



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION I ACADEMICS AND ELIGIBILITY COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 21, 2026, VIDEOCONFERENCE**

KEY ITEMS.

1. **Exception to the NCAA Transfer Windows when a student-athlete's academic program is discontinued.** The NCAA Division I Academics and Eligibility Committee did not support the creation of an exception that would permit a student-athlete to enter the NCAA Transfer Portal outside the legislated windows if their academic program is discontinued.
2. **Legislative requests from the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee's Legislative Task Force.** The Academics and Eligibility Committee continued its consideration and discussion on concepts submitted by the USOPC Legislative Task Force related to the receipt of funds, awards, benefits, prize money or expenses provided directly by a country's national Olympic and/or Paralympic governing body (equivalent to the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee) or the sport-affiliated national governing body (or, for international student-athletes, the equivalent organization of that nation) to student-athletes and revisions to current exceptions to permit individuals to participate in organized practice sessions with an institution's sport program in preparation for the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

ACTION ITEMS.

- **None.**

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Exception to the NCAA Transfer Windows when a student-athlete's academic program is discontinued.** The NCAA Division I Cabinet has requested the Academics and Eligibility Committee consider whether an exception to the NCAA Transfer Portal windows should be permitted when a student-athlete's academic program is discontinued. The current legislation permits a student-athlete to initiate the notification of transfer process outside the legislated transfer windows in limited instances (e.g., head coach departs the institution; student-athlete's aid is reduced, cancelled or not renewed; or student-athlete's sport is discontinued).

The Academics and Eligibility Committee did not support the creation of an exception that would permit a student-athlete to enter the Transfer Portal outside the legislated windows if their academic program is discontinued. The Academics and Eligibility Committee noted the following: (1) Generally, an institution will provide accommodations to allow any student to complete the academic program prior to it being discontinued all together; (2) The current sport-specific windows are available to student-athletes; (3) Flexibility should be permitted in waivers in instances where the student-athlete is currently enrolled in the academic program, no accommodations are offered by the institution to complete the academic program within the duration of the student-athlete's athletics eligibility and written confirmation is provided by an academic authority outside athletics (e.g., registrar, provost). Lastly, the Academics and Eligibility Committee did request regular updates from the staff on the number of waivers processed by the staff that include mitigation related to the discontinuance of an academic program.

2. **Requests for legislation from the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee's Legislative Task Force.** The Academics and Eligibility Committee has been asked to consider two requests from the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee's Legislative Task Force related to practice criteria and the receipt of funds by student-athletes training for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The Academics and Eligibility Committee has legislative authority over the NCAA bylaws that would need to be amended if the concepts were introduced into the legislative cycle and ultimately adopted. The following are the two concepts for the committee's consideration:

Concept No. 1: To specify, the receipt of funds, awards, benefits, prize money or expenses provided directly by a country's national Olympic and/or Paralympic governing body (equivalent to the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee) or the sport-affiliated national governing body (or, for international student-athletes, the equivalent organization of that nation) is permitted.

Concept No. 2: To revise the current exception for individuals to participate in organized practice sessions with an institution's sport program in preparation for the Olympic and Paralympic Games, as specified.

The Academics and Eligibility Committee asked the staff to work with the USOPC Legislative Task Force to provide examples encountered by student-athletes that are creating challenges with the current legislation.

3. **NCAA Division I degree completion program update.** The Academics and Eligibility Committee was informed the NCAA national office will no longer provide funding to support the NCAA Division I degree completion program, including funding for former student-athletes at limited-resource institutions. Earlier this year, the NCAA committed to finding \$20 million in operating expense savings to help pay for recent legal settlements. As part of that effort, the national office surveyed the membership to identify spending priorities, suggestions for revenue generation and spending reductions. Based on the review and targeted reductions, the changes were made to committee budgets and policies in the 2026-27 fiscal year (September 1, 2026, through August 31, 2027), including the decision to eliminate funding for the Division I degree completion program, effective immediately. The current legislation will remain unchanged and will remain an obligation of Division I membership to require schools to fund former student-athletes to complete their undergraduate degrees, provided certain criteria are met.
4. **Accelerating Academic Success Program update.** The Academics and Eligibility Committee received an update on the AASP program. Established in 2012, AASP includes grants for eligible schools and student-athletes and is designed to support schools as they work to meet NCAA academic standards by developing programs and systems to increase graduation rates and to ensure academic success. Since the pandemic, financial support has been limited to single-year grants (\$100,000 max). For this year, 31 applications were

received and 17 grants were awarded. Over \$1.6 million was awarded and the average grant amount was \$94,363. The 2026-27 grant recipients are:

- Alabama A&M University;
- Austin Peay State University;
- Chicago State University;
- Cleveland State University;
- Coppin State University;
- East Texas A&M University;
- Indiana State University;
- Jackson State University;
- Long Beach State University;
- Mississippi Valley State University;
- Morgan State University;
- Northwestern State University;
- Tennessee State University;
- University of the Incarnate Word;
- University of South Carolina, Upstate;
- University of Tennessee at Martin; and
- Winthrop University.

5. **Division I age-based eligibility model.** The Academics and Eligibility Committee received an update on the adoption of the age-based eligibility model. Education is being provided to the membership through webinars and a comprehensive question and answer document. The Academics and Eligibility Committee will continue to receive updates on any issues as the legislation continues to be implemented.
6. **Update on the Division I decentralization initiative.** The Academics and Eligibility Committee received an update on the Division I decentralization initiative, which is being spearheaded by the cabinet. The overall goal of the initiative is to introduce a package of legislative proposals intended to decentralize oversight of certain rules for all sports. The initial proposals – which would result in changes to coaching limits, playing season start and end dates, and recruiting rules, among other areas – could be adopted by the Cabinet as early as January. At the direction of the Division I Board of Directors, following the Decision-Making Working Group’s recommendations in August 2025, the cabinet will continue to review potential options to decentralize rules on a variety of other topics.
7. **Report from the NCAA Division I Academic Eligibility Subcommittee.** The Academics and Eligibility Committee received an update from the Academic Eligibility Subcommittee on the following items: (1) Approval of the NCAA Division I Academic Performance Program (APP) directive for waivers and adjustments; (2) Approval of directives for NCAA Division I initial-eligibility and progress-toward-degree waivers and the previously approved waiver checklist for progress-toward-degree deficiencies; and (3) Approval of initial-eligibility waivers and High School Review and International Student Records Committees policies and procedures. The subcommittee has also been engaged in an in-depth review of the current continuing eligibility legislation in NCAA Division I Bylaw 14

(full-time enrollment, good academic standing, credit hours, percentage-of-degree and grade-point average requirements). Lastly, the subcommittee considered a request from a member conference that would provide a one-term grace period for tracking percentage of degree for transfer student-athletes upon their full-time enrollment at the next Division I institution. The subcommittee did not support pursuing legislation at this time and will determine if any flexibility can be provided through the waiver process.

8. **Report from the NCAA Division I Athletics Eligibility Subcommittee.** The Academics and Eligibility Committee received an update from the Athletics Eligibility Subcommittee on its review and approval of updated guidelines related to student-athlete reinstatement requests. In addition, with the adoption of the age-based eligibility model, the subcommittee updated its guidelines for pre-enrollment athletics eligibility certification guidelines.
9. **NCAA Division I governance update.** The Academics and Eligibility Committee received an update on several key initiatives currently underway in Division I and upcoming topics to be discussed at the October cabinet and board meetings. These topics included: (1) Waiver requests from institutions to enter a student-athlete's name into the Transfer Portal outside the legislated windows; (2) Pre-enrollment competition with professional athletes; (3) Mid-year initial enrollees; and (4) Regulation of agents.
10. **NCAA legal update.** The Academics and Eligibility Committee received an update from the NCAA Office of Legal Affairs regarding new and ongoing litigation.
11. **NCAA research update.** The Academics and Eligibility Committee received an update on key research initiatives, including preliminary data on the academic impact of transferring.
12. **NCAA enforcement update.** The Academics and Eligibility Committee received an update from the NCAA enforcement staff on recent trends and activity regarding academic integrity and other topics of interest.
13. **Report of the Academics and Eligibility Committee July 28 videoconference meeting.** The Academics and Eligibility Committee reviewed and approved the report from its July 28, meeting.
14. **Future meeting dates.**
 - a. October 21, 2026, videoconference – 2-4 p.m. Eastern.
 - b. November 18, 2026, videoconference – 2-4 p.m. Eastern.

c. December 16, 2026, videoconference – 2-4 p.m. Eastern.

Committee Chair: Shauna Cobb, Boston College
Staff Liaisons: Jennifer Henderson, Division I Governance and Member Services
Binh T. Nguyen, Division I Governance and Member Services
Quintin Wright, Division I Governance and Member Services

NCAA Division I Academics and Eligibility Committee September 21, 2026, Videoconference	
Attendees:	
Shanna Alexander, Merrimack College.	
Michelle Almazan, University of California, Riverside.	
Jeri Beggs, Illinois State University.	
Brendan Belz, University of Utah.	
Kevin Bostian, Northwestern State University.	
Lissa Broome, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.	
Shauna Cobb, Boston College.	
Kim Durand, University of Washington.	
Scott Fuess, University of Nebraska, Lincoln.	
Taryn Gall, Lehigh University.	
Brad Horton, Georgia State University.	
Jason Leonard, University of Oklahoma.	
Maggie McKinley, University of Cincinnati.	
Kevin Melendrez, New Mexico State University.	
Jason Porter, University of Houston.	
Jeremy Robinett, Western Illinois University.	
Caemon Scott, University of Louisiana at Lafayette.	
Eric Wood, University of Mississippi.	
Absentees:	
Scott Carr, Florida International University.	
NCAA Staff Liaisons in Attendance:	
Jennifer Henderson, Binh Nguyen and Quintin Wright.	
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:	
Abbey Bales, Lydia Bell, Keisha Burnette, Connor Bush, Amanda Conklin, Brandy Hataway, Sa Heath, Maison Hubbard, Mike Massa, Scott McDonald, Stephanie Quigg, Geoff Silver, Jen Smith, Jared Tidemann, Jerry Vaughn, DeAnna Wiley and Katy Yurk.	