

# Go FAR!



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.

Because faculty athletics representatives are such a vital link in any Division II institution's strategic communications chain, FARs can help explain in a positive manner the complex relationship between intercollegiate athletics and higher education, which continues to be misunderstood by many audiences.

- FARs are uniquely positioned to articulate the benefits of intercollegiate athletics to faculty, the media and the public.
- FARs bring the academic perspective and priorities to the discussion, providing a fresh point of view to reporters and broadcasters who are accustomed to interacting only with athletics administrators and coaches.
- As such, FARs are advocates for Division II's "Life in the Balance," as they champion student-athlete academic success and help ensure the quality of the athletics experience.

**Division II's approach that emphasizes balance, and the resulting initiatives brought forth to increase graduation rates and academic success, are the kinds of things that we as a division can be proud of because we know that in the long run, it's not just the athletics experience that's going to benefit our student-athletes; it's also the pursuit of the academic path of their choosing, and the graduation and the preparation for life that's going to benefit our student-athletes.**

**Kevin Schriver**  
Faculty Athletics Representative  
Southwest Baptist University

# Champion Your Student-Athletes!

As the FAR, you may be aware of tensions that sometimes occur between the faculty and the athletics department at colleges and universities – perhaps even at your own institution. It may be an age-old disconnect, but as the FAR, you are uniquely positioned to strengthen the relationship and refute some of the myths.

To help people understand the value athletics adds to the academic experience, consider the following:

- Regardless of the category – academic achievement, community engagement, campus leadership, university ambassadorship – however you rank your student body, student-athletes almost certainly will populate the top tier. FARs who interact with student-athletes know this firsthand and should advocate that fact to colleagues and other campus constituents who may doubt athletics' positive influence on the university as a whole.
- Division II's academic philosophy emphasizes learning and development in a personal setting. Graduation rates indicate the success of that approach, as student-athletes graduate at rates several percentage points (usually 6-9 points) higher than their general student body counterparts (see [ncaa.org/about/what-we-do/academics?division=d2](https://www.ncaa.org/about/what-we-do/academics?division=d2) for more about academic success in Division II).
- Division II athletes have plenty of access to their FAR, who helps manage their academic pursuits and nominates them for internships, postgraduate scholarships and other programs/resources to advance their careers.
- Among Division II's most attractive attributes is the fact that athletics participation doesn't preclude athletes from being equally passionate about their academics. A recent survey of Division II athletes indicated that most of them chose their academic major because they were interested in the topic, and that it helped prepare them for a particular career field – not because their coaches steered them into that curriculum because it would benefit their athletics participation.

**For more information and resources, visit the “Tools to Tell the DII Story” on the Division II homepage at [ncaa.org](https://www.ncaa.org).**

**Division II schools have hundreds of student-athletes, very few of which are on a full ride. Only a small percentage of them have even half a scholarship. We bring in so many kids who are need-based and have the federal financial aid, and that's what helps fund the university.**

**Brenda Cates**  
Faculty Athletics Representative  
University of Mount Olive