

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 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 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 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.