

Coaches: Be the Influence You Want To Be!



Division II is a collection of more than 300 NCAA colleges and universities that provide thousands of student-athletes the opportunity to earn athletics scholarships and compete at a high level while excelling in the classroom and fully engaging in the broader campus experience.

As a college coach, you interact with student-athletes (current and prospective) more than anyone else on campus. You also influence student-athletes' families, other campus stakeholders, alumni and community members. Now that's a wide reach!

While you understand what makes your institution unique when you're out recruiting or interacting off campus, don't forget to use Division II to your advantage when you can by emphasizing:

Big-time athletics competition

- Division II sports are highly competitive. One coach put it this way: "People often underestimate the quality of Division II competition, but they change their minds quickly when they watch us play. Our stadiums might not be as large as some other schools, but our talent is."
- Coaches have found success with prospective student-athletes by touting the plentiful opportunities in Division II of becoming an All-American, an Olympic athlete or even a professional athlete and competing for a national title.
- Division II's partial scholarship model allows coaches to offer athletics-based aid like Division I schools do, while also granting prospective athletes access to all the academic and need-based aid they would find at Division III colleges.

Access to championships

- Division II sponsors and fully funds 25 national championships – 12 in men's sports and 13 in women's sports. Of the three divisions, Division II provides the highest access ratio to championships competition.
- Division II is the only NCAA division that conducts "National Championships Festivals," Olympic-style events in which a number of national championships are held at a single site over a period of several days.
- When you talk about the athletics experience in Division II, reiterate what the potential outcomes are. At the so-called Division I mid-majors, prospects probably will be competing for conference championships, whereas in Division II, they'll be contending for national championships.

Academic success

- When you talk to prospects and their families about what they'll experience at your institution, emphasize the student aspect. Talk about the regional focus, the reduced travel and limited missed class time. Student-athletes in Division II have the ability to do both – being a student and an athlete – very well.
- Division II students have an excellent opportunity to be highly skilled and highly decorated athletes, but the division's "Life in the Balance" approach allows them to become marketable in their career because they'll have time to focus on their academic pursuits, their grades, their internships, and whatever else it takes to prepare themselves for life after graduation.



Messaging That Matters

Here's what some of your coaching peers are saying about Division II:

"The ability to say to our recruits that **the opportunity to compete for an NCAA championship is a legitimate option** has enabled us to sway them toward our program."

"We have a lot of outstanding student-athletes who care about academics. That's why we recruited them. We're going to do whatever we can to get them all together for practice without sacrificing class time. **We want to win games, but the focus is always on academics first.**"

"I coach in Division II – not somewhere else – because I live for that one kid who comes back and says **I made a difference to him or her as an individual** instead of expressing thanks for winning a championship or some other athletics-related accomplishment. I don't coach for the wins; I don't think any of us do. Of course we all want to win, **but winning in and of itself is not what drives our desire to coach.** We certainly don't do it in Division II to earn accolades from thousands and thousands of fans, or to earn big monetary bonuses from our bosses. **What matters is to realize the difference we make in young peoples' lives.**"

"Not one thing in what we do focuses on winning or championships. It all focuses on the players, their experiences on and off the field and their journeys to be selfless together. **That fabric of who we are and what makes us what we are is the reason why and how we win championships.**"

"A selling point not only to prospects, but also to their parents, is that Division II student-athletes **graduate with a resume in hand.** Because our Life in the Balance approach affords such a breadth of experiences in addition to participating in championship-level athletics, **our kids graduate as leaders who are that much further along in acclimating to the workforce and being highly valued by prospective employers.**"



For more information and resources, visit the "Tools to Tell the DII Story" on the Division II homepage at ncaa.org.