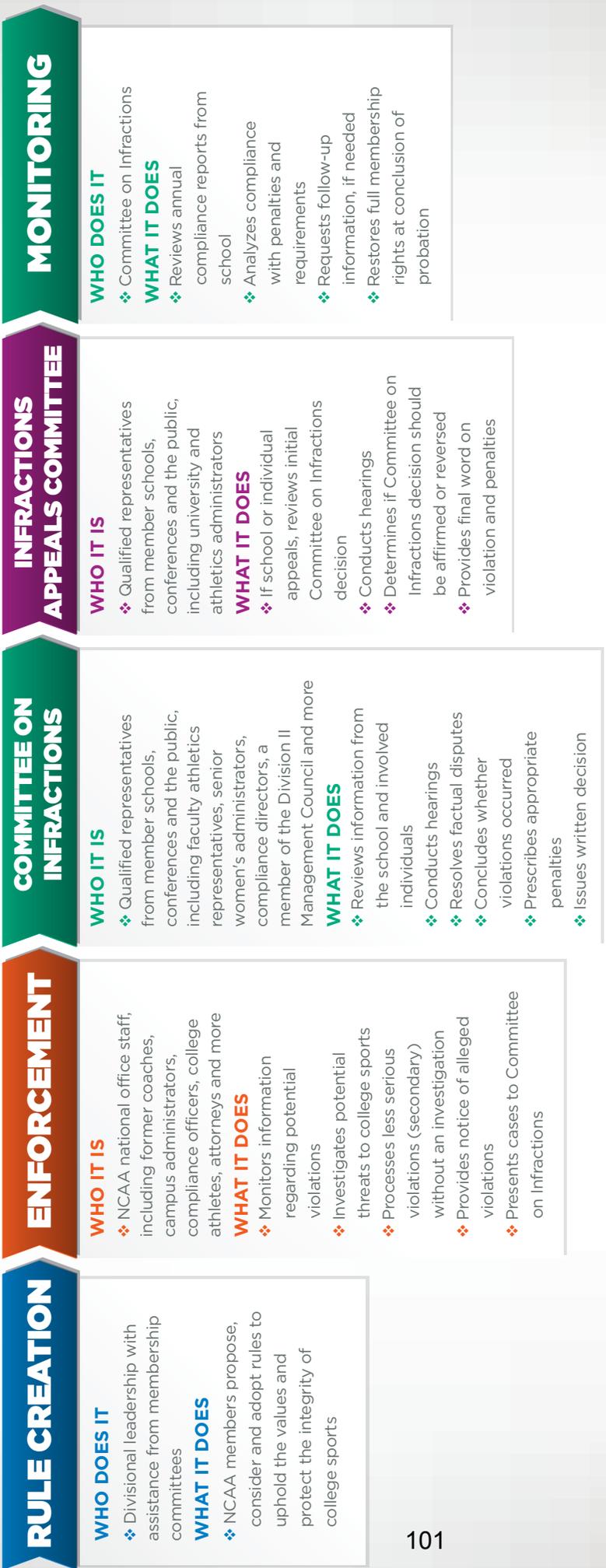


WHAT IS OR ISN'T PERMISSIBLE BEFORE JAN. 1 AND FINANCIAL DEPOSIT?

		
 FACEBOOK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send/accept a friend request to or from PSA. • Utilize private messenger/chat function. • Like a status, photo or post. • Share a post (without comment). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post on PSA's wall. • Comment on a status, photo or post. • Utilize a group messenger/chat function.
 TWITTER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSA can follow coach; coach can follow PSA. • Retweet PSA's tweet (without comment). • Favorite PSA's tweet. • Utilize private direct message function. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tweet using PSA's Twitter handle (@PSA). • Tag PSA in a post. • Reply to PSA's tweet.
 INSTAGRAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSA can follow coach; coach can follow PSA. • Like PSA's photo. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tag PSA in a post. • Comment on PSA's photo.
 SNAPCHAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send/accept a friend request to or from PSA. • Send and receive snaps (photos/videos). • Utilize private chat function. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize group snap function. • Utilize group chat function.
 LINKEDIN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send/accept connection requests to or from PSA. • Utilize private in-message function. • Share PSA's post (without comment). • Like PSA's post. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend or endorse PSA. • Comment on PSA's post.
 PINTEREST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSA can follow coach; coach can follow PSA. • Coach can re-pin PSA's post. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tag PSA.
 TIKTOK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSA can follow coach; coach can follow PSA. • Like PSA's post. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reply to PSA's post. • Tag PSA in a post.

*Social media is constantly changing, so this chart is also subject to change.
If you are unsure about something, just ask the academic and membership affairs staff.*

NCAA DIVISION III INFRACTIONS PROCESS



The NCAA Division III infractions process begins with rules proposed, considered and adopted by NCAA members. These rules focus on eligibility, recruiting, academic performance, playing and practice seasons, scholarships, and extra benefits. In Division III, violations of these rules can either be considered major or secondary. When a school or a college athlete violates a rule, the NCAA enforcement staff investigates, provides notice of potential violations to schools and involved individuals, and presents information about potential major violations to the Committee on Infractions. Generally, the enforcement staff and conferences handle secondary violations. Then, the COI considers the facts of the case and the positions of all parties. Members of a COI deliberate, conclude if violations occurred, prescribe appropriate penalties, then issue a written decision. That decision can be reviewed by the Infractions Appeals Committee if a school or involved individual does not agree with the COI's findings, conclusions or penalties. If the COI prescribes probation and/or penalties, the COI reviews annual reports to ensure that the school completes all requirements.





F.A.C.T. INVESTIGATIONS

FAIR • ACCURATE • COLLABORATIVE • TIMELY

The enforcement staff supports schools and individuals who play by the rules and are committed to integrity. NCAA investigations protect the common interests of schools and the Association’s enduring values. When potential violations are discovered, schools and individuals are obliged to cooperate by disclosing all relevant information to enforcement staff or committee representatives.

BYLAWS

NCAA members propose and adopt bylaws.

INVESTIGATION & PROCESSING

The enforcement staff investigates alleged violations of those bylaws and presents its findings to the Committee on Infractions (COI).

OUTCOME & APPEAL

The COI, made up of qualified individuals from NCAA schools and the public, concludes whether violations occurred and whether penalties are appropriate. The COI decision is reviewed by the Infractions Appeals Committee, also made up of qualified individuals from NCAA schools and the public.



COMPLIANCE

Each NCAA school has an obligation to monitor and control its athletics programs, its representatives and its student-athletes to assure compliance with the Constitution and bylaws of the Association.

NON-COMPLIANCE

Each NCAA school has an obligation to report all instances of noncompliance to the Association in a timely manner.

EXEMPLARY COOPERATION

Exemplary cooperation by an NCAA school or involved individual may be a mitigating factor when determining any penalties. Exemplary cooperation may include identifying individuals, documents and other information pertinent to the investigation; expending institutional resources to expedite a thorough and fair collection and disclosure of information; or bringing additional violations to the attention of the enforcement staff.

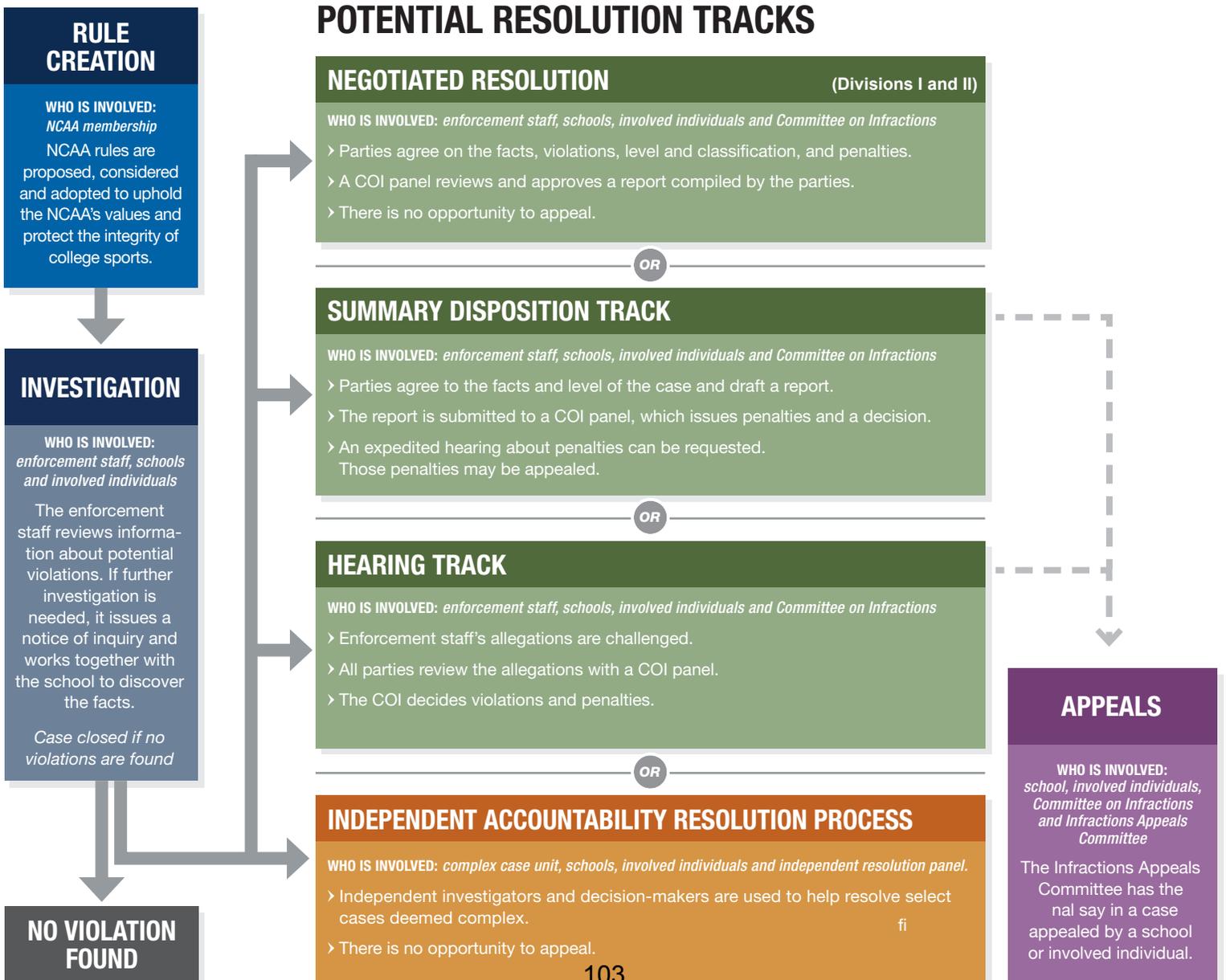
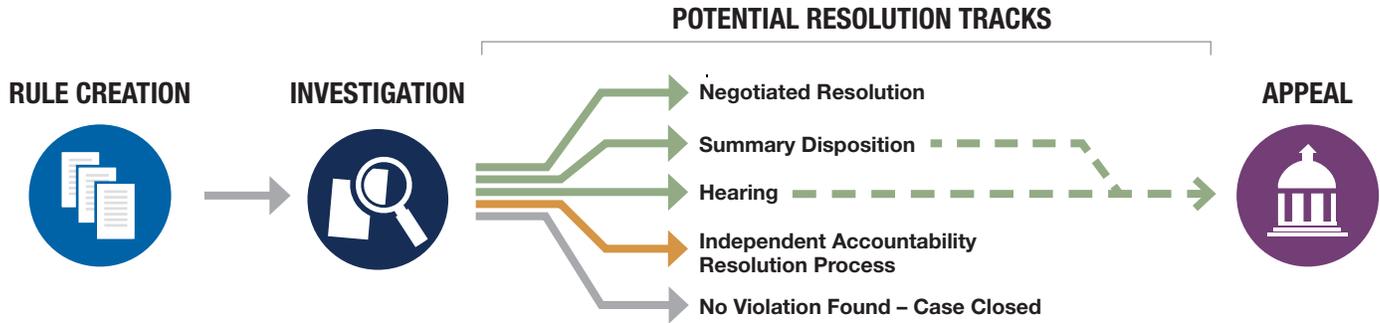
FAILURE TO COOPERATE

Failing to cooperate with the NCAA enforcement staff, Committee on Infractions (COI) or Infractions Appeals Committee may result in an independent allegation and be considered an aggravating factor when determining any penalties. Institutional representatives or involved individuals may be asked to appear before a hearing panel of the COI at the time the allegation is considered.

Inside the Infractions Process: Infractions Process Overview



The infractions process is designed to ensure fair play and integrity among NCAA schools. Here is a look at how the process works and the options available to reach a fair resolution.





NATIONAL OFFICE ENFORCEMENT STAFF INFRACTIONS PROCESS

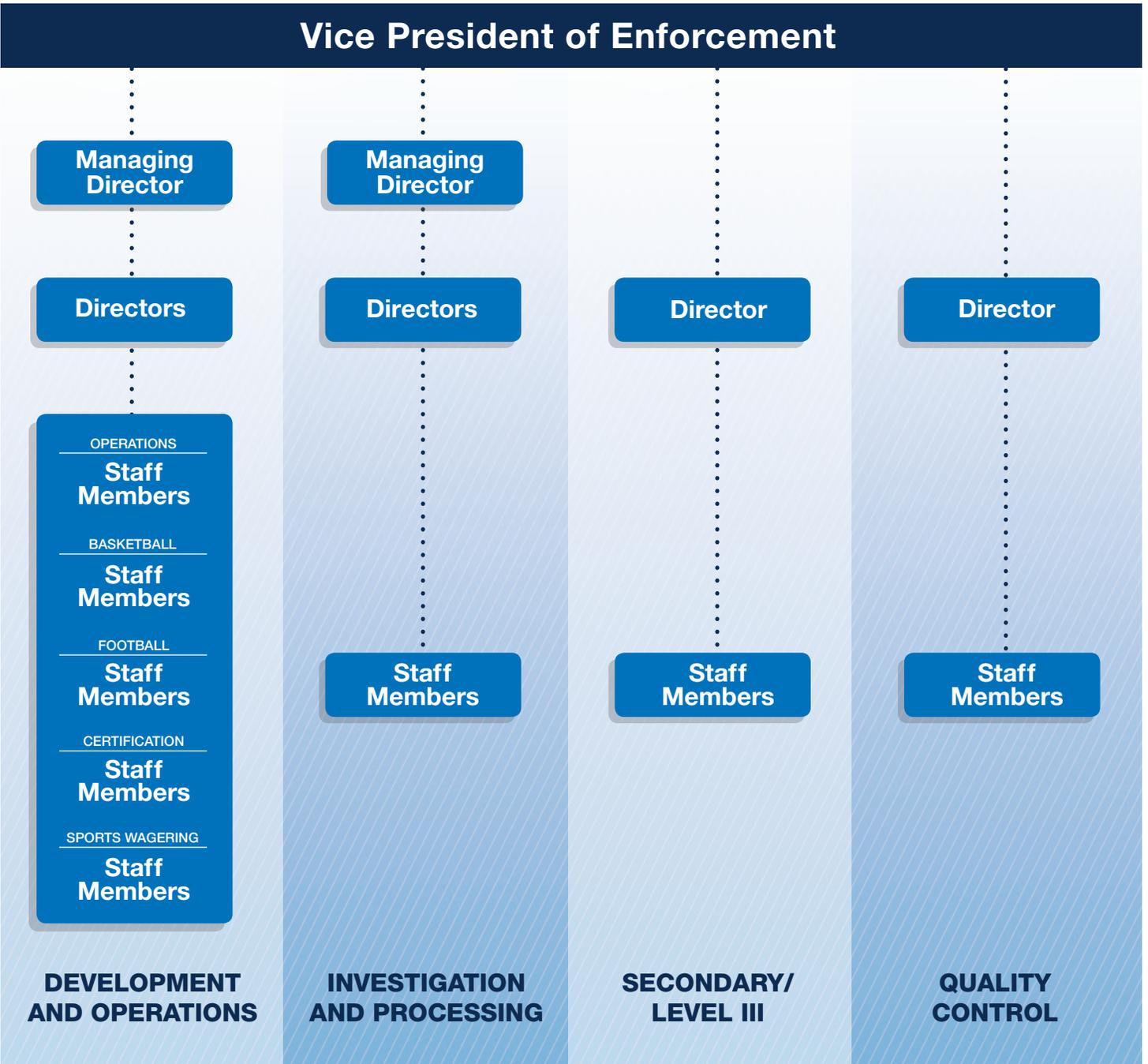
The NCAA enforcement staff is divided into specialty teams shown below. The **development and operations staff** provides sport-specific subject matter expertise in football, basketball, track and field, and baseball. It also reviews potential violations, complementing the **investigation and processing staff** in determining the facts of a case and whether to bring formal allegations.

Staff members in the **secondary/Level III group** process thousands of infractions reported each year by member schools. The **quality control group** works with all the teams to ensure procedural compliance, consistent decisions and accurate collection of data.

Many members of the enforcement staff are attorneys with varied backgrounds in criminal law, civil practice or government service. Many also are former student-athletes, high school coaches, college coaches, professional coaches, compliance officers or athletics administrators.

Each member receives intense orientation when hired and continual training on rules, interview skills and other professional development. The enforcement department strives to attract, hire and train mature staff members who will provide excellent and efficient service to NCAA member schools.

Vice President of Enforcement

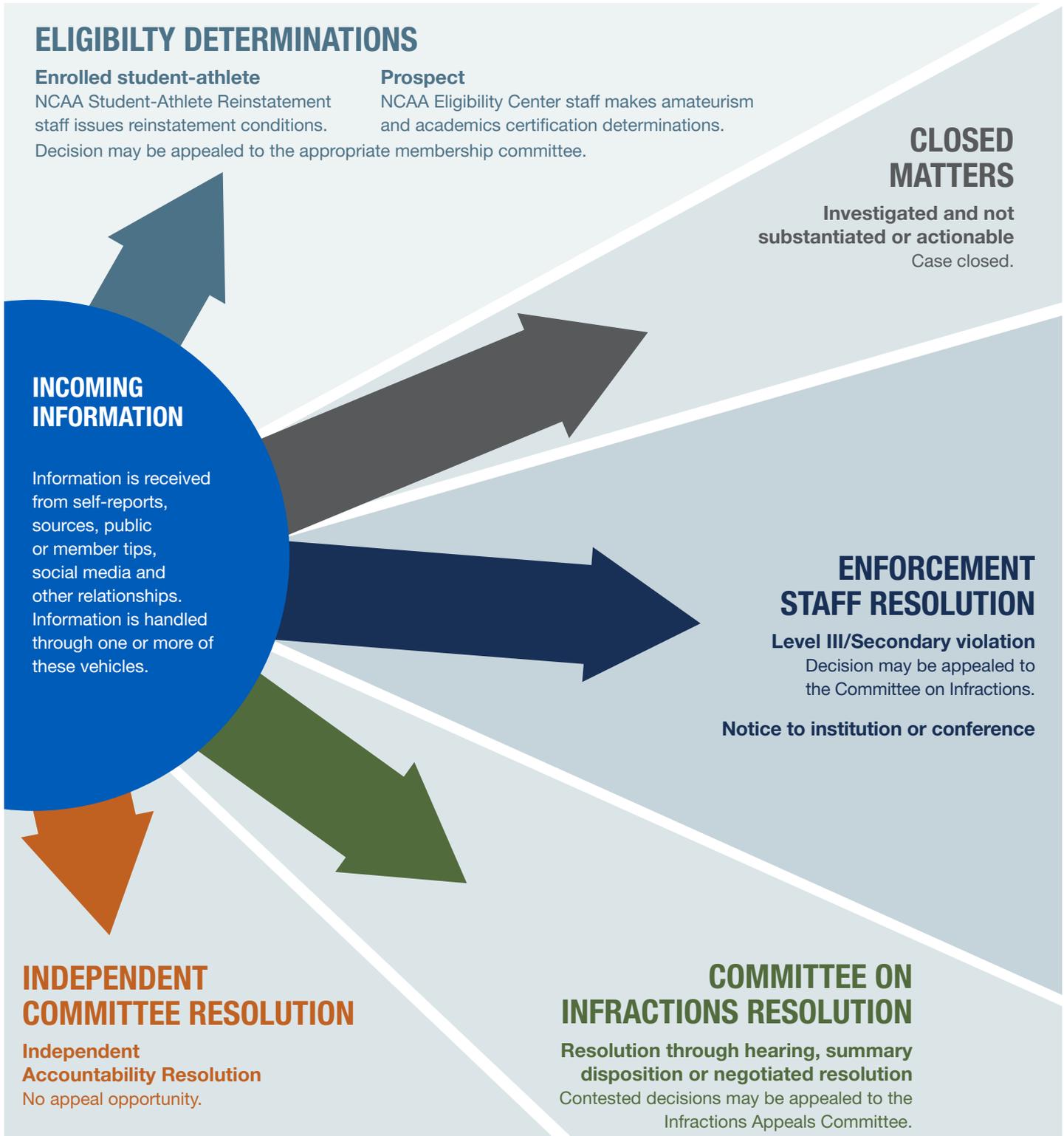




Information about potential rule violations is reported to the enforcement staff by many sources.

Some of that information is not credible or specific enough to open an investigation, and other information suggests a violation may have occurred. When credible information is received, either the enforcement staff begins investigating or it is handled outside the infractions process.

As an investigation evolves, there are at least five paths an incoming piece of information might take. Some cases may involve more than one of the resolution paths listed below.





Student-Athlete Reinstatement Process

An institution submits a case to the student-athlete reinstatement (SAR) staff when it:

- (1) declares a current or prospective student-athlete ineligible due to a violation affecting eligibility; or
- (2) determines a specific waiver is needed.

In all cases, the SAR staff and committees subscribe to the students-first philosophy; attempt to place student-athletes back in the position they were prior to a violation occurring while also evaluating culpability; and review the totality of circumstances to render an outcome that considers student-athlete well-being and fairness. Here is an overview of the SAR process.

SAR CASE TYPES

Violations affecting student-athlete's eligibility (Bylaws 10-17)

Student-athlete unable to use four seasons of competition/participation within five-year/10-semester/15-quarter period of eligibility

- Extension of Eligibility Waiver
- Athletics Activity Waiver (Division I)

Student-athlete competes/participates limitedly during a season of competition/participation

- Hardship Waiver Appeal
 - Hardship Waiver (Independent Institutions)
- Season of competition/participation waiver—competition while eligible/ineligible

Pre-Enrollment Amateurism Certification Process

SAR PROCESS



Institution determines waiver is necessary or violation affecting eligibility has occurred.



Institution submits case with required documentation to SAR staff.



Case assigned to SAR staff member who collaborates with institution to resolve questions and obtain additional information, if necessary.



SAR staff reviews case and considers legislation, committee guidelines, policies and procedures, case precedent, asserted mitigation, and other relevant information.



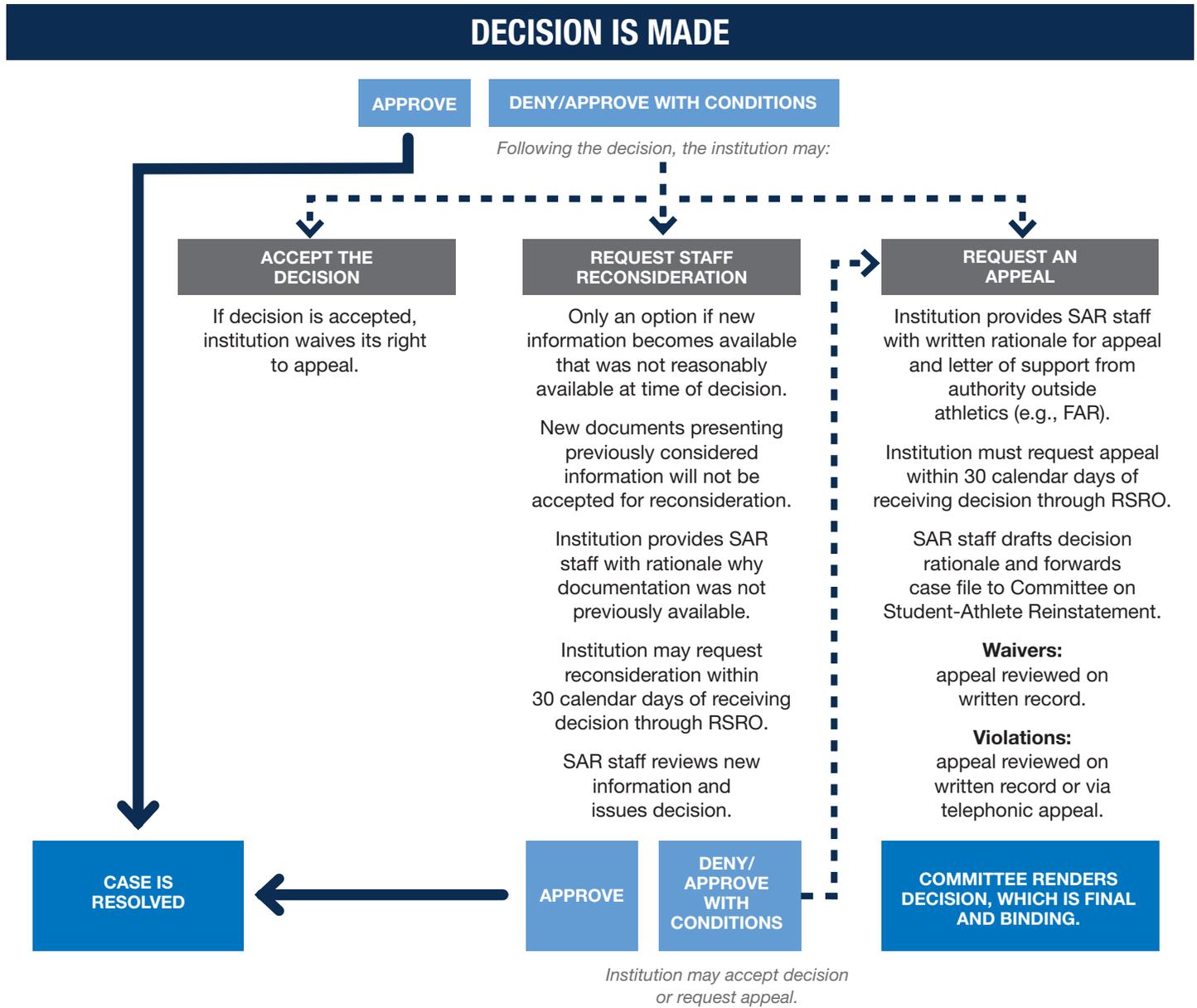
SAR staff issues decision to institution.



Institution may accept staff decision, request reconsideration or request appeal.

(See appeal section on next page)

Student-Athlete Reinstatement Process continued



COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

5

MEMBERS

The Divisions I, II and III Committees for Student-Athlete Reinstatement are each comprised of five members from divisional institutions and conferences, and one Student-Athlete Advisory Committee representative.

- ### DON'T FORGET!
- Include case-specific signed Buckley statement.
 - Include student-athlete's written statement.
 - "Urgent" means pending competition within 10 days.
 - Resolve all interpretive issues prior to submission.
 - Call SAR staff with questions: 317-917-6222.

DISCLAIMER: Please note, this document is intended as a general process overview and is not inclusive of all SAR policies and procedures. Please see ncaa.org/compliance/reinstatement/student-athlete-reinstatement for additional information.

Fall Sports

A Closer Look at the New Playing Season Model



Cross Country



Field Hockey



Soccer



Women's Volleyball



Men's Water Polo

OVERALL STRUCTURE

Start and end date during the fall **+** 24 days during the spring

FALL TRADITIONAL SEGMENT

Existing 16-unit practice formula **→** NCAA selections
(USING THE FIRST PERMISSIBLE CONTEST DATE)

SPRING NONTRADITIONAL SEGMENT

First class date after Jan. 1 **→** 5 weekdays before spring finals
24 DAYS, INCLUDING ONE DATE OF COMPETITION. NO MORE THAN 4 DAYS PER WEEK.

DO YOU HAVE FOOTBALL?

2023-11 did not change anything about the football playing season, **but NC-2024-2 DID!** Now, to be consistent with other fall sports, football must also wrap up its spring period at least 5 weekdays before spring finals.

NCAA SELECTIONS

Sport	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Cross Country	Nov. 12	Nov. 17	Nov. 16
Field Hockey	Nov. 5	Nov. 10	Nov. 9
Soccer	Nov. 5	Nov. 10	Nov. 9
Women's Volleyball	Nov. 12	Nov. 17	Nov. 16
Men's Water Polo	Nov. 19	Nov. 24	Nov. 23
Sports without an NCAA Championship	Nov. 12	Nov. 17	Nov. 16

“A DAY” OR “NOT A DAY”

	A DAY	NOT A DAY
Any athletically related activities (Bylaw 17.02.1.1) by any members of a team	✓	
Meetings, like those listed in Bylaw 17.02.1.1.1.1		✓
Fundraising, as outlined in Bylaw 17.02.1.1.1.2		✓
Observing activities, such as those in Bylaw 17.02.1.1.1.3		✓
Voluntary strength and conditioning activities, like the ones in Bylaw 17.02.1.1.1.4		✓
Coach interacting with a student-athlete’s social media post about voluntary workouts	✓	
Voluntary leadership programming, as defined in Bylaw 17.02.1.1.1.5		✓
Team building or team bonding activities	✓	

OUTSIDE COMPETITION?

Student-athletes cannot compete on an outside team from **Start → **Finish** of the traditional segment.**

DAYS OFF?

Still required at least once per 7-day period.

*Plus: Multisport SAs still need **one full day off per 7-day period.***

WHAT ABOUT ...

Preparation for, and participation in, NCAA championships ... or in a non-NCAA season-ending championship like ECAC’s?

Permissible outside of the declared season. See Bylaw 17.1.3.

A team’s annual contest exemptions?

No change there! More details in Bylaw 17.1.4.5.

Preparation for, and participation in, a foreign tour?

Foreign tours are still separate from the declared season. Head to Bylaw 17.31.

HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

Contact the Division III AMA Staff Through RSRO.

Division III Football Updates

2022 changes to contact and equipment use timelines

PRESEASON

First Practice → **First Contest**

Acclimatization period	6 days.
Number of full equipment practices	Limit to 8 days of full equipment practices in the preseason (including during the acclimatization period).
Full contact practices	Only on days with full equipment; no more than two consecutive days.
Time of contact (full & thud)	No more than 75 minutes (per player) for any practice.

REGULAR SEASON

First Contest → **NCAA Championship**

Number of practices with full equipment	No more than two full equipment practices per week of the regular season. No more than three full equipment practices during a bye week of the regular season.
-----------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

SPRING SEASON

16 days over 5 weeks

Use of helmets	May be used every day.
Use of shoulder pads	May be used on 4 of the days, but not before the 5th day.
Use of practice equipment (e.g., tackling dummies, sleds, etc.)	May use equipment to teach blocking and tackling on the 4 shoulder pad days. Remaining 12 days - no equipment.
Contact	On the four helmet and shoulder pad days: May have 1-on-1 limited contact for instructional purposes, but no blocking/tackling to the ground. Remaining 12 days - no contact.

Defining: Contact

Full contact is any contact that involves tackling to the ground. *Thud contact* is contact that occurs at competitive speed but remains above the waist, and players stay on their feet. Teams may only engage in *full contact* during full padded practices.

COUNTING: Preseason Scrimmages, Exhibitions or Joint Practices

Each preseason, a team is permitted up to two scrimmages, exhibitions or joint practices. A scrimmage, exhibition or joint practice counts as one of the eight allowable full padded practices during the preseason. Also, while these activities would count when considering no more than two consecutive days of full contact, they are not subject to the 75-minute contact limitations.

Defining: Limited Skill Instruction

Limited skill instruction does not involve student-athletes having contact with one another. While the hand shield legislation allows student-athletes to have contact with the shield to learn proper blocking techniques, it does not permit person-to-person contact. Contact beyond this limited exception is not consistent with the legislation.

BREAKING DOWN: The Spring Season

Helmet-Only Days

May engage in conditioning and strength training sessions and limited skill instruction but contact is not permitted, except with a hand shield.

Examples of impermissible activities:

- A defensive player attempts to re-route the receiver by putting hands on the receiver.
- Offensive players attempt to “pick” defensive players to get open, resulting in defensive players running into each other. This would be considered a likely result of the drill as it is an intended consequence.
- A defensive lineman puts his hands on the chest or shoulder of an offensive lineman in an attempt to rush the passer.
- An offensive lineman puts his hands on a defensive player in an attempt to block the defensive player.
- Striking a student-athlete with a hand shield.

Helmet and Shoulder Pad Days

On the four days in which student-athletes may wear helmets and shoulder pads, limited contact is allowed provided it is instructionally focused as opposed to competitively focused.

Permissible activities:

- Limited contact is allowed when teaching individual blocking techniques.
- May use tackling bags, tackling sled, blocking sled, hand shields, tackling rings and other similar type instructional equipment.
- Student-athletes may participate in 1 v. 1 instructional blocking drills.
- Student-athletes may ‘walk-through’ combination blocking drills, inside run drills, blitz pick-up and other similar type drills that involve multiple participants. These drills should not result in contact if conducted above a walk-through speed.

Impermissible activities:

- May not tackle to the ground.
- Limited contact is not allowed in the context of 11 v. 11 or other similar type contest simulations.
- Limited contact is not allowed as part of combination blocking drills, inside run drills, blitz pick-up and other similar type drills that involve multiple participants.
- A “Spring Game” is not permitted.



Period Sports

A Closer Look at the New Playing Season Model



Golf



Rowing



Tennis

OVERALL STRUCTURE

114 days

PRACTICE AND COMPETITION DURING FALL PERIOD

Existing 16-unit practice formula → 5 weekdays before fall finals
(USING THE FIRST PERMISSIBLE CONTEST DATE)

PRACTICE AND COMPETITION SPRING PERIOD

Jan. 15 → NCAA selections

FIRST COMPETITION DURING THE FALL PERIOD?

Golf and Tennis: Sept. 1 (or the preceding Friday if Sept. 1 is a Saturday, Sunday or Monday) or the first day of classes - whichever is earlier.

Rowing: Sept. 7 or the first day of classes - whichever is earlier.

NCAA SELECTIONS

Sport	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Men's Golf	May 6	May 12	May 4
Women's Golf	May 13	May 5	May 11
Rowing	May 13	May 12	May 11
Tennis	May 6	May 5	May 4

“A DAY” OR “NOT A DAY”

	A DAY	NOT A DAY
Any athletically related activities (Bylaw 17.02.1.1) by any members of a team	✓	
Meetings, like those listed in Bylaw 17.02.1.1.1		✓
Fundraising, as outlined in Bylaw 17.02.1.1.2		✓
Observing activities, such as those in Bylaw 17.02.1.1.3		✓
Voluntary strength and conditioning activities, like the ones in Bylaw 17.02.1.1.4		✓
Coach interacting with a student-athlete’s social media post about voluntary workouts	✓	
Voluntary leadership programming, as defined in Bylaw 17.02.1.1.5		✓
Team building or team bonding activities	✓	

OUTSIDE COMPETITION?

*Student-athletes cannot compete on an outside team from **First practice**  **Last practice** in each period.*

DAYS OFF?

Still required at least once per 7-day period.

Plus: Multisport SAs still need one full day off per 7-day period.

WHAT ABOUT ...

Preparation for, and participation in, NCAA championships ... or in a non-NCAA season-ending championship like ECAC’s?

Permissible outside of the declared season and days do not count against 114. See Bylaw 17.1.3.

A team’s annual contest exemptions?

No change there! More details in Bylaw 17.1.4.5.

Preparation for, and participation in, a foreign tour?

Foreign tours are still separate from the declared season. Head to Bylaw 17.31.

HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

Contact the Division III AMA Staff Through RSRO.

Winter Sports

A Closer Look at the New Playing Season Model



Basketball



Bowling



Fencing



Gymnastics



Ice Hockey



Rifle



Skiing



Swimming and Diving



Indoor Track and Field



Wrestling

OVERALL STRUCTURE

114 days (OR 144 DAYS FOR INDOOR AND OUTDOOR TRACK AND FIELD).

THE SEASON

Sept. 7*, or the institution's first day of classes for the fall term → NCAA selections
WHICHEVER IS EARLIER. *SEE BELOW FOR CERTAIN SPORTS!

Up to 8 days may be used outside of the season.

ABOUT THOSE 8 DAYS

1) Do count toward your 114/144; (2) May not be used before your first day of classes; (3) May not be used 5 weekdays before an exam period, through the exam period or during summer vacation; and (4) May not be used more than 3 times during any 7-day period.
And, yes - ice hockey teams may be on ice.

BASKETBALL, BOWLING, ICE HOCKEY, SKIING OR WRESTLING?

2023-11 did not change your start dates for the season. That means ...

Basketball	Oct. 15
Bowling	Oct. 1
Ice Hockey	1st Monday in October (off ice); 2nd Monday in October (on ice)
Skiing	Oct. 15 (thru April 5 or US National Championships, whichever is later)
Wrestling	Oct. 10

NCAA OR NATIONAL COLLEGIATE SELECTIONS

Sport	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Basketball	Feb. 25	March 2	March 1
Bowling	March 24	March 23	March 22
Fencing	Feb. 19	Feb. 24	Feb. 23
Men's Gymnastics	April 7	April 6	April 5
Women's Gymnastics	March 25	March 24	March 23
Ice Hockey	March 3	March 9	March 8
Indoor Track and Field	March 3	March 2	March 8
Rifle	Feb. 20	Feb. 25	Feb. 24
Swimming and Diving	March 2	March 1	Feb. 28
Wrestling	March 3	March 2	March 1
Sports without an NCAA Championship	March 3	March 9	March 8

“A DAY” OR “NOT A DAY”

	A DAY	NOT A DAY
Any athletically related activities (Bylaw 17.02.1.1) by any members of a team <i>Except for swimming and diving and track and field - Bylaw 17.1.4.1 remains intact. For those teams: although student-athletes may have different days off, a team will only be charged a maximum of 6 days per 7-day period.</i>	✓	
Meetings, like those listed in Bylaw 17.02.1.1.1		✓
Fundraising, as outlined in Bylaw 17.02.1.1.2		✓
Observing activities, such as those in Bylaw 17.02.1.1.3		✓
Voluntary strength and conditioning activities, like the ones in Bylaw 17.02.1.1.4		✓
Coach interacting with a student-athlete’s social media post about voluntary workouts	✓	
Voluntary leadership programming, as defined in Bylaw 17.02.1.1.5		✓
Team building or team bonding activities	✓	

OUTSIDE COMPETITION?

Student-athletes cannot compete on an outside team from **First Contest** → **Last Contest**

DAYS OFF?

Still required at least once per 7-day period.

Plus: Multisport SAs still need one full day off per 7-day period.

WHAT ABOUT ...

Preparation for, and participation in, NCAA championships ... or in a non-NCAA season-ending championship like ECAC’s?

Permissible outside of the declared season and days do not count against 114 days.

See Bylaw 17.1.3.

A team’s annual contest exemptions?

No change there! More details in Bylaw 17.1.4.5.

Preparation for, and participation in, a foreign tour?

Foreign tours are still separate from the declared season. Head to Bylaw 17.31.

HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

Contact the Division III AMA Staff Through RSRO.

Spring Sports

A Closer Look at the New Playing Season Model



Baseball



Lacrosse



Softball



Outdoor Track and Field



Beach Volleyball



Men's Volleyball



Women's Water Polo

OVERALL STRUCTURE

Start and end date during the spring **+** 24 days during the fall

114 DAYS IF YOU SPONSOR ONLY OUTDOOR TRACK AND FIELD

FALL NONTRADITIONAL SEGMENT

Sept. 7 or first day of classes **→** 5 weekdays before fall finals

(WHICHEVER IS EARLIER)

24 DAYS, INCLUDING ONE DATE OF COMPETITION. NO MORE THAN 4 PER 7-DAY PERIOD.

SPRING TRADITIONAL SEGMENT

15 weeks before NCAA selections **→** NCAA selections

(MAY USE UP TO 12 OF THE 24 DAYS BEFORE THIS DATE)

USING SOME DAYS BEFORE THE SPRING SEASON?

If your team elects to use up to 12 of its 24 days immediately before the start of the spring segment, those days are **not** held to the nontraditional segment limitations outlined above.

NCAA SELECTIONS AND 15-WEEK START DATES

Sport	2023-24	15 Weeks	2024-25	15 Weeks	2025-26	15 Weeks
Baseball	May 13	Jan. 29	May 12	Jan. 27	May 11	Jan. 26
Lacrosse	May 5	Jan. 21	May 4	Jan. 19	May 3	Jan. 18
Softball	May 13	Jan. 29	May 12	Jan. 27	May 11	Jan. 26
Outdoor Track and Field*	May 19	Feb. 4	May 18	Feb. 2	May 17	Feb. 1
Beach Volleyball	April 27	Jan. 13	April 26	Jan. 11	April 25	Jan. 10
Men's Volleyball	April 14	Dec. 31	April 13	Dec. 29	April 12	Dec. 28
W. Water Polo	April 28	Jan. 14	April 27	Jan. 12	April 26	Jan. 11
Sports without an NCAA Championship	May 19	Feb. 4	May 18	Feb. 4	May 17	Feb. 4

* If you sponsor only outdoor track and field

“A DAY” OR “NOT A DAY”

	A DAY	NOT A DAY
Any athletically related activities (Bylaw 17.02.1.1) by any members of a team	✓	
Meetings, like those listed in Bylaw 17.02.1.1.1.1		✓
Fundraising, as outlined in Bylaw 17.02.1.1.1.2		✓
Observing activities, such as those in Bylaw 17.02.1.1.1.3		✓
Voluntary strength and conditioning activities, like the ones in Bylaw 17.02.1.1.1.4		✓
Coach interacting with a student-athlete’s social media post about voluntary workouts	✓	
Voluntary leadership programming, as defined in Bylaw 17.02.1.1.1.5		✓
Team building or team bonding activities	✓	

OUTSIDE COMPETITION?

*Student-athletes cannot compete on an outside team from **Start** → **Finish** of the traditional segment.*

DAYS OFF?

Still required at least once per 7-day period.

*Plus: Multisport SAs still need **one full day off per 7-day period**.*

WHAT ABOUT ...

Preparation for, and participation in, NCAA championships ... or in a non-NCAA season-ending championship like ECAC’s?

Permissible outside of the declared season. See Bylaw 17.1.3.

A team’s annual contest exemptions?

No change there! More details in Bylaw 17.1.4.5.

Preparation for, and participation in, a foreign tour?

Foreign tours are still separate from the declared season. Head to Bylaw 17.31.

HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

Contact the Division III AMA Staff Through RSRO.

DIVISION III FUTURE CHAMPIONSHIP SITES AND DATES 2025-2028

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Baseball	Selections	May 11	May 17
	Regionals	May 15-17	May 21-23
	Super Regionals	May 22-23	May 28-29
	Finals	May 29-June 4	June 4-10
Host	North Coast Athletic Conference/Greater Cleveland Sports Commission	York College (PA)	
Location	Cleveland, OH	York, PA	
Men's Basketball	Selections	March 1	Feb. 28
	First/Second Round	March 6-7	Mar. 5-6
	Sectionals	March 13 or 14	Mar. 12-13
	Finals	March 20-21; and April 5 (Indy)	Mar. 19 and 21
Host	Manchester/Visit Fort Wayne	Presidents' Athletic Conference	Mar. 16 and 18
Location	Fort Wayne, IN	Pittsburgh, PA	
Women's Basketball	Selections	March 1	Feb. 28
	First/Second Round	March 6-7	Mar. 5-6
	Sectionals	March 13-14	Mar. 12-13
	Finals	March 12 and 14	Mar. 18 and 20
Host	Old Dominion Athletic Conference/City of Salem	American Rivers Conf.	Mar. 16 and Apr. 1 (Indy)
Location	Salem, VA	Cedar Rapids, IA	ODAC Salem, VA
Cross Country	Selections	Nov. 16	Nov. 15
	Regionals	Nov. 15	Nov. 14
	Finals	Nov. 22	Nov. 21
	Host	Converse College/Spartanburg CVB	Carleton College
Location	Spartanburg, SC	Northfield, MN	Terre Haute, IN
Field Hockey	Selections	Nov. 9	Nov. 8
	First Round	Nov. 12	Nov. 11
	Second/Third Round	Nov. 15-15	Nov. 14-14
	Finals	Nov. 21 and 23	Nov. 20 and 22
Host	Trinity College (CT)	Hobart & William Smith	Middlebury
Location	Hartford, CT	Geneva, NY	Middlebury, VT
Football	Selections	Nov. 16	Nov. 15
	First Round	Nov. 22	Nov. 21
	Second Round	Nov. 29	Nov. 28
	Third Round	Dec. 6	Dec. 5
Quarterfinals	Dec. 13	Dec. 12	Dec. 11
Semifinals	Dec. 20	Dec. 19	Dec. 18
Finals	Jan. 10, 2026	Jan. 9, 2027 or TBD	Jan. 8, 2028 or TBD
Host	Ohio Athletic Conference/Canton Stark CVB	ODAC & City of Salem	OAC
Location	Canton, OH	Salem, VA	Canton, OH
Men's Golf	Selections	May 4	10-May
	Finals	May 12-15	May 18-21
	Host	Oglethorpe/Greater Orlando Sports Commission	Christopher Newport
	Location	Howey-in-the-Hills, FL	Williamsburg, VA
Selections	11-May	May 3	May 8
Finals	May 19-22	May 11-14	May 16-19
Host	Claremont-Mudd-Scripps	Christopher Newport	Williams
Location	Palm Desert, CA	Williamsburg, VA	Williamstown, MA
Men's Ice Hockey	Selections	March 8	March 7
	First Round	March 14	March 13
	Quarterfinals	March 21	March 20
	Finals	March 26 and 28	March 26 and 28
Host	Utica College	TBD	WIAC
Location	Utica, NY	Non-predetermined	Middleton, WI
Women's Ice Hockey	Selections	March 8	Mar. 7
	First Round	March 11	Mar. 13
	Quarterfinals	March 14	Mar. 20
	Finals	March 20 and 22	Mar. 26 and 28
Host	TBD	Plattsburgh State	TBD
Location	Non-predetermined	Plattsburgh, NY	Non-predetermined

DIVISION III FUTURE CHAMPIONSHIP SITES AND DATES 2025-2028

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Men's Lacrosse	Selections	May 3	May 9
	First Rounds	May 6	May 12
	Second & Third Rounds	May 9-10	May 15-16
	Quarterfinals & Semifinals	May 16-17	May 22-23
	Finals	May 24	May 30
Host	Harvard/Kraft Sports & Entertainment Foxborough, MA	Drexel Philadelphia, PA	Harvard/Kraft Sports & Entertainment Foxborough, MA
Women's Lacrosse	Selections	May 3	May 3
	First Round	May 9	May 8
	Second Round	May 10	May 9
	Regionals	May 16-17	May 15-16
	Finals	May 22 and 24	May 28 and 30
Host	Babson College Babson Park, MA	Tampa Tampa, FL	RIT Rochester, NY
Rowing	Selections	May 11	May 10
	Finals	May 29-30	May 28-29
	Host	University of North Georgia Gainesville, GA	Central Florida Sarasota, FL
Men's Soccer	Selections	Nov. 9	Nov. 8
	First/Second Rounds	Nov. 15-16	Nov. 14-15
	Sectionals	Nov. 22-23	Nov. 21-22
	Finals	Dec. 5 and 7	Dec. 3 and 5
	Host	UNLV/Las Vegas Events Las Vegas, NV	Old Crew Stadium Columbus, OH
Women's Soccer	Selections	Nov. 9	Nov. 8
	First/Second Rounds	Nov. 15-16	Nov. 14-15
	Sectionals	Nov. 22-23	Nov. 21-22
	Finals	Dec. 4 and 6	Dec. 4 and 6
	Host	UNLV/Las Vegas Events Las Vegas, NV	Old Crew Stadium Columbus, OH
Softball	Selections	May 11	May 17
	Regionals	May 14-16	May 20-22
	Super Regionals	May 22-23	May 27-28
	Finals	May 28 - June 3	June 3-9
	Host	Old Dominion Athletic Conference/City of Salem Salem, VA	Millikin Decatur, IL
Swimming & Diving	Selections	Feb. 26	Feb. 24
	Regionals (Diving)	Feb. 27-28	Feb. 26-27
	Finals	March 18-21	March 17-20
	Host	Franklin College/Indiana Sports Corporation Indianapolis	ODAC Greensboro, NC
	Location	Indianapolis	
Men's & Women's Tennis	Selections	May 4	9-May
	First/Second/Third Round	May 8-10	May 14-16
	Finals	Women: May 18-25; Men: May 19-26	May 24-June 1
	Host	University of the South/Chattanooga Sports Commission Chattanooga, TN	Claremont MS Claremont, CA
	Location	Chattanooga, TN	Claremont, CA
Indoor Track & Field	Selections	March 8	March 7
	Finals	March 13-14	March 12-13
	Host	TBD/City of Birmingham Birmingham, AL	Whitworth University / Spokane Sports Commission Spokane, WA
	Location	Birmingham, AL	Spokane, WA
	Selections	May 17	May 21
Outdoor Track & Field	Finals	May 21-23	May 27-29
	Host	University of Wisconsin, LaCrosse LaCrosse, WI	University of Mount Union/Greater Cleveland Sports Commission Geneva, OH
	Location	LaCrosse, WI	Geneva, OH
	Selections	April 12	Apr. 11
	Preliminary Round	April 17-18	April 15-17
Men's Volleyball	Finals	April 24 and 26	April 23 and 25
	Host	Springfield College Springfield, MA	Salisbury University/Wicomico County Tourism Salisbury, MD
	Location	Springfield, MA	Salisbury, MD
	Selections	Nov. 16	Nov. 15
	Regionals	Nov. 20-22	Nov. 19-21
Women's Volleyball	Finals	Dec. 3-4 and 6	Dec. 2-3 and 5
	Host	Illinois Wesleyan University Bloomington, IL	SportsPITTSBURGH/Presidents' Athletic Conf Pittsburgh, PA
	Location	Bloomington, IL	Pittsburgh, PA
	Selections	Feb. 27-Mar. 1	Feb. 26-28
	Regionals	Mar. 13-14	Mar. 12-13
Wrestling	Finals	Mar. 13-14	Mar. 10-11
	Host	American Rivers Conference Cedar Rapids, IA	Augustana College Moline, IL
	Location	Cedar Rapids, IA	Moline, IL

Division III Championships Liaisons to Sports Committees

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 Liz Sucha - lsuscha@ncaa.org
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Wrestling	JP Williams jpwilliams@ncaa.org	Duey Naatz naatzd@uwstout.edu

NCAA Division III Federated Rules Process

The following sets forth the process for establishing Division III specific playing rules. This process was guided and established in accordance with the following principles:

1. There needs to be appropriate Division III input into the establishment of playing rules;
2. Playing rules that are related to student-athlete health and safety are common and the process for all other playing rules should encourage common rules and allow for flexibility when deemed necessary by the division; and
3. The divisional playing rules process needs to be incorporated into the existing framework of the rules making process to support efficiency, understanding and application of the rules.

Authority for federating.

1. Proposal BOG-2022-1, the establishment of a new NCAA constitution included a provision (Constitution Article 2-A-2-d) that allows for flexibility at the divisional level in establishing rules for sports competitions.
2. NC-2024-7 (common provision voting separately) clarified that playing rules do not have to be common and charged the divisions with establishing their divisional processes for playing rules.
3. July 17-18, 2023, The Division III Management Council ratified actions by the NCAA Division III Administrative Committee approving a process for establishing Division III specific playing rules (i.e., federated rules process).
4. October 21-22, 2024, NCAA Division III Management Council amended the Division III federated rules process by creating a Federated Rules Subcommittee of Management Council.

Core tenets of the process.

Only Division III members of playing rules bodies and the Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP) will vote on Division III specific playing rules.

The Division III sport committee(s) will provide guidance to the Division III members of the playing rules committee(s) on potential federated playing rules.

The Federated Rules Subcommittee of Management Council (see below), when appropriate, will provide guidance to the Division III members of the playing rule committee(s) and PROP on potential federated playing rules.

NCAA national office staff will provide notice to the membership when proposed playing rules have a significant financial or philosophical impact.

Process.

The following link provides an overview of the process for establishing common playing rules:
[Rules: What Is A Playing Rule.pdf](#).

The following sets forth the process for Division III federation of playing rules:

Before the annual playing rule committee meeting.

The Division III members of the rules committee will meet with the members of the relevant Division III sports championship committee to provide additional Division III perspectives on the proposals being considered.

The Federated Rules Subcommittee of the Management Council may also attend this meeting to provide its perspective.

Annual Playing Rules committee meeting.

During the annual meeting, the Division III members of the playing rules committee may recommend and vote on rules proposals that are specific to Division III.

A simple majority vote of the Division III members is required to approve a proposal for the division.

If the playing rules committee adopts a common rule that is not supported by the Division III members at the annual meeting, it shall still go forward as a common rule for purposes of soliciting Division III comments. The Division III members will consider whether or not the common rule should apply to Division III after the comment period.

To raise awareness of the opportunity to provide feedback, the NCAA Division III staff will notify the membership through NADIII AA and D3CA of any proposed rules that are going out for comment, that:

1. Have a significant financial impact whether that is a direct financial impact, impacts personnel or requires additional resources; or
2. Could be construed to impact a fundamental Division III principle (e.g., student-athlete participation opportunities).

Comment Period.

Proposals that are approved for Division III by the Division III members of the rules committee are sent to Division III for feedback and may be, at the discretion of the full rules committee, sent to other divisions for feedback, noting that the proposal would apply to Division III.

Playing Rules committee review of comment period results.

Prior to the meeting, the Division III members of the playing rules committee will meet again with the relevant Division III sports championship committee to review the comments.

The Federated Rules Subcommittee of the Management Council may also attend this meeting to provide its perspective.

After the joint meeting, the Division III members of the playing rules committee at their playing rules committee meeting may do the following:

1. Reconsider, delay implementation or alter a Division III specific proposal.
2. Reconsider, delay implementation or alter a common rule as it applies to Division III.
3. For Division III, reconsider, delay implementation or alter proposed common rules that were not ultimately approved by the playing rules committee.

The vote for any of these actions would be a simple majority of the Division III members of the playing rules committee.

After the rules committee meeting.

The Federated Rules Subcommittee of Management Council may meet before PROP's review of proposals to discuss any proposals of concern. Any position of this subcommittee will be forwarded to the Division III members of PROP.

Playing Rules Oversight Panel review of proposals.

1. Division III members of the Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP) vote on Division III specific proposals.
2. If a common rules proposal is not supported by the full PROP, the Division III members of the panel may vote to determine whether the proposal is approved for Division III.
3. The Division III members may also vote to remand a common rule back to the playing rules committee for Division III only.

Conclusion of the federated playing rules process.

The Division III PROP members' vote is the final step in the federated process. There is no appellate opportunity. However, after the playing rules process has been completed, the division does have the opportunity to exempt Division III from a common playing rule that has been adopted but is not effective per the process outlined below.

NCAA Division III Federated Playing Rules Exemption Process

At the 2025 NCAA Convention the membership passed proposal 2025-4 which allows Management Council to exempt Division III from a common playing rule approved by PROP that is not yet effective. The process permits either the membership or the Division III Management Council to initiate that review under limited circumstances. The process for initiating and conducting such a review is as follows:

Management Council:

1. After PROP approves any playing rules changes, the staff will forward the newly adopted rules identified during the playing rules process by the membership or governance structure to the Management Council Playing Rules Subcommittee for review that has a significant financial impact and/or are detrimental to a Division III philosophy.
2. The subcommittee will provide the Management Council with a summary of its review and any recommendations at the council's next regular meeting or during a videoconference, if needed.
3. If PROP meets after the July Management Council meeting, the staff will arrange a videoconference with the council to review any report and recommendations from the subcommittee.

Membership:

1. After PROP approves any playing rules changes, the membership may request the Management Council to review a common playing rule. To initiate this review, the membership (either two multi-sport conferences or 20 institutions) must submit a letter to the Division III Management Council chair with a copy to the council's NCAA staff liaison.
2. The letter must be executed by either the conference commissioners, athletics directors, athletics direct reports or president/chancellors, identify the playing rule(s), and state the reason why the rule(s) will place an unreasonable financial burden on member institutions or is detrimental to a Division III philosophical principle. Supporting documentation is recommended.

3. The request should also indicate the preferred outcome if the Management Council would exempt the division from the playing rule (i.e., making the rule permissible or reverting to the previous rule).
4. The request should be submitted as early as possible once the membership has been notified of the rules change(s) that have been approved by PROP. No request will be considered after the competitive season for a sport has started. The council will consider the timing of the request and the impact that changing a playing rule will have on officials, coaches, student-athletes, athletics departments and their staff when making a decision.

Possible Management Council Decisions:

1. Maintain the playing rule that was approved by PROP.
2. Make the playing rule permissive.
3. Revert the mandatory playing rule to the previous rule.

Decision Process:

1. The council will review the written request without an in-person presentation.
2. The council may request participation from a Division III member of PROP, relevant sport playing rules committee/subcommittee and/or staff liaisons to either group.
3. The council will provide its response in writing, copying PROP and the sport playing rules committee/subcommittee.
4. Council decisions are effective immediately, unless otherwise noted.
5. There is no opportunity for an appeal or reconsideration of the council's decision.

Decision Ratification:

If the council exempts the division from a common playing rule or makes the rule permissive, the council's action will be included in the next Convention's Official Notice for possible ratification by the Division III delegates during the Business Session at the NCAA Convention.

OVERVIEW OF THE NCAA PLAYING RULES PROCESS

Basics

NCAA Playing Rules cover situations:

1. On the competition area (e.g., field, court, etc.);
2. When game officials are present; and
3. When the competition is between two teams.

Playing rules do NOT deal with the following:

- Recruiting
- Scrimmage
- Practices
- Compliance issues
- NCAA championship policies

In general, the playing rules book is intended to include only those things that a game official can reasonably control. There are some cases where the rules book may be the best place to house a certain rule (e.g., wrestling weight-management policies and procedures), but as a guiding principle, enforceability of rules for officials generally is a prerequisite for inclusion in the rules book.

Sports with NCAA Playing Rules

The NCAA publishes 15 rules books for the 18 sports listed below (cross country, indoor track and field, and outdoor track and field, and men's and women's water polo are in one book) and has 15 playing rules committees/subcommittees.

Fall	Winter	Spring
Cross Country	Men's and Women's Basketball	Baseball
Football	Bowling	Men's and Women's Lacrosse
Soccer	Ice Hockey	Softball
Women's Volleyball	Swimming and Diving	Outdoor Track and Field
Men's Water Polo	Indoor Track and Field	Women's Water Polo
	Wrestling	

Non NCAA Rules Sources

In cases where the rules of an international or other governing body serve the needs of the NCAA membership, a sport may be played under these rules. In most cases, the championship sports committees will make minor modifications to these rules. These modifications go through a similar process as do proposals from NCAA playing rules committees (e.g., PROP oversight). The sports are listed below, noting the governing body handling these competition rules:

Sport	Governing Body
Fencing	United States Fencing Association
Field Hockey	International Hockey Federation
Golf	United States Golf Association
Gymnastics	Federation Internationale de Gymnastique
Rifle	USA Shooting
Rowing	United States Rowing Association
Skiing	International Ski Federation/US Ski Association
Tennis	Intercollegiate Tennis Association
Men's Volleyball	United States Volleyball

Relationship to NCAA Championship Sport Committees

All NCAA playing rules are used during regular-season and championship competition. Playing rules are written somewhat broadly in some areas to allow for the wide range of NCAA members during the regular season. However, championships committees may be more stringent with some policies (e.g., facility requirements, number of squad members, etc.).

Championship sport committees are given the opportunity to provide input and feedback during the rules process. However, a championship committee is not permitted to alter an NCAA playing rule or overrule a rules committee. Similarly, the playing rules committee is not able to create different rules for championship play or make policy that would affect only championship competition.

In many cases, the secretary-rules editor and chair of the rules committee serve as liaisons to the championship.

Secretary-Rules Editors

The NCAA secretary-rules editors are the official rules interpreters for each NCAA playing rules committee. This individual serves on the committee but does not have a formal vote. In general, secretary-rules editors are long-time members of their sport community with extensive backgrounds in coaching, officiating and educating. This position is critical to the success of the playing rules process and the work of these committees.

Secretary-rules editors are limited to two, four-year terms. The historical knowledge and understanding of rules history is a key element the secretary-rules editor brings to committee discussions and decisions.

Interpretations

There are times when the NCAA rules books do not cover a situation that may be encountered during play. In other cases, a new rule may affect competition in a way the committee did not expect, and a clarification may be required.

In between annual rules sessions, the secretary-rules editor may issue interpretations intended to amplify and clarify the spirit and intent of NCAA playing rules. These interpretations, which are made in consultation with the chair and sometimes the full committee, are to be taken as the rule for play immediately. At the annual rules meetings, the full committee will confirm or overturn these rules interpretations.

Officiating Programs

Many NCAA sports have an officiating improvement program, which is designed to educate and assign the best officials for NCAA championship competition. The sports with an officiating improvement program are listed below:

- Baseball
- Men's Basketball
- Women's Basketball
- Women's Bowling
- Field Hockey
- Men's Ice Hockey
- Women's Ice Hockey
- Men's Lacrosse
- Women's Lacrosse
- Men's and Women's Soccer
- Softball
- Women's Volleyball
- Men's and Women's Water Polo
- Wrestling

Several other sports have well established officiating programs with a national association (e.g., swimming and diving and women's volleyball), and the NCAA has contracted with those groups to assist in assigning and developing officials for championship competition.

Generally, the national coordinator of officials attends NCAA playing rules meetings sessions and provides input from an officiating perspective. This input is critical for the committee and has strengthened the bond between officiating and the rules process. Also, starting in 2007, the NCAA has allocated funding for an active official to attend each rules committee meeting.

Coaches Associations

The NCAA playing rules administration staff relies on the respective coaching associations for feedback from and communication with the coaching community. At each coaches association's annual convention, the secretary-rules editor, rules committee chair and NCAA staff member attend and present regarding the playing rules process and procedures.

In recent years, coaching associations have been increasingly helpful by assisting the rules committees in the distribution of surveys, bulletins and other materials. Coaching associations often have the most up-to-date databases and e-mail contacts for coaches, who are a key constituency for playing rules committees.

In some cases, the coaches associations have reserved space in newsletters and Web sites, and have allowed secretary-rules editors and staff to write articles for their publication. This enhances the communication with this important constituency.

Typical Playing Rules Cycle

The rules process involves four key steps. They are:

- Proposal development/annual meeting
- Approval process
- Feedback/communication
- Education/training

To illustrate how this process works, a typical cycle for football is listed below

- *Proposal Development/Annual Meeting (February)*. This is the only time the committee meets in person as a group. At this meeting, the committee considers the results of the annual rules survey, reviews proposals from the membership and has a general discussion on the health of the game. Statistics, a balance between offense and defense, and other issues are also discussed.
- *Approval Process (March)*. Once the proposed rules changes are developed and voted on, the committee publishes its proposals. The proposals are sent to the membership for comment. At a minimum, a two-week window is provided for membership comment.

- *Feedback/Communication (April)*. The feedback is compiled by the NCAA staff and shared with the rules committee. If needed, the committee has the option of reconsidering or altering a proposal based on the feedback received.

Once finalized, the proposals and membership comments are submitted to PROP for approval. The PROP member assigned to each sport has a separate call with the secretary-rules editor, chair and staff liaison to review the proposals in more detail. The full Panel holds calls periodically to approve and receive reports from its committees. On the PROP call, the member assigned to each sport reviews the changes with the full group. If approved by PROP, the changes go into effect upon publications of the next rules book. If any proposals are not approved, NCAA staff communicates this to the membership and committee in a separate announcement.

- *Education/Training (May-July)*. Once PROP takes action, the rules book and other materials are produced, depending on each sport. In football, this includes the rules book, video, preseason guide and mechanics manual. The secretary-rules editor and national coordinator make presentations to various coaching and officiating groups at clinics and preseason sessions.

TIMELINE OF IMPORTANT DATES : TWO-YEAR RULES PROCESS

WHAT ARE PLAYING RULES?

- Playing rules are what happens on the field, court, pool, pitch, mat, rink, lane, track, slope or range when an opponent and officials are present.
- Playing rules are the same for all three divisions.
- Playing rules are the same for regular-season and championship competition.

INFORMATION GATHERING STAGE – Year One

- During the season, the secretary-rules editor and committee members compile hot topics (comments , ideas, questions) from coaches, commissioners and athletics administrators. A rules survey may be conducted to determine how the membership feels about certain issues. A rules proposal may be forwarded to any committee member for consideration.

ANNUAL MEETING – Year One

- The committee meets to discuss and determine rules proposals to improve the game.

COMMENT PERIOD – Year One

- A list of proposals approved by the committee is sent to coaches and conference commissioners for feedback. This two-week comment period allows the membership to see and respond to the exact language of the proposals.

PROP APPROVAL – Year One

- The Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP) reviews all of the rules-change proposals the committee approved and all comments from the membership. PROP's charge is to review all proposals for financial implications, safety concerns and harm to the image of the game. Items approved by PROP are incorporated into the rules book.

TWO-YEAR RULES BOOK – Year One

- A complimentary copy of the playing rules book is mailed to head coaches and conference commissioners. Additional copies of the book may be ordered or downloaded online at NCAApublications.com.

INFORMATION GATHERING STAGE – Year Two

- During the season, the secretary-rules editor and committee members compile hot topics. A nontraditional playing season rules survey may be offered.

ANNUAL MEETING – Year Two

- The committee meets to discuss item for future consideration and educational opportunities. The committee submits a report to PROP.

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PLAYING RULES & DIVISION III

April 2024

What is a playing rule?

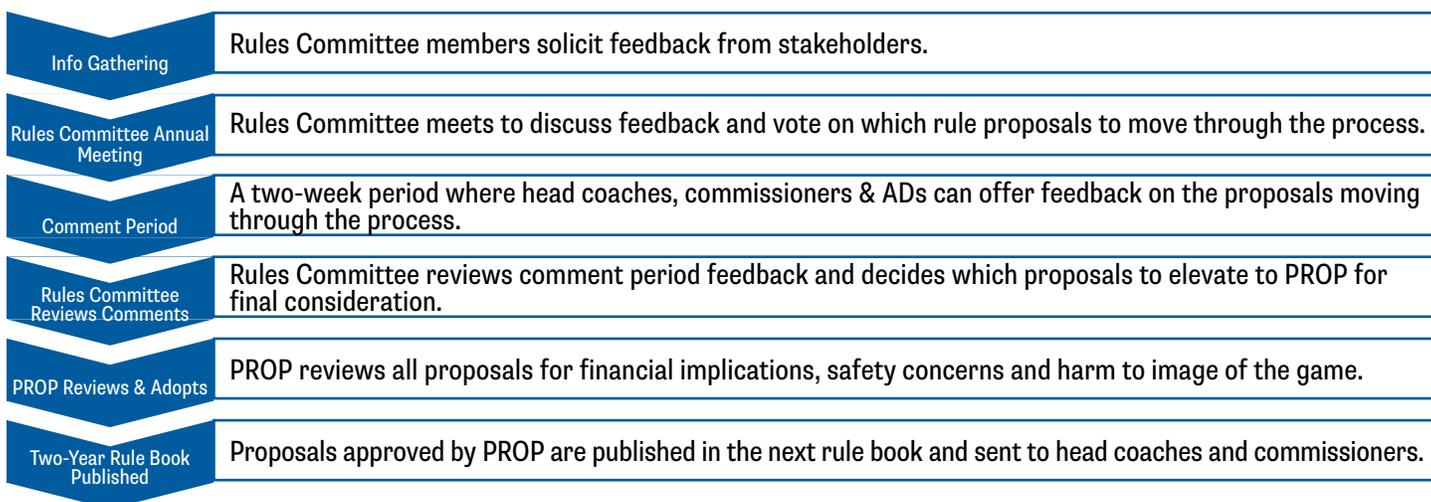
Playing rules are what happens on the field, court, pool, pitch, mat, rink, lane, track or slope when an opponent and officials are present. Playing rules are not what happens during recruiting or practicing, or while working on compliance issues or NCAA championship policies.

What is the difference between a common rule and a federated rule?

A **common** rule is consistent across all three divisions, while a **federated** rule allows for differences by division.

What is the common rule making process and who is involved?

Every two years, each sport undergoes a Playing Rules Cycle.



Stakeholders.

Members of Division III, including coaches, commissioners and athletic administrators.

Rules Committee.

An Association-wide committee that meets to determine which rule changes are elevated to PROP and if proposals are common or federated. DIII is represented on each committee by 2 to 4 members, depending on the sport. For sports using non-NCAA playing rules*, a subcommittee of the DIII Sport Championship Committee serves in this role.

Sport Championship Committee.

A DIII sport-specific committee comprised of coaches and administrators who are experts in their sport, govern each sport and are responsible for administering their respective championships, including establishing brackets and selecting teams to fill them.

PROP.

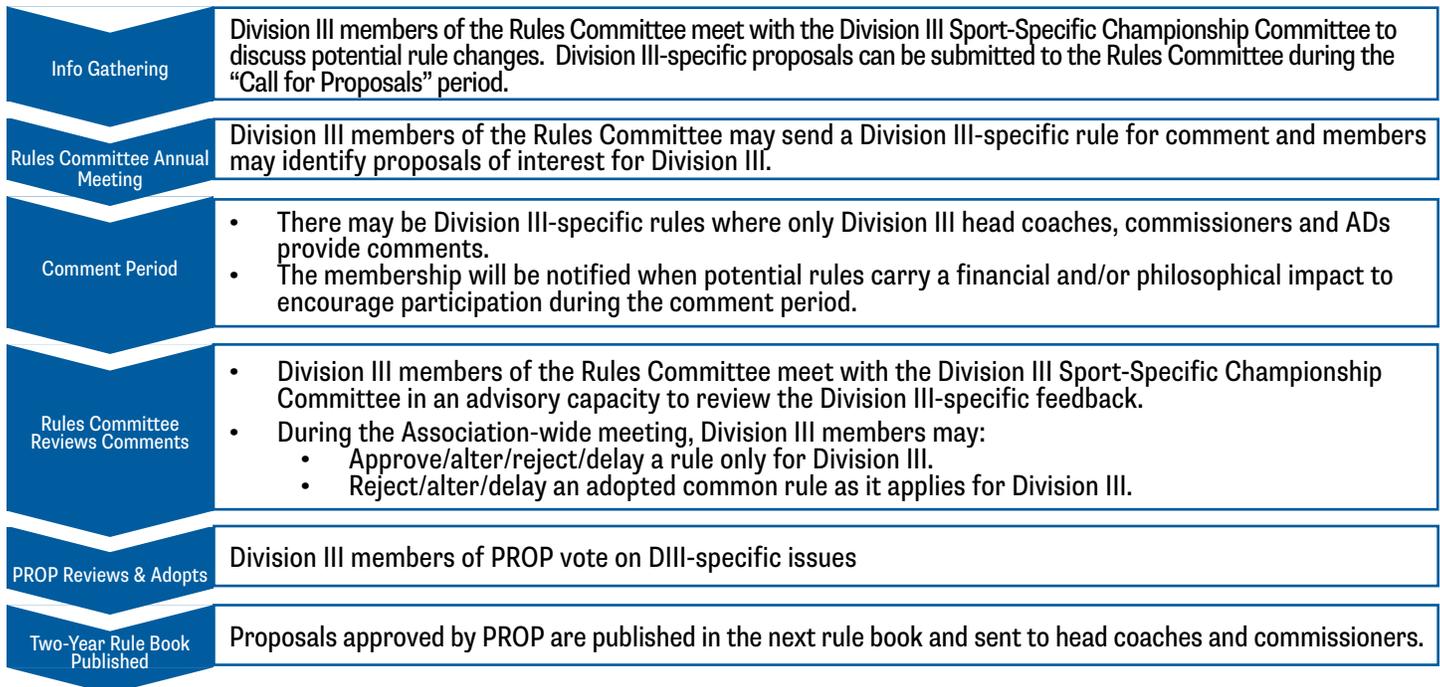
The Playing Rules Oversight Panel. An Association-wide committee that reviews playing rules proposals and playing rules issues, including implementation of playing rules proposed by rules committees. DIII representation is 3 members.

*sports using non-NCAA playing rules: fencing, field hockey, golf, gymnastics, rifle, rowing, skiing, tennis and men's volleyball.

PLAYING RULES & DIVISION III

April 2024

How does the Division III federated rules process fit in the existing playing rules process?



Can any playing rule be federated?

While PROP has suggested that some rules areas are integral to competition and should remain common for all divisions, it has also acknowledged that there could be exceptions based on compelling reasons to federate a particular rule. Only the DIII members of PROP determine if a proposed rule that addresses one of the areas, below, has compelling reasons to be federated.

PROP has suggested that the following rules areas should be *common*:

- Rules with a health and safety impact
- Field dimensions, court markings, permissible logos on the field/court
- Scoring and timing rules, including rules surrounding overtime
- Conduct/unsporting rules
- Rules addressing penalty enforcement
- Uniform rules
- Equipment rules (ball/stick specifications, player equipment)
- Technical rules (individual team sports)

PROP has suggested that the following rules areas could be *federated* or *permissive*:

- Halftime/intermission length
- Allowable substitutions
- Technology rules (instant replay, challenge review, technology on bench/sideline, etc.)
- Rules identified as administrative that can be altered by mutual consent of the institutions involved in the contest

Have questions about the playing rules processes?

For questions about playing rules contact: Rachel Seewald, rseewald@ncaa.org.

2025-26 NCAA Division X Sport Championship Preliminary-Round Information and Bid Checklist

Selections

Selections for the 2025-26 NCAA Division X Sport Championship will be announced at Time Eastern time, Day, Month Date via Platform.

Preliminary-Round Schedule

Opening Round: (day), (Month and date): (start time-end time)
First Round: (day), (Month and date): (start time-end time)
Second Round: (day), (Month and date): (start time-end time)
Third Round: (day), (Month and date): (start time-end time)
Quarterfinals: (day), (Month and date): (start time-end time)
(day), (Month and date): (start time-end time) or
Semifinals: (day), (Month and date): (start time-end time) *(if necessary)*

Bid Checklist

The following materials must be submitted by institutions that wish to be considered as hosts for preliminary-round competition. All materials are due by 5 p.m. Eastern time, Day, Month and date.

Each of the online forms listed below may be accessed and submitted through the championships bid portal at <https://championships.ncaa.org>. The application is now part of My Apps and new users need to go through their SSO administrator to have it added to their My Apps account.

To begin the process of submitting a bid, you will need to locate the specific divisional sport and round in the Championships Available for Bidding section and click on Start Bid.

- Proposed Budget(s).** An online proposed budget must be completed for **each** round of competition you wish to host. For those institutions submitting bids for multiple rounds, a 'copy' function is available in the system and will allow you to copy the budget or bid for another round. The appropriate round and date of competition must be indicated on each budget. Please be sure to include projected ticket sales in the Receipts section.

Note: Due to budget system upgrades, budgets submitted before the 2023-24 academic year can no longer be copied. Any newly submitted budgets will again be available for copying for future years/additional rounds. Previous budgets may still be accessed via the Home tab.

Free-form fields in the budget templates have been eliminated. Bidders will have to make their selections from a predetermined menu of options for each category. To assist with determining the appropriate option, bidders can hover over each option for examples/details.

Please carefully review pages (page #s) of the 2025-26 NCAA Division (div) (gender) (sport) Prechampionship Manual (linked), before submitting a proposed budget, and make note of the following for all preliminary-round competition:

- All lodging expenses for officials and site representatives (if needed) must be included in your budget. Officials' fees, per diem and travel expenses do not need to be included, nor do per diem and travel expenses for site representatives – the NCAA will pay those expenses directly.
 - If needed, this space can be used for other pertinent information related to sport-specific championship budgets (i.e., do not budget for specific equipment; this will be provided by the NCAA).
- Facility Profile.** An online facility profile must be completed and/or maintained as necessary by each institution interested in hosting preliminary-round competition. Information regarding video board, LED board and/or ribbon boards should be entered via the “Boards/Control Room” tab of the applicable venue profile.

A facility profile can be maintained and updated on a regular basis. If a facility can host multiple sports, check the appropriate box(es) under the Sports tab of the facility profile to provide the information for that facility. Refer to page (page #) of the prechampionship manual for facility requirements and site selection procedures. Facility information must be reviewed for completeness and accuracy once a year. Instructions on the process are included in the bid portal.

- Key Contacts.** The key contacts for your institution should be entered and/or maintained as necessary within your profile. Please enter the information for the key personnel associated with running a championship at your site.

When starting a bid, you will be prompted to enter new key personnel, or edit or confirm your existing key personnel. In addition, you will be asked to designate individuals who should receive the various host shipments (e.g., sport equipment, merchandise, awards, etc.). Please include the proper mailing address for overnight deliveries. P.O. box addresses will not be accepted.

Personnel who will administer the competition also will be listed and can be edited within the Profile section of the Championships Bid Portal. When entering individuals in this manner, information must be entered on both the General tab and the Role/Titles by Sport or Facility tab.

- **Critical Incident Response Team Contact Information.** The system automatically will generate a critical incident response team contact information form based on data entered into the key contacts form and the new Emergency Numbers tab in the facility profile. If applicable, site representative information will be added by the championship manager once a site has been selected for hosting.
- **Safety and Security Plan.** Based on a review of current and future championships competition venues, discussions with safety and security experts, and their own expertise and knowledge, the NCAA has established a Safety and Security Advisory Group to develop a compilation of *Best Practices* for NCAA Championships, which can be found [here](#). We urge each competition venue to take these *Best Practices* into account when developing its safety and security program.

As part of your bid, **please submit a safety and security plan** for your venue. Your safety and security plan documents should be uploaded in the Documents tab of the facility profile, under in the Safety and Security Plan section.

- **Alcoholic Beverages.** All Division I, Division II and National Collegiate championships are eligible to engage in the sale of beer, wine and prepackaged/premixed beverages (the latter with alcohol by volume of not greater than 15%), provided certain criteria are met. After starting a bid in the NCAA Bid Portal, users will be prompted to answer a few questions that will determine their institution’s eligibility to sell alcoholic beverages at a given venue. If a school is deemed eligible and is interested in selling permissible alcoholic beverages, it will be required to complete one of the agreement options that must be signed and uploaded into the bid portal. Please thoroughly review the Championships Alcohol Sales Policy before determining and completing the appropriate agreement. A host that indicates it plans to sell alcohol at its site will see a new “Concessions Reporting” section in the budget. This section will need to be completed AFTER the conclusion of competition and submitted along with the actual expenses.
- **Lodging.** The host institution/agency shall negotiate a courtesy hold for the participating institutions/student-athlete(s). The selected hotel properties shall be within no more than 30 miles of the competition site and be priced at a fair and reasonable market room rate, while remaining sensitive to daily divisional per diem allowances. The selection of a competition site may be dependent on availability and quality of rooms for participating institutions/student-athletes. A [letter of intent template](#) is provided by the NCAA for the host to use to confirm the hold with the hotel(s).

All prospective hosts for non-predetermined sites will be required to identify the hotel properties they secured for the event via the Hotels tab, along with an upload of signed hotel agreement(s)/letter(s) of intent.

- **Liability Insurance.** Host institutions must maintain and provide proof of at least \$1 million of general liability insurance on an occurrence form for Bodily Injury and Property Damage, including Products Liability (including completed-operations coverage), coverage for

contractual liability, independent contractors, and personal and advertising injury. Coverage cannot exclude liability arising from athletic participation, spectators, alcohol, or food-borne illness. The certificate must be submitted to NCAA prior to competition. State institutions subject to state governing tort laws are permitted to provide proof of limited liability under state laws instead of general liability coverage. (This is the minimum requirement per NCAA bylaws).

If applicable, off-campus venues must also maintain and provide a minimum of \$1 million in general liability insurance on an occurrence form for Bodily Injury and Property Damage, including Products Liability (including completed-operations coverage), coverage for contractual liability, independent contractors, and personal and advertising injury. Coverage cannot exclude liability arising from athletic participation, spectators, alcohol, or food-borne illness. The NCAA must be named as an additional insured.

All insurance must be provided by an insurance company with an A.M. Best Rating of A-, VII or higher.

Host institutions must provide the national office with the appropriate certificates of insurance or documentation of self-insurance. This information must be provided via the Certificate of Insurance link in the bid portal. As this is a new feature in the portal, all prospective hosts must upload their documentation once. Depending on the coverage, users must subsequently verify their documentation is still valid, or upload a new certificate once the previous version has expired.

- **[Other additional requirement(s)]**. If you have any additional sport-specific bid requirements, they should be added here. If other documents are required, they can be uploaded in to the Championships Bid and Host portal system.
- **[Other additional requirement(s)]**. If you have any additional sport-specific bid requirements, they should be added here. If other documents are required, they can be uploaded in to the Championships Bid and Host portal system.

Additional Host Information/Resources

Host Operations Manual. The 2025-26 NCAA Division (div) (gender) (sport) Championship Host Operations Manual (*linked*) will assist your institution in all stages of the bidding and hosting process.

Drug Testing. Drug testing may occur at any round of the championship and the assistance of the host institution will be a vital part of the testing. You will be notified in advance if the round you are hosting has been selected for drug testing. Please review the [drug testing site coordinator manual](#) and note that Drug Free Sport International will provide materials to assist in the program.

Americans with Disabilities Act. The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that public establishments offer equal access and services to people who are physically and mentally challenged. The host institution/conference is required to confirm that each facility in which an NCAA championship or ancillary event occurs is in compliance with the Act by the various facilities hosting NCAA championship events. The host institution/conference is responsible for determining if the competition site will be in compliance as of the dates of the championship. If the host institution/conference becomes aware that a competition site hosting an NCAA championship event will not be in compliance, it shall immediately notify the NCAA national office staff member with responsibility for the event in order to discuss the issue.

Statement of Inclusion. The host institution/conference plays a central role in fostering, growing and preserving an inclusive culture on-site at NCAA championship events. Potential hosts should review the NCAA statement of inclusion [here](#) and prepare to deliver and maintain an environment that is safe, healthy, and free of discrimination and respects the dignity of all persons.

NCAA Bylaw 31. Please review Bylaw 31 of the NCAA Division (div) Manual as it contains policies regarding the administration of an NCAA event.

Contact Information. If you have any questions regarding the bid process, please contact the (championship administrator) at 317-917-XXXX or xxxxxxxxx@ncaa.org.

APPENDIX H • 2025-26 DIVISION III AUTOMATIC QUALIFICATION SPORT CHAMPIONSHIP BERTHS

Tentative allocations pending review of 2025-26 sponsorship.

SPORT	BRACKET SIZE	Automatic Qualifier	At-Large
BASEBALL	64	41	23
M BASKETBALL	64	43	21
W BASKETBALL	64	43	21
FIELD HOCKEY	28	18	10
FOOTBALL	40	28	12
#M GOLF	43 teams 6 individuals	34	9
#W GOLF	29 teams 6 individuals	25	4
M ICE HOCKEY	14	10	4
W ICE HOCKEY	13	8	4
M LACROSSE	40	27	13
W LACROSSE	47	32	15
ROWING	8	4	4
M SOCCER	64	42	22
W SOCCER	64	43	21
SOFTBALL	64	42	22
#M TENNIS	44 teams 32 singles 16 doubles	34	10
#W TENNIS	49 teams 32 singles 16 doubles	38	11
M VOLLEYBALL	21	14	5
W VOLLEYBALL	64	43	21
WRESTLING	210	n/a	n/a

Automatic Qualifiers – the number of conferences that meet the automatic qualification requirements.

At-large – The bracket size minus the number of AQs. This would be a national selection based on the NPI.

Individual/team sports that qualify for automatic qualification selection principles. The AQ access ratio for individual/team sports is 1:7.0 and the individual participant access for each championship varies.

Notes:

- Brackets are based on the previous academic year's sponsorship numbers (eligible institutions).
- Championship berths are based on the current academic year's sponsorship numbers (eligible institutions).
- Bracket size and format (i.e., additional preliminary-round games) may fluctuate based on sport sponsorship numbers. The team sport access ration is 1:6.0.
- At-larges will maintain a minimum of two berths.
- Bracket sizes when applying the 1:6.0 ratio have been truncated down to the nearest whole number (52.7 truncates to 52).



DIVISION III
DISCOVER | DEVELOP | DEDICATE

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Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference

Alfred State College	AL-fred
Carlow University	KAHR-loh
Hilbert College	HIL-bert
La Roche University	luh-ROHSH
Mount Aloysius College	al-oh-ISH-uhs
Penn State University, Altoona	al-TOO-nuh
Pennsylvania State University Erie , the Behrend College	EER-ee, BAIR-uhnd
University of Pittsburgh, Bradford	PITS-burg, BRAD-ferd
University of Pittsburgh, Greensburg	PITS-burg, GREENZ-burg



American Rivers Conference

Buena Vista University	BYOO-nah VIS-tuh
Central College (Iowa)	SEN-truhl
Coe College	KOH
Loras College	LAWR-is
Luther College	LOO-ther
Nebraska Wesleyan University	WES-lee-uhn
Simpson College	SIMP-suhn
University of Dubuque	duh-BYOOK
Wartburg College	WAWRT-burg



American Southwest Conference

East Texas Baptist University	BAP-tist
Hardin-Simmons University	HAHR-dn - SIM-uhnz
Howard Payne University	HOW-erd PEYN
University of Mary Hardin-Baylor	MAIR-ee HAHR-dn - BEY-ler

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ATLANTIC EAST CONFERENCE

Atlantic East Conference

Centenary University (New Jersey)	sen-TEN-uh-ree
Gwynedd Mercy University	GWIN-ed MUR-see
Immaculata University	ih-MAK-yuh-la-ta
Marymount University (Virginia)	MAIR-ee-mount
Marywood University	MAIR-ee-wood
Neumann University	NOO-muhn
Pratt Institute	PRAT
Saint Elizabeth University	ih-LIZ-uh-buhth



Centennial Conference

Bryn Mawr College	BRIN mahr
Dickinson College	DIK-in-suhn
Franklin & Marshall College	FRANGK-lin & MAHR-shuhl
Gettysburg College	GET-iz-burg
Haverford College	HAV-er-ferd
Johns Hopkins University	jonz HOP-kinz
McDaniel College	muhk-DAN-yuhl
Muhlenberg College	MYOO-luhn-burg
Swarthmore College	SWAWRTH-mohr
Ursinus College	ur-SAHY-nis
Washington College (Maryland)	WOSH-ing-tuhn



City University of New York Athletic Conference

Baruch College	buh-ROOK
Brooklyn College	BROOK-lin
Hunter College	HUHN-ter
John Jay College of Criminal Justice	JON JEY
Lehman College	LEE-muhn
Medgar Evers College	MED-ger EV-erz
The City College of New York	NOO YAWRK
York College (New York)	YAWRK

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Coast-To-Coast Conference

Christopher Newport University	KRIS-tuh-fer NOO-pawrt
Johnson & Wales University (Charlotte)	JON-suhn & weylz
Regent University	REE-juhnt
Salisbury University	SAWLZ-ber-ee
University of California, Santa Cruz	SAN-tuh KROOZ
University of Mary Washington	MAIR-ee
Warren Wilson College	WAWR-uhn WIL-suhn



College Conference of Illinois & Wisconsin

Augustana College (Illinois)	aw-guhst-AN-uh
Carroll University (Wisconsin)	KAIR-uhl
Carthage College	KAHR-thij
Elmhurst University	ELM-hurst
Illinois Wesleyan University	il-uh-NOI WES-lee-uhn
Millikin University	MIL-ih-kin
North Central College	nawrth SEN-truhl
North Park University	nawrth PAHRK
Wheaton College (Illinois)	WEET-n



Collegiate Conference of the South

Agnes Scott College	AG-nis
Asbury University	AS-ber-ee
Belhaven University	BEL-hey-vuhn
Covenant College	KUHV-uh-nuhnt
Huntingdon College	HUHN-ting-duhn
LaGrange College	luh-GREYNJ
Maryville College (Tennessee)	MAIR-ee-vil
Piedmont University	PEED-mont
Wesleyan College (Georgia)	WES-lee-uhn

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Conference of New England

Curry College	KUR-ee
Endicott College	EN-di-kot
Gordon College	GAWR-dn
Johnson & Wales University (Providence)	JON-suhn & weylz
Nichols College	NIK-uhlz
Roger Williams University	ROJ-er WIL-yuhmz
Suffolk University	SUHF-uhk
University of Hartford	HAHRT-ferd
University of New England	noo ING-gluhnd
Wentworth Institute of Technology	WENT-wurth
Western New England University	noo ING-gluhnd



Empire 8

Alfred University	AL-fred
Elmira College	el-MAHY-ruh
Hartwick College	HAHRT-wik
Houghton University	HOHT-n
Keuka College	KYOO-kah
Nazareth College	NAZ-er-uhth
Russell Sage College	RUHS-uhl seyj
St. John Fisher University	jon FISH-er
State University of New York at Brockport	BROK-pohrt
State University of New York at Geneseo	jen-uh-SEE-oh
State University of New York Polytechnic Institute	pol-ee-TEK-nik
Utica University	YOO-ti-kuh

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Great Northeast Athletic Conference

Albertus Magnus College	al-BUR-tuhs MAG-nuhs
Colby-Sawyer College	KOHL-bee SOI-er
Dean College	DEEN
Elms College	ELMZ
Emmanuel College (Massachusetts)	ih-MAN-yoo-uhl
Lasell University	lah-SEL
Mitchell College	MICH-uhl
New England College	noo ING-gluhnd
Norwich University	NAWR-ich
Regis College (Massachusetts)	REE-jis
Rivier University	riv-ee-AIR
Saint Joseph's College (Maine)	JOH-suhfs
Simmons University	SIM-uhnz
University of St. Joseph (Connecticut)	JOH-suhf



Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference

Anderson University (Indiana)	AN-der-suhn
Berea College	buh-REE-uh
Bluffton University	BLUHF-tuhn
Earlham College	URL-uhm
Franklin College	FRANGK-lin
Hanover College	HAN-oh-ver
Manchester University	MAN-ches-ter
Mount St. Joseph University	JOH-suhf
Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology	roh-z - HUHL-muhn
Transylvania University	tran-sil-VEYN-yuh

Independents

Maranatha Baptist University	mar-uh-NATH-uh BAP-tist
Rosemont College	ROHZ-mont
Trinity Washington University	TRIN-i-tee

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Landmark Conference

Catholic University	KATH-lik
Drew University	DROO
Elizabethtown College	ih-LIZ-uh-buhth-toun
Goucher College	GOW-cher
Juniata College	joo-nee-AH-tuh
Lycoming College	lie-COMB-ing
Moravian University	moh-REY-vee-uhn
Susquehanna University	suhs-kwuh-HAN-uh
University of Scranton	SKRAN-tn
Wilkes University	WILKS



Liberty League

Bard College	BAHRD
Clarkson University	KLAHRK-suhn
Hobart and William Smith Colleges	HOH-bahrt and WIL-yuhm
Ithaca College	ITH-uh-kuh
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	ren-suh-LEER pol-ee-TEK-nik
Rochester Institute of Technology	ROCH-es-ter
Skidmore College	SKID-mohr
St. Lawrence University	LAWR-uhns
Union College (New York)	YOON-yuhn
Vassar College	VAS-er



Little East Conference

Eastern Connecticut State University	kuh-NET-i-kuht
Keene State College	KEEN
Plymouth State University	PLIM-uhth
Rhode Island College	roh d AHY-luhnd
University of Massachusetts Boston	BAW-stuhn
University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth	DAHRT-muhth
University of Southern Maine	MEYN
Vermont State University Castleton	KAS-uhl-tuhn
Western Connecticut State University	kuh-NET-i-kuht

Pronunciation Guide



Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference

Anna Maria College	AN-uh muh-REE-uh
Bridgewater State University	BRIJ-waw-ter
Fitchburg State University	FICH-burg
Framingham State University	FREY-ming-ham
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts	mas-uh-CHOO-sits
Massachusetts Maritime Academy	MAR-i-tahym
Salem State University	SEY-luhm
Westfield State University	WEST-feeld
Worcester State University	WUH-stir



Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association

Adrian College	EY-dree-uhn
Albion College	AL-bee-uhn
Alma College	AL-muh
Calvin University	KAL-vin
Hope College	HOHP
Kalamazoo College	kal-uh-muh-ZOO
Saint Mary's College (Indiana)	MAIR-eez
The University of Olivet	ah-lih-VET
Trine University	TRAHYN



Middle Atlantic Conference

Albright College	AWL-bright
Alvernia University	al-VER-nee-uh
Arcadia University	ahr-KAY-dee-uh
Delaware Valley University	DEL-uh-wair VAL-ee
DeSales University	De-SALES
Eastern University	EE-stern
Fairleigh Dickinson University, Florham	FAIR-lee DIK-in-suhn, FLOR-uhm
Hood College	HOOD
King's College (Pennsylvania)	KINGZ
Lebanon Valley College	LEB-uh-nuhn VAL-ee

Pronunciation Guide



Middle Atlantic Conference cont'd.

Messiah University	mah-SIGH-uh
Misericordia University	miz-uh-ruh-KOR-dee-uh
Stevens Institute of Technology	STEE-vuhnz
Stevenson University	STEE-vuhn-suhn
Widener University	WIDE-ner
York College (Pennsylvania)	your-k



Midwest Conference

Beloit College	buh-LOIT
Cornell College	kor-NEHL
Grinnell College	grin-NEL
Illinois College	il-uh-NOI
Knox College	NOKS
Lake Forest College	FOR-ist
Lawrence University	LAWR-uhns
Monmouth College (Illinois)	MON-muhth
Ripon College	RIP-in



Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference

Augsburg University	AWGZ-burg
Bethel University (Minnesota)	BETH-uhl
Carleton College	KAHRL-tuhn
College of Saint Benedict	BEN-i-dikt
Concordia College, Moorhead	kon-KAWR-dee-uh, MOOR-hed
Gustavus Adolphus College	gus-TAY-vuhs uh-DOLF-us
Hamline University	HAM-lin
Macalester College	ma-CAL-es-ter
Saint John's University (Minnesota)	JONZ
Saint Mary's University of Minnesota	MAIR-eez
St. Catherine University	KATH-er-in
St. Olaf College	OH-luff
The College of St. Scholastica	skuh-LAS-tika

Pronunciation Guide



New England Small College Athletic Conference (NEZ-cack)

Amherst College	AM-erst
Bates College	BEYTS
Bowdoin College	BO-duhn
Colby College	KOHL-bee
Connecticut College	kuh-NET-i-kuht
Hamilton College	HAM-uhl-tuhn
Middlebury College	MID-l-ber-ee
Trinity College (Connecticut)	TRIN-i-tee
Tufts University	TUHFTS
Wesleyan University (Connecticut)	WES-lee-uhn
Williams College	WIL-yuhmz



New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference

Babson College	BAB-suhn
Clark University (Massachusetts)	KLAHRK
Emerson College	EM-er-suhn
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	mas-uh-CHOO-sits
Mount Holyoke College	HOH-lee-ohk
Salve Regina University	SAHL-vey ri-JEE-nuh
Smith College	SMITH
Springfield College	SPRING-feeld
U.S. Coast Guard Academy	KOYST GAHRD
Wellesley College	WELZ-lee
Wheaton College (Massachusetts)	WEET-n
Worcester Polytechnic Institute	WUH-stir pol-ee-TEK-nik

Pronunciation Guide



New Jersey Athletic Conference

Kean University	KAYN
Montclair State University	mont-KLAIR
New Jersey City University	NOO JUR-zee
Ramapo College	RAM-uh-poh
Rowan University	ROH-uhn
Rutgers , The State University of New Jersey, Camden	RUHT-gers, KAM-duhn
Rutgers , The State University of New Jersey, Newark	RUHT-gers, NOO-erk
Stockton University	STOK-tuhn
The College of New Jersey	NOO JUR-zee
William Paterson University of New Jersey	WIL-yuhm PAT-er-suhn



North Atlantic Conference

Husson University	HUHS-uhn
Lesley University	LEZ-lee
Maine Maritime Academy	MEYN MAR-i-tahym
State University of New York at Cobleskill	KOH-buhl-skil
State University of New York at Delhi	DEL-hi
Thomas College	TOM-uhs
University of Maine at Presque Isle	PRESK AHYL
University of Maine, Farmington	FAHR-ming-tuhn
Vermont State University Johnson	ver-MONT - JON-suhn
Vermont State University Lyndon	ver-MONT - LIN-duhn

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North Coast Athletic Conference

Denison University	DEN-uh-suhn
DePauw University	dih-PAW
John Carroll University	JON KAIR-uhl
Kenyon College	KEN-yuhn
Oberlin College	OH-bur-lin
Ohio Wesleyan University	WES-lee-uhn
The College of Wooster	WUUST-er
Wabash College	WAW-bash
Wittenberg University	WIT-n-burg



Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference

Alverno College	al-VER-no
Aurora University	uh-RAWR-uh
Benedictine University (Illinois)	ben-i-DIK-tin
Concordia University Chicago	kon-KAWR-dee-uh
Concordia University Wisconsin	kon-KAWR-dee-uh
Dominican University (Illinois)	duh-MIN-i-kuhn
Edgewood University	EJ-wood
Illinois Institute of Technology	il-uh-NOI
Lakeland University	LEYK-luhnd
Marian University (Wisconsin)	MAIR-ee-uhn
Milwaukee School of Engineering	mil-WAW-kee
Rockford University	ROK-ferd
St. Norbert College	NAWR-bert
Wisconsin Lutheran College	LOO-ther-uhn



Northwest Conference

George Fox University	JAWRJ FOKS
Lewis & Clark College	LOO-is & KLAHRK
Linfield University	LIN-feeld
Pacific Lutheran University	puh-SIF-ik LOO-ther-uhn
Pacific University (Oregon)	puh-SIF-ik
University of Puget Sound	PEW-jit
Whitman College	WIT-muhn
Whitworth University	WIT-wurth
Willamette University	wi-LAM-it

Pronunciation Guide



Ohio Athletic Conference

Baldwin Wallace University	BAWLD-win WOL-is
Capital University	KAP-i-tl
Heidelberg University	HAHYD-I-burg
Marietta College	mair-ee-ET-uh
Muskingum University	muh-SKING-uhm
Ohio Northern University	oh-HAHY-oh
Otterbein University	OT-er-bahyn
University of Mount Union	YOON-yuhn
Wilmington College (Ohio)	WIL-ming-tuhn



Old Dominion Athletic Conference

Averett University	AY-vuh-ret
Bridgewater College (Virginia)	BRIJ-waw-ter
Eastern Mennonite University	MEN-uh-nahyt
Guilford College	GIL-ferd
Hampden-Sydney College	HAMP-duhn - SID-nee
Hollins University	HOL-inz
Randolph College	RAN-dolf
Randolph-Macon College	RAN-dolf - MEY-kuhn
Roanoke College	ROH-uh-nohk
Shenandoah University	shen-uhn-DOH-uh
Sweet Briar College	BRAHY-er
University of Lynchburg	LINCH-burg
Virginia Wesleyan University	WES-lee-uhn
Washington and Lee University	LEE

Pronunciation Guide



Presidents' Athletic Conference

Allegheny College	al-i-GEY-nee
Bethany College (West Virginia)	BETH-uh-nee
Chatham University	CHAT-uhm
Franciscan University of Steubenville	fran-SIS-kuhn STOO-buhn-vil
Geneva College	juh-NEE-vuh
Grove City College	GROHV
Hiram College	HI-ruhm
Saint Vincent College	seynt VIN-suhnt
Thiel College	TEEL
Washington and Jefferson College	JEF-er-suhn
Waynesburg University	WEYNZ-burg
Westminster College (Pennsylvania)	WEST-min-ster



Skyline Conference

Farmingdale State College	FAHR-ming-deyl
Manhattanville College	man-HAT-n-vil
Mount Saint Mary College (New York)	MAIR-ee
Purchase College, State University of New York	PUR-chuhs
Sarah Lawrence College	SAIR-uh LAWR-uhns
St. Joseph's University (Brooklyn)	JOH-suhfs (BROOK-lin)
St. Joseph's University (Long Island)	JOH-suhfs
State University College at Old Westbury	WEST-ber-ee
State University of New York Maritime College	MAR-i-tahym
University of Mount Saint Vincent	VIN-suhnt
U.S. Merchant Marine Academy	MUR-chuhnt
Yeshiva University	juh-SHEE-vuh



Southern Athletic Association

Berry College	BER-ee
Centre College	SEN-ter
Millsaps College	MIL-saps
Oglethorpe University	OH-guh I-thawrp
Rhodes College	ROHDZ
Southwestern University (Texas)	south-WES-tern
Trinity University	TRIN-i-tee
University of the South (Sewanee)	suh-WAH-nee

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Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference

California Institute of Technology	IN-sti-toot
California Lutheran University	LOO-ther-uhn
Chapman University	CHAP-muhn
Claremont McKenna-Harvey	KLAIR-mont muh-KEN-uh -
Mudd-Scripps Colleges	HAHR-vee muhd - skrips
Occidental College	ok-si-DEN-tl
Pomona-Pitzer Colleges	puh-MOH-nuh - PIT-ser
University of La Verne	luh VURN
University of Redlands	RED-luhndz
Whittier College	WIT-ee-er



Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference

Austin College	AW-stuhn
Centenary College (Louisiana)	sen-TEN-uh-ree
Colorado College	kol-uh-RAH-do
Concordia University Texas	kon-KAWR-dee-uh
Hendrix College	HEN-driks
LeTourneau University	leh-TUR-noh
McMurry University	muhk-MUR-ee
Schreiner University	SHRAHY-ner
Texas Lutheran University	LOO-ther-uhn
University of Dallas	DAL-uhs
University of St. Thomas (Texas)	TOM-uhs
University of the Ozarks (Arkansas)	OH-zahrks

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St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference

Blackburn College	BLAK-bern
Eureka College	yuh-REE-kuh
Greenville University	GREEN-vil
Lyon College	LION
Mississippi University for Women	mis-uh-SIP-ee
Principia College	prin-SIP-ee-uh
Spalding University	SPAWL-ding
Webster University	WEB-ster
Westminster College (Missouri)	WEST-min-ster



State University of New York Athletic Conference (SOO-nee-ack)

Buffalo State, State University of New York	BUHF-uh-loh
State University of New York at Canton	KAN-tn
State University of New York at Cortland	CORT-land
The State University of New York at Fredonia	free-DOHN-yah
State University of New York at Morrisville	MAWR-is-vil
State University of New York at New Paltz	new-PAWL TZ
State University of New York at Oneonta	oh-nee-ON-tuh
State University of New York at Oswego	os-WEE-goh
Plattsburgh State University of New York	PLATS-burg
State University of New York at Potsdam	POTS-dam

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United East Conference

Cairn University	KAIRN
Cedar Crest College	SEE-der krest
Gallaudet University	gal-uh-DET
Keystone College	KEE-stohn
Lancaster Bible College	LANG-kuh-ster
Notre Dame of Maryland University	noh-truh DAHM
Penn State Berks College	BURKS
Penn State Brandywine	BRAN-dee-wahyn
Penn State Harrisburg	HAIR-is-burg
Penn State University, Abington	AB-ing-tuhn
Pennsylvania College of Technology	pen-suh I-VEYN-yuh
St. Mary's College of Maryland	MAIR-eez
University of Valley Forge	VAL-ee fohrj
Wilson College	WIL-suhn



University Athletic Association

Brandeis University	BRAN-dice
Carnegie Mellon University	KAHR-ni-gee MEL-uhn
Case Western Reserve University	CASE WES-tern
Emory University	EM-uh-ree
New York University	NOO YAWRK
University of Chicago	shi-KAH-goh
University of Rochester	ROCH-es-ter
Washington University in St. Louis	LOO-is

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Upper Midwest Athletic Conference

Bethany Lutheran College	BETH-uh-nee LOO-ther-uhn
Crown College (Minnesota)	KROUN
Martin Luther College	MAHR-tn LOO-ther
North Central University	SEN-truhl
University of Minnesota, Morris	MAWR-is
University of Northwestern-St. Paul	PAWL
University of Wisconsin- Superior	suh-PEER-ee-er



USA South Athletic Conference

Brevard College	Bree-Vhard
Greensboro College	Greens-Borough
Mary Baldwin University	MAIR-ee BAWLD-win
Meredith College	Mer-uh-dith
Methodist University	METH-uh-dist
North Carolina Wesleyan University	WES-lee-uhn
Pfeiffer University	Fi-Fur
Salem College (North Carolina)	SEY-luhm
Southern Virginia University	ver-JIN-yuh
William Peace University	WIL-yuhm PEES



Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference

University of Wisconsin- Eau Claire	OH KLAIR
University of Wisconsin- La Crosse	LUH KROS
University of Wisconsin- Oshkosh	OSH-kosh
University of Wisconsin- Platteville	PLAT-vil
University of Wisconsin- River Falls	RIV-er FAWLZ
University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point	STEE-vuhnz
University of Wisconsin- Stout	STOUT
University of Wisconsin- Whitewater	WAHYT-waw-ter