



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION I COUNCIL
MAY 15, 2025, VIDEOCONFERENCE**

In an effort to connect NCAA Division I Council items to the NCAA pillars of academics, fairness and well-being, items included in this report have an identifying pillar. There is an additional pillar, operational, that is used to denote items that relate to maintaining a stable and efficient Division I.

ACTION ITEMS.

- **None.**

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Update from the Settlement Implementation Committee.** (Academics/Fairness/Well-Being/Operational) The NCAA Division I Council received an update on the work of the settlement Implementation Committee. Additional resources related to settlement implementation are being developed and will be distributed at a later date.
2. **NCAA Division I Decision-Making Working Group.** (Academics/Fairness/Well-Being/Operational) The council received an update on the work of the Division I Decision-Making Working Group, which included an overview of next steps and the timeline for review and action by the NCAA Division I Board of Directors. Recently, a prerecorded [webinar](#) was shared with the membership and affiliate organizations. The webinar provides a comprehensive review of the working group's charge, current legislative process, challenges and opportunities within the Division I structure, along with draft concepts and future governance expectations. A second webinar and feedback request focused on a decentralized regulatory model and the structure of sport committees will be distributed on May 22. The final meeting of the Decision-Making Working Group will be June 11-12. The group's final recommendations will be presented to the Board of Directors for consideration during its June 23 meeting.
3. **Review of Sports Wagering Legislation.** (Fairness/Well-Being/Operational) The council received an update on [direction](#) from the Board of Directors that the council adopt legislation to eliminate the prohibition on wagering on professional sports. The council will consider a proposal as expedited legislation during its June 24-25 meeting. The Board of Directors also recommended that the NCAA staff develop concepts for the appropriate committees to explore safe harbor, limited immunity or reduced penalties for student-athletes who engage in sports wagering but seek help for problem gambling.
4. **Conference Membership Requirements.** (Fairness/Well-Being/Operational) The council received an update on the Board of Directors' discussion of concepts related to the review of conference membership requirements. The board has been reviewing conference membership requirements to determine whether temporary flexibility or adjustments are warranted given the changing landscape of intercollegiate athletics and higher education.

The Board of Directors approved the following principles for the review:

- a. Proposed changes to conference membership requirements should provide institutions with appropriate flexibility to align themselves with like institutions in the post-settlement environment.
- b. Proposed changes to conference membership requirements should not increase the number of Division I multisport conferences.
- c. Proposed changes should reflect a strategic approach to membership growth and sustainability in Division I.

The board directed staff to seek feedback on the concepts outlined below:

- a. **Continuity Legislation.** Whether there is support for offering the opportunity for a waiver of the continuity legislation to allow a new conference to form with at least 10 (or maybe 12) members if the creation of the new conference does not increase the overall number of conferences.

The current continuity legislation requires institutions forming a new conference to compete together for a period of eight years before accessing revenue distribution or automatic qualification as a conference. The Board of Directors is seeking feedback on whether there is support for temporarily allowing waivers to reduce the waiting period to one or two years if the requirements outlined above are satisfied.

- b. **Membership Status – Grace Period.** Whether the grace period for conferences that fall below the required number of institutions to remain an active conference should be temporarily reduced from two years to one.
- c. **Automatic Qualification – Grace Period.** Whether the automatic qualification grace period should be reduced from two years to one. In addition, whether the relevant committees should be instructed to strongly consider denying any waiver requests for conferences that fall more than one below the required number of institutions for automatic qualification eligibility.
- d. **Membership Moratorium.** Whether a moratorium should be placed on new applications to reclassify to Division I for a period.

A formal feedback request will be distributed to conference offices in late May. The feedback collected will be shared with the Board of Directors during its meeting on June 23.

- 5. **Reports from Council Committees.** The council received reports from its standing committees that included the informational items noted below.

- a. **NCAA Division I Football Championship Subdivision Oversight Committee.** The council received a report from the Football Championship Subdivision Oversight Committee that included the following recommendations and informational items.

- **Football – Football Championship Subdivision – Maximum Contests and First Permissible Contest Date.** (Fairness/Well-Being/Operational) The Football Championship Subdivision Oversight Committee previously recommended that the council adopt expedited legislation during its June 2025 meeting to amend the championship subdivision football playing seasons legislation. The proposal would increase the institutional and student-athletes maximum contest limitations in any one season from 11 to 12 contests, amend the FCS first contest date legislation to permit an institution to engage in outside competition beginning the Thursday that is 13 weeks prior to the selection of the NCAA Division I Football Championship participants, and eliminate all first contest date exceptions. The proposal's effective date is August 1, 2026.

Rationale. This proposal would standardize the championship subdivision football playing season to begin each year 13 weeks before the FCS Championship selection date. This proposal also provides the opportunity for institutions to compete in 12 contests within a fixed 13-week period, providing consistency and, in years that would currently permit only 11 contests, additional scheduling flexibility.

- b. **NCAA Division I Legislative Committee.** The council received a report from the Legislative Committee that included the following recommendations and informational items.

- **Division Membership – Conditions and Obligations of Membership – Periodic Compliance Review – Effective Date.** (Academics/Fairness/Well-Being/Operational) The Legislative Committee previously recommended that the council adopt expedited legislation during its June 2025 meeting to delay the effective date, from August 1, 2025, to August 1, 2027, of the membership requirement to conduct a periodic compliance review at least once every four years. The proposal's effective date is August 1, 2027.

Rationale. With significant changes to the Division I regulatory landscape anticipated for implementation beginning July 1, 2025, it is premature for an institution to conduct a meaningful review of its compliance operations. Although the August 1, 2025, effective date provides an institution four years to ultimately conduct the review, recent feedback suggested that if the majority of institutions choose to delay their compliance review to the latter half of the current four-year window, conference office staff, who will likely be involved in many institutional compliance reviews, will be overburdened.

Moving the start of the four-year window back to August 1, 2027, will alleviate future scheduling congestion, while helping institutional compliance operations focus their near-term efforts on adjusting to the anticipated changes to the regulatory landscape. The compliance review requirement will be more meaningful with the benefit of experience in the new landscape. Consideration of this recommendation as expedited legislation during the June council meeting will provide necessary notice to institutions that were considering conducting or beginning their periodic compliance reviews on or after August 1, 2025.

6. **Legal Update.** (Operational) The council received an update on litigation affecting Division I and the Association overall.
7. **Report of the April Council Meeting.** (Operational) The council approved the report of its April meeting. (*Unanimous voice vote.*)

Council Chair: Josh Whitman, University of Illinois; Big Ten Conference.
Council Liaisons: Geoff Bentzel, Division I Governance
Amanda Conklin, Division I Governance
Jennifer Fraser, Division I Governance
Leeland Zeller, Division I Governance

NCAA Division I Council Videoconference May 15, 2025	
Attendees:	
Alisse Ali-Joseph, Northern Arizona University; Faculty Athletics Representative Association.	
Mark Alnutt, University at Buffalo, State University of New York; Mid-American Conference.	
Nicole Kendall Arrighi, Tennessee State University; Ohio Valley Conference.	
Kelly Barsky, University of California, Santa Barbara; Big West Conference.	
Amy Beggin, University of New Mexico; Mountain West Conference.	
Jackie Blackett, Columbia University-Barnard College; The Ivy League.	
Matt Boyer, Southeastern Conference (FBS autonomy conference commissioner) (alternate).	
Josh Brooks, University of Georgia; Southeastern Conference.	
Don Bruce, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville; 1A Faculty Athletics Representative.	
Dan Butterly, Big West Conference (Division I Subdivision conference commissioner).	
Jason Cable, Alabama State University; Southwestern Athletic Conference.	
Tim Coffey, Longwood University; Big South Conference.	
Christine Copper, U.S. Naval Academy; Patriot League.	
Brad Corbin, Washington State University; Pac-12 Conference.	
John Currie, Wake Forest University; Atlantic Coast Conference.	
Joey D'Antonio; Coastal Athletic Association.	
Anthony Egbo; Division I Student-Athlete Advisory Committee.	
Ellen Ferris; American Athletic Conference (alternate).	
Gerald Harrison, Austin Peay State University; ASUN Conference.	
Shawn Heilbron, Stony Brook University; Coastal Athletic Association.	
Jeff Jackson; Missouri Valley Conference.	
Doug Knuth, Southern Utah University; Western Athletic Conference.	
Jessica Kumke; Horizon League.	
Julie Roe Lach; Horizon League (alternate).	
Lisa Liotta, Canisius University; Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference.	
Brandon Martin, University of Missouri, Kansas City; The Summit League.	
Kimya Massey, University of San Diego; West Coast Conference.	
Ed McLaughlin, Virginia Commonwealth University; Atlantic 10 Conference.	
Noreen Morris; Northeast Conference (alternate).	
Meredith Page; Division I Student-Athlete Advisory Committee.	
Jennifer Phillips, James Madison University; Sun Belt Conference.	
Elizabeth Rabb, Wofford College; Southern Conference.	
Allison Rich, University of New Hampshire; America East Conference.	
Heath Schroyer, McNeese State University; Southland Conference.	
Jim Senter, University of Texas at El Paso; Conference USA.	
Jon Steinbrecher; Mid-American Conference.	
Melody Webb, Norfolk State University; Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (alternate).	
Josh Whitman, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign; Big Ten Conference.	

NCAA Division I Council Videoconference May 15, 2025	
Katie Willett; Big East Conference (alternate).	
Absentees:	
Greg Christopher, Xavier University; Big East Conference.	
Steve Corder, University of Detroit Mercy; Horizon League.	
Terry Gawlik, University of Idaho; Big Sky Conference.	
Brad Hurlbut, Fairleigh Dickinson University; Northeast Conference.	
Michael Kelly, University of South Florida; American Athletic Conference.	
Greg Sankey, Southeastern Conference (FBS autonomy conference commissioner).	
Guests in Attendance:	
Braeden Pratt, Division I Student-Athlete Advisory Committee.	
NCAA Staff Liaisons in Attendance:	
Geoff Bentzel, Amanda Conklin, Jenn Fraser and Leeland Zeller.	
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance for Portions of the Meeting:	
Scott Bearby, Tim Buckley, Derrick Crawford, Jon Duncan, Michele Forte-Osborne, Dan Gavitt, Haydyn Gibson, Terri Steeb Gronau, Ethan Hite, Lynn Holzman, Kevin Lennon, John Macrina, Mario Morris, Stephanie Quigg, Bridget Rigney, Dave Schnase, Lynda Tealer, Stan Wilcox and Meghan Wright.	