



## NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Update - February 2021

As Division I women's basketball leaders continue to focus on taking strategic steps to improve our game, we want to keep you apprised of significant developments. If you have any questions, please reach out to any of the staff liaisons associated with the specific topic.

### 1. 2021 NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Championship update.

#### a. Championship announcement – [\*SAN ANTONIO IS TOURNEY TOWN!\*](#)

**IT DOESN'T  
GET ANY  
BIGGER  
THAN THIS.**

2021

NCAA **WOMEN'S BASKETBALL**

2021 WOMEN'S **FINAL FOUR**  
SAN ANTONIO

NCAA **WOMEN'S BASKETBALL**

**WE'RE FORTUNATE TO BE  
WORKING WITH SAN ANTONIO,**  
which features one of the most experienced local organizing committees in the country, and our No. 1 priority will be to provide a safe environment for student-athletes, coaches, administrators, officials and everyone else associated with the championship," said Lynn Holzman, NCAA vice president of women's basketball.

[\*\*READ FULL ANNOUNCEMENT HERE\*\*](#)

#### b. [\*\*Due February 26:\*\*](#) Conference Automatic Qualifier (AQ) Requirements. Deadline for conferences to submit their AQ requirements identifying how their conference AQ will be

determined for the 2021 Tournament, if changes need to be made. Send AQ requirement updates to Meredith Cleaver, [mcleaver@ncaa.org](mailto:mcleaver@ncaa.org) .

**c. [Due February 26: Championship Eligibility Waiver Process.](#)** An institution must have a minimum of 13 games against Division I institutions to qualify for team selection as an at-large or automatic qualifier in the NCAA Division I Men's and Women's Basketball Championships. For more information about the policy and the established waiver process visit: [Link to Waiver Process Information.](#)

**d. NCAA Evaluation Tool (NET).** The NCAA Evaluation Tool (NET) has replaced the Ratings Percentage Index (RPI) as the contemporary sorting tool used to measure a team's quality and help evaluate team resumes for selection and seeding in the Division I Women's Basketball Championship. The first release of the NET rankings took place on January 4, 2021 and will be updated daily throughout the remainder of the 2020-21 season.

[NET Rankings](#)  
[NET Infographic](#)  
[NET FAQ](#)

Staff contacts: Meredith Cleaver, Lynn Holzman and Rick Nixon  
Team Selection Subcommittee chair: Debbie Richardson, senior associate commissioner, Atlantic 10 Conference

**e. COVID-19 Information and Resources.**

- The NCAA Sports Science Institute has developed and collected various resources related to COVID-19, including the resocialization of college sport and guidance and recommendations for basketball. The webpage can be found [here](#).
- A weekly question and answer guide on compliance and regulatory questions is available to the membership at [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org) (on the Division I Compliance page).

Staff contacts: Meredith Cleaver and Binh Nguyen

**2. NCAA Women's Basketball Strategic Plan Updates & [NEW DOWNLOADABLE WBB Strategic Planning Materials for Schools and Conferences.](#)**

**a. NCAA Women's Basketball Strategic Plan** continues to celebrate the victories achieved in year one and is continuing to move forward with key initiatives in year 2. The latest measurements around the continued progress are located [here](#):

- [NCAA Women's Basketball Strategic Plan Year 1 \(2019-20\) Recap - Victories](#)
- [NCAA Women's Basketball Strategic Play Year 2 \(2020-21\) Progress to Date and Priorities](#)

**WOMEN'S BASKETBALL** 2019-24 STRATEGIC PLAN

**“WE TIP WITH EXCELLENCE AND INTEGRITY”**

**OUR VISION**  
Unify and grow the women's basketball community; empower student-athletes to achieve their full potential; celebrate and elevate the game; and create an inspiring experience for all involved.

**TEAMWORK**  
We define success in terms of what we accomplish together.

**INCLUSION**  
We embrace diversity and celebrate differences.

**PASSION**  
We aspire to be the best we can be in all we do.

**EXCELLENCE**  
We succeed in education, basketball and our lives.

**INTEGRITY**  
We honor and respect the game and each other.

**We're building our plan on the following goal areas:**

- Leadership**  
NCAA Women's Basketball leads within and beyond the sport to unify and strengthen the game and our community.
- Transformational Student-Athlete Experience**  
NCAA Women's Basketball shall be the gold standard for how participation in intercollegiate athletics serves as an integral component of the higher education experience and prepares student-athletes for life after college.
- Quality Competition**  
NCAA Women's Basketball shall administer and shape the game to showcase the commitment student-athletes and coaches devote to skill development and team play at the highest level.
- Memorable Championships**  
NCAA Women's Basketball Championships are the pinnacle of the student-athlete experience. We commit to providing the best and brightest stage on which to celebrate our game.
- Building Affinity**  
The unique identity of NCAA Women's Basketball is all about the connection people feel to the game, student-athletes and coaches.

**It's the time to execute strategies that lead us to victory.**  
With those as our guidingposts, our strategic plan will elevate our game and our community. We're intentional about the steps we're taking to achieve our goals. We've set a course that will benefit those who play the game — and those who oversee it — in all three divisions for years to come.

**2020-21 WOMEN'S BASKETBALL YEAR TWO PRIORITIES**  
**GOAL AREA: LEADERSHIP**

**OBJECTIVES**

- ▶ Drive awareness of and advocate for women's basketball.
- ▶ Position coaches as ambassadors for the sport.
- ▶ Promote fiscal responsibility and sustainability.
- ▶ Engage with organizations that oversee and administer youth basketball.

**YEAR TWO GOAL AREA PRIORITIES**

- Continue collaboration with women's basketball key stakeholders, and further elevate discussions around youth basketball participation.
- Development and execution of a virtual women's basketball summit with key stakeholders.
- Explore legislation change for NBA Academy within Tourney Town.
- Considerations for a USA Basketball waiver in 2020-21 due to COVID-19 Olympic preparations.
- Coaches Credentialing Phase II: Women's and men's basketball coaches are engaging to inform the development of curriculum to provide a complete coaches credentialing program. The women's basketball credentialing program is expected to be developed within the year.
- The TIP with Excellence and Integrity Toolkit will share content and a process for coaches to engage in compassionate and courageous culture conversations, with the ultimate goal of creating solidarity within individual member teams and communities across women's basketball.

**2020-21 WOMEN'S BASKETBALL YEAR TWO PRIORITIES**  
**GOAL AREA: TRANSFORMATIONAL STUDENT-ATHLETE EXPERIENCE**

**OBJECTIVES**

- ▶ Support and promote student-athlete well-being.
- ▶ Facilitate effective post-athletics transition, career preparation and leadership development.
- ▶ Actively lead positive and impactful change in the areas of culture, health and safety, and social justice for the betterment of the sport and student-athletes' experience.

**YEAR TWO GOAL AREA PRIORITIES**

- Women's basketball is collaborating with the Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) and the Sport Science Institute (GOALS Study) in a research-based transformational coach education program that will study coach-athlete relationships. Results of the study will be available in spring 2021.
- Development of a student-athlete engagement panel to drive the priorities of the game through the voice of the student-athlete.
- Continued development of the former student-athlete fellow designation for former basketball student-athletes to engage in limited coaching activities to become more qualified for future positions.

**WOMEN'S BASKETBALL** 2019-24 STRATEGIC PLAN

For the full information around the NCAA Women's Basketball Strategic Plan efforts, visit:  
<https://www.ncaa.org/championships/ncaa-women-s-basketball-2019-24-strategic-plan>.

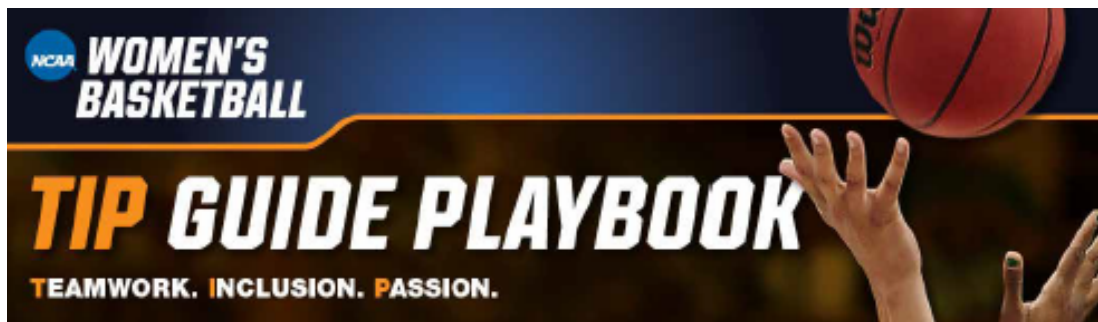
**b. NEW & DOWNLOADABLE: TIP with Excellence Toolkit.** The NCAA has developed a “TIP” with Excellence Toolkit, in partnership with the Drake University Robert D. and Billie Ray Center and the Excellence with Integrity Institute.

There are three (3) team culture practices included in the “TIP” materials, each focus each focused on one of the NCAA Women's Basketball values: Teamwork, Inclusion, and Passion. The three Team Culture Practices are not sequential. They can be done in any order at any time. Each Culture Practice can be conducted in a variety of environments — the court, the locker room, a classroom, a film session, on the bus — as you see fit.

The TIP Team Culture Practices feature several research-based Excellence with Integrity TOOLS™ as their core content. The culture development EWI TOOLS™ distill relevant research, as well as over 20 years of the authors' implementation experience in leadership and culture development, into simple, consistent, and replicable strategies. The EWI TOOLS™ will guide the immediate activities presented in the TIP Culture Practices sessions and are intended to be used in support of your ongoing team culture development beyond the original practice sessions.

Each Culture Practice includes a Student-Athlete Playbook and a Coaches Guide for the coach, or whomever is leading the Culture Practice. Both documents are fillable pdf's: they can be viewed on a smart phone, tablet, or computer, and they have areas that can be typed into and saved; the documents can also be printed out and used as needed in a paper format.

**[DOWNLOAD MATERIALS HERE](#)**



c. **NEW & DOWNLOADABLE: Develop School and Conference Women's Basketball Strategic Planning Templates.** The NCAA is providing the following templates to allow schools and conference to develop their own strategic plans for women's basketball. The following materials are available:

1. Steps for Developing Conference-Level Strategic Initiatives for Women's Basketball and Connecting Conference Strategies to NCAA National Goals Template.
2. Strategic Planning Worksheet and Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Template.



### [DOWNLOAD MATERIALS HERE](#)

d. **Women's Basketball Student-Athlete Engagement Group formed in Division I.** A student-athlete engagement group was formed in collaboration with the WBCA to amplify the voice of women's basketball on key initiatives, legislation and various issues. Read more about the group and roster [here](#).

As we continue the work to grow our sport, we encourage you to join us in being champions for women's basketball. View the strategic plan in its entirety at [ncaa.org/wbbstrategicplan](http://ncaa.org/wbbstrategicplan).

Staff contacts: Meredith Cleaver, Lynn Holzman, Binh Nguyen and Amy Reis

**3. Playing rules update.** The NCAA Women's Basketball Rules Committee continues to review its rules to determine if potential waivers or interpretations are necessary due to COVID-19 issues as new and updated resocialization guidelines are released. The latest interpretations and clarifications can be found [here](#).

Staff contact: Rachel Seewald

**4. NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Oversight Committee/NCAA Division I Council Hot Topics.** Throughout the fall and winter, the Women's Basketball Oversight Committee and the Division I Council discussed and acted on regulations and policies impacted by COVID-19. A summary may be found [here](#). A listing of actions currently under consideration may be found [here](#).

- Several actions impacting women's basketball include the following:

- a. Waiver to permit two noncoaching staff members to be managers and practice players.
- b. An additional season of competition and extension of eligibility granted to student-athletes, provided certain criteria are met.
- c. Temporary recruiting dead period extended to April 15, 2021 in all sports.
- d. Waiver approved to permit 4-4 transfer student-athletes currently serving a transfer year to be immediately eligible, provided certain criteria are met.

Staff contacts: Meredith Cleaver and Binh Nguyen

Committee chair: Lisa Campos, vice president for intercollegiate athletics, University of Texas at San Antonio

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*This email was sent to NCAA Division I conference commissioners, NCAA Division I senior woman administrators, NCAA Division I directors of athletics, NCAA Division I women's basketball head coaches, the NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Oversight Committee, the NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Committee and the Women's Basketball Coaches Association based on contact information in the [NCAA Directory](#).*

National Collegiate Athletic Association, 700 W. Washington St., Indianapolis, IN 46204 US

This email was sent to: [mcleaver@ncaa.org](mailto:mcleaver@ncaa.org)

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