

Life in the Balance



Division II supports the educational mission of college athletics by fostering a balanced and inclusive approach in which student-athletes learn and develop through their desired academic pursuits, in civic engagement with their communities and in athletics competition.

The phrase “Life in the Balance” surfaced in 2005 with the launch of the division’s Strategic Positioning Platform and was used as a way to package changes in playing and practice seasons in 2010 and 2011. But since then, it has become a mantra that Division II institutions and conferences use to define who they are and what they represent.

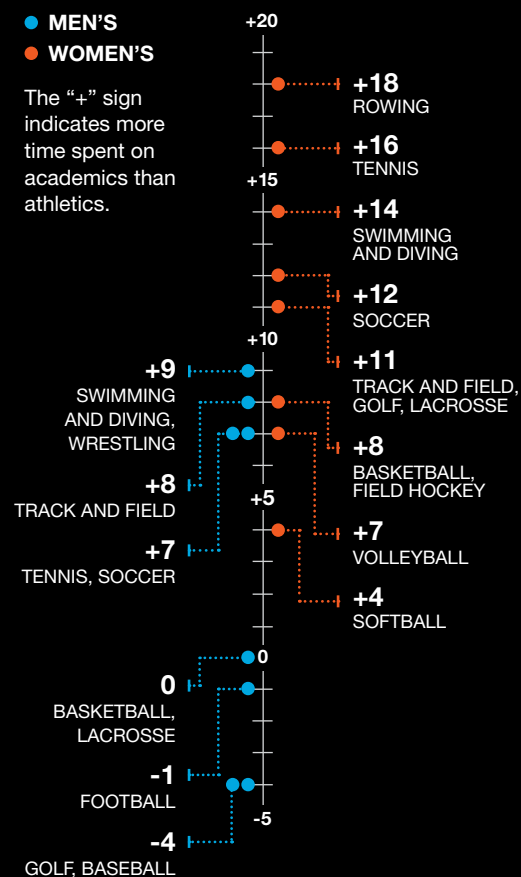
Results from the 2018 Division II Membership Census indicate the vast majority of every constituent group still believe in the balanced approach, and the Division II governance structure continues to work diligently to protect that sense of balance in developing strategic initiatives, legislation and policy.

Balance Benefits:

- Division II shapes student-athletes who graduate with the skills and knowledge to be productive people.
- Division II students are able to play sports, be integrated in campus life, do well in the classroom and graduate with distinction.
- Division II students have an excellent opportunity to be highly skilled and highly decorated athletes, but the balanced approach allows them to become marketable in their career because they’ll have time to focus on their academic pursuits, internships, job shadowing, and whatever else it takes to prepare themselves for life after graduation.
- Division II athletics programs actively engage with their communities, which helps drive attendance at athletics contests, fosters relationships between student-athletes and community members, and develops more of a shared civic experience. Community engagement also strengthens the bond among teammates and fosters individual and personal growth.

ACADEMICS VS. ATHLETICS

Average difference in hours spent per week in-season on Division II academic activities vs. athletics activities.



SOURCE: 2015 NCAA GOALS Study (2015 student-athlete self-report)

Life in Balance means Life in Wellness

The Division II Presidents and Management Councils discussed what Life in the Balance means to them, their institutions, and to the division overall. The overwhelming sense is that balance remains an effective and practical – even noble – way to distinguish Division II institutions within the menu of college choices for prospective student-athletes, and to provide already enrolled student-athletes an enriched college experience that contributes to their total wellness.

Balance helps ensure the **holistic development** of the student-athlete.

We use the balanced approach to build a **culture of wellness**.

Taking care of your student-athletes through a balanced approach **models a pathway to leadership**.

Life in the Balance is a philosophy that **should apply to all students**, not just student-athletes.

Life in the Balance: We not only model it, ***we allow and encourage it.***

The Division II governance structure uses Life in the Balance to **weigh the merits of legislative proposals and policy decisions**.

We include adherence to the **balanced approach** as part of our personnel evaluations and hiring practices.

Balance is the single-most distinguishing attribute for Division II.

Life in the Balance: **See it, believe it, and watch it come true.**

The balance model enables students to **participate fully** in the breadth of the college/campus/community experience.