Division I Conference SAAC Guide

Updated March 2026.

DIVISION I

Contents

Section 1:
What is DI National SAAC?

WHAT IS SAAC?

A Student-Athlete Advisory Committee is composed of student-athletes who provide insights into the student-athlete experience. The SAAC offers input on rules, regulations and policies that affect student-athletes in NCAA member conferences and on member school campuses. There are national SAACs for Divisions I, II and III representing student-athletes across the Association. NCAA legislation mandates that all Division I members have a conference SAAC as well as a SAAC per institution within the conference.

SAAC HISTORY

An Association-wide SAAC was adopted at the 1989 NCAA Convention and was formed primarily to review and offer student-athlete input on NCAA activities and proposed legislation that affected student-athlete well-being. The initial national committee was composed of student-athletes from all membership divisions to ensure that the student-athlete voice accounted for the diverse educational and athletic experiences of student-athletes at all NCAA member schools.

In 1995, NCAA member institutions adopted legislation mandating that each school create a SAAC. Additionally, the legislation required every conference to create its own committee. Each institution's SAAC maintains communication with the national SAAC, either directly or through a conference SAAC.

In August 1997, the NCAA federated along divisional lines, expanding the national SAAC to three SAACs representing NCAA Divisions I, II and III. Federation broadened student-athlete participation in the governance process by increasing the number of SAAC members from the former Association-wide committee of 28 student-athletes to over 75 members serving on the national Division I, II and III committees.

In February 2026, Division I National SAAC changed their name to be Division I National Student-Athlete Advocacy Committee. This change emphasizes the committee's primary role in advocating for student-athlete interests and strengthening the visibility of its mission within the NCAA governance structure. Division II and Division III SAAC maintained their current name and the use of advisory. Division I campus and conference SAACs are not required to change their name to align with National SAAC.

A variety of constituencies within the Association seek input from the divisional SAACs. SAAC members serve as voting members on their division's respective presidential bodies and committees. Division I, Division II and Division III SAACs vote on legislative issues annually at the NCAA Convention. Additionally, SAAC members serve on other divisional and Association-wide committees.

DIVISION I SAAC BYLAWS

20.2.4.28 Student-Athlete Advisory Committee. An active member institution shall establish a student-athlete advisory committee for its student-athletes, which must:

(a) Appoint an executive team that, at a minimum, includes a chair and vice chair;

(b) Be directly overseen by a senior athletics administrator; and

(c) Be provided two opportunities annually for committee leaders to engage with members of the athletics senior leadership team, management team, or members of groups of equivalent nature to discuss and exchange feedback on student-athlete-related topics in academics, facilities, campus life and other initiatives, as well as department-wide projects and strategic planning.
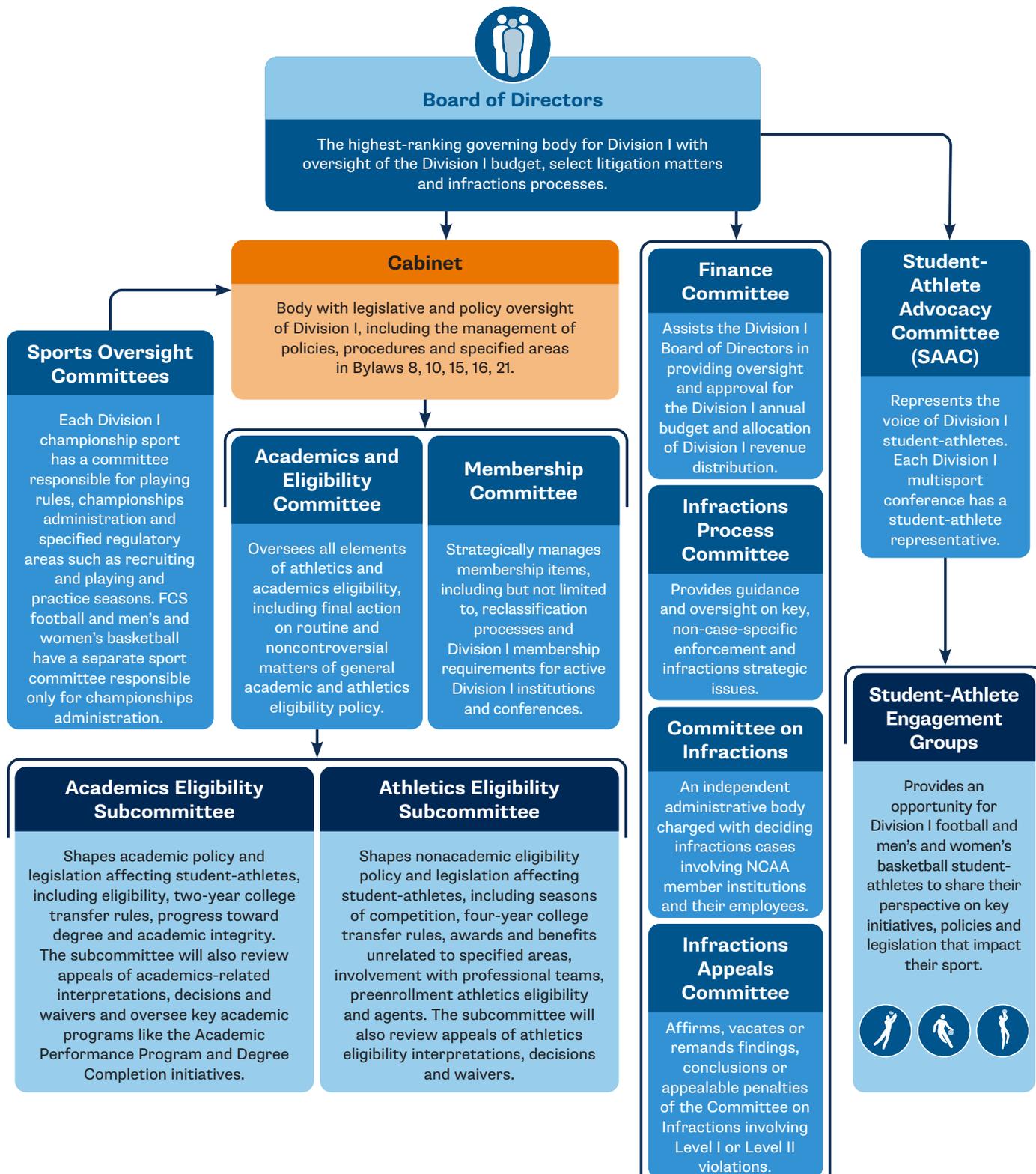
20.3.4.6 Conference Student-Athlete Advisory Committee. A multisport conference shall establish a student-athlete advisory committee for its member institutions' student-athletes. The composition and duties of the committee shall be determined by the conference. The committee must:

(a) Appoint an executive team that, at a minimum, includes a chair and vice chair;

(b) Be directly overseen by a senior conference administrator; and

(c) Be provided at least two opportunities annually for at least two student-athlete representatives (e.g., SAAC leadership) to engage with relevant operational-level conference committees to discuss and exchange feedback on student-athlete initiatives, legislation, championships, and other student-athlete-related topics. The conference has the discretion to determine the specific committees that will engage with the student-athletes, but must include at least one group.

Section 2:
SAAC Organizational Structure

NCAA Division I Governance Structure

Board of Directors

The highest-ranking governing body for Division I with oversight of the Division I budget, select litigation matters and infractions processes.

Cabinet

Body with legislative and policy oversight of Division I, including the management of policies, procedures and specified areas in Bylaws 8, 10, 15, 16, 21.

Sports Oversight Committees

Each Division I championship sport has a committee responsible for playing rules, championships administration and specified regulatory areas such as recruiting and playing and practice seasons. FCS football and men's and women's basketball have a separate sport committee responsible only for championships administration.

Academics and Eligibility Committee

Oversees all elements of athletics and academics eligibility, including final action on routine and noncontroversial matters of general academic and athletics eligibility policy.

Membership Committee

Strategically manages membership items, including but not limited to, reclassification processes and Division I membership requirements for active Division I institutions and conferences.

Academics Eligibility Subcommittee

Shapes academic policy and legislation affecting student-athletes, including eligibility, two-year college transfer rules, progress toward degree and academic integrity. The subcommittee will also review appeals of academics-related interpretations, decisions and waivers and oversee key academic programs like the Academic Performance Program and Degree Completion initiatives.

Athletics Eligibility Subcommittee

Shapes nonacademic eligibility policy and legislation affecting student-athletes, including seasons of competition, four-year college transfer rules, awards and benefits unrelated to specified areas, involvement with professional teams, preenrollment athletics eligibility and agents. The subcommittee will also review appeals of athletics eligibility interpretations, decisions and waivers.

Finance Committee

Assists the Division I Board of Directors in providing oversight and approval for the Division I annual budget and allocation of Division I revenue distribution.

Infractions Process Committee

Provides guidance and oversight on key, non-case-specific enforcement and infractions strategic issues.

Committee on Infractions

An independent administrative body charged with deciding infractions cases involving NCAA member institutions and their employees.

Infractions Appeals Committee

Affirms, vacates or remands findings, conclusions or appealable penalties of the Committee on Infractions involving Level I or Level II violations.

Student-Athlete Advocacy Committee (SAAC)

Represents the voice of Division I student-athletes. Each Division I multisport conference has a student-athlete representative.

Student-Athlete Engagement Groups

Provides an opportunity for Division I football and men's and women's basketball student-athletes to share their perspective on key initiatives, policies and legislation that impact their sport.

SAAC ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

1. Campus Student-Athlete Advisory Committee
    a. One or two representatives from each athletics team within an institution.
2. Conference Student-Athlete Advisory Committee
    a. One or two representatives from each Division I institution in the conference.
3. National Student-Athlete Advocacy Committee
    a. The Division I SAAC includes one representative from each of the 32 Division I multisport voting conferences.

Below is a list of the 32 Division I Conferences:

- America East Conference
- American Conference
- Atlantic Sun Conference
- Atlantic 10 Conference
- Atlantic Coast Conference
- Big 12 Conference
- Big East Conference
- Big Sky Conference
- Big South Conference
- Big Ten Conference
- Big West Conference
- Coastal Athletic Association
- Conference USA
- Horizon League
- The Ivy League
- Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference
- Mid-American Conference
- Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference
- Missouri Valley Conference
- Mountain West Conference
- Northeast Conference
- Ohio Valley Conference
- Pac-12 Conference
- Patriot League
- Southeastern Conference
- Southern Conference
- Southland Conference
- Southwestern Athletic Conference
- The Summit League
- Sun Belt Conference
- West Coast Conference
- Western Athletic Conference

NCAA Staff Liaisons

- Primary Liaison: **Quintin Wright**, Director of Division I Governance and Member Services, **qwright@ncaa.org**
- Secondary Liaison: **Judy Delp**, Administrative Assistant of Division I Governance and Member Services, **jdelp@ncaa.org**
- Secondary Liaison: **Haydyn Makins**, Associate Director of Division I Governance and Member Services, **hmakins@ncaa.org**
- Secondary Liaison: **Shelby Sonnefeldt**, Assistant Director of Division I Governance and Member Services, **ssonnefeldt@ncaa.org**
- Secondary Liaison: **Asia Thompson**, Assistant Director of Basketball, **athompson@ncaa.org**

Section 3:
Individual Roles/Organizational Structure

INDIVIDUAL ROLES

At each level of the Division I governance structure (national, conference and campus), there are liaisons and administrators to support each committee.

CAMPUS SAAC

Campus SAAC Liaison

The campus SAAC liaison, much like the conference liaison, is responsible for overseeing the development of the campus SAAC agenda, managing the budget and handling administrative tasks such as maintaining meeting minutes and the roster. The liaison's primary role is to guide and support student-athletes as they determine their priorities and accomplish their goals.

Campus SAAC Student-Athlete Representative

The campus SAAC student-athlete representative is responsible for actively participating in all campus SAAC meetings and maintaining open communication with other campus SAAC members. Representatives serve as a liaison between the student-athletes on their team and the campus SAAC, ensuring that team perspectives are shared and represented.

CONFERENCE SAAC

Conference SAAC Liaison

The conference SAAC liaison is responsible for tasks like developing agendas, managing the budget and handling administrative duties such as keeping minutes and maintaining the roster. The main goal is to guide and support student-athletes as they set priorities and work toward their goals.

Conference SAAC Executive Board

Creating an Executive Board is recommended to manage the operations of a conference SAAC. Typical positions include chair, vice chair, secretary and/or treasurer, all held by student-athletes.

Chair

- Presides over meetings.
- Serves as liaison to the conference office.
- Functions as spokesperson from conference student-athletes to the community and member schools.

Vice Chair

- Leads meetings when the chair is unavailable.
- Oversees subcommittees addressing student-athlete needs.
- Assumes all chair responsibilities in the chair's absence.
- Completes any tasks assigned by the committee.
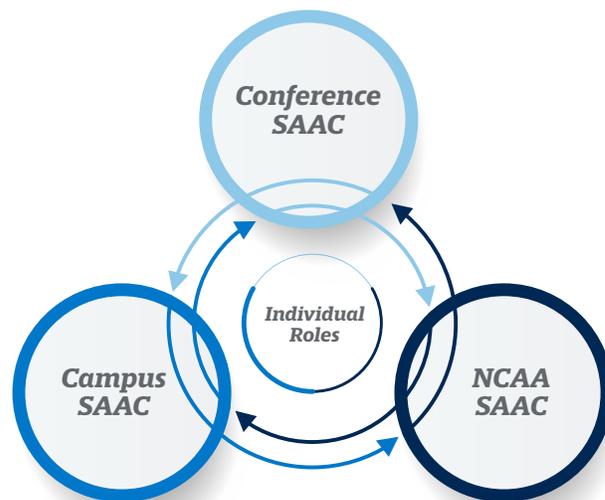
• Secretary

- Maintains attendance records.
- Prepares summaries of meeting minutes.

Treasurer

- Submits budget requests.
- Tracks and records all SAAC financial transactions.

Conference SAAC Student-Athlete Representative

The role of the conference SAAC student-athlete representative is similar to that of the national SAAC student-athlete representative. They are expected to attend and actively participate in all campus and conference SAAC meetings, maintain open communication with the conference SAAC liaison and act as a liaison between the campus and conference SAACs. Conference SAAC representatives should stay informed about issues and updates at both the conference and national levels that affect their conference. It is not required for conference SAAC representatives to serve as the president of their campus SAAC.

NATIONAL SAAC

NCAA Liaison

The NCAA staff liaisons to Division I SAAC assist the committee by providing guidance, administrative support and resource information, while ensuring the committee's decisions are carried out.

National SAAC Representative

The national SAAC representative plays an active role in conference and national SAAC meetings, acting as a liaison between their campus, conference and the national SAAC. They are expected to stay up to date on issues and updates from both their conference and the NCAA.

Section 4:
Organizing Your Committee

KEY COMPONENTS FOR ORGANIZING A CONFERENCE SAAC

Mission Statement
It is important for every conference SAAC to have a mission statement. This statement defines the purpose and importance of having a SAAC at the conference level. To convey a clear, consistent message to the student-athletes, it's recommended to have a mission statement that correlates with the national SAAC mission statement.

Establish Constitution and Bylaws
Once your conference SAAC has developed a mission statement, a set of conference bylaws should establish the following:
- SAAC's purpose.
- Member selection process.
- Attendance policies.
- Officer roles.
- Robert's Rules of Order (see Section 5).

Selection Process for New Member
The selection process for new members should aim for consistent representation from each institution. Selection methods can vary, but should promote diversity, and vacancies should be addressed promptly by notifying the conference liaison and filling roles before the next meeting.

Nominations
Nomination processes for SAAC representatives vary across conferences. Some schools may designate the president and vice president of their campus SAAC as their conference SAAC representatives, while other schools may purposefully select representatives other than their president and vice president. The goal is consistent representation from each school at conference SAAC meetings.

Another option for conference SAAC nominations is to require that a slate of nominees be submitted from each school to the conference for review. It is then the responsibility of the commissioner, conference SAAC liaison and/or the chair and vice chair of the conference SAAC to discuss and select the appropriate representative.

Below are a few factors to keep in mind when developing a diverse conference SAAC:
- Gender.
- Sport.
- Ethnicity.
- Year in school.

Attendance Policy
Campus SAAC representation is mandatory at all conference SAAC meetings. The conference SAAC should create an attendance policy accepted by all members. Below are a few factors to keep in mind when developing an attendance policy:
- Excusable absences are permitted in the following instances:
  - Family emergencies.
  - Athletics competition occurring during the scheduled meeting.
  - Academic reasons.
- Two unexcused absences may result in dismissal.
- Members who will miss a meeting must inform the conference SAAC liaison regarding their planned absence before the meeting.
- The conference SAAC representative is required to refer relevant campus issues to the full conference SAAC before a missed meeting.
- At the conclusion of the missed meeting, it is the absent member's responsibility to contact a fellow conference SAAC member to discuss agenda items covered during the meeting.

Officers (Executive Board)
- The executive board is required to include a chair and vice chair, and optionally one or two more representatives.
- There should be a distinct election procedure and specific expectations for the executive board, determined by the conference SAAC.
- Officers should represent different schools within the conference.

Vacancies
The following steps should occur when conference SAAC vacancies occur:
- A SAAC member should notify the conference liaison at least one semester/quarter before anticipated departure.
- The conference liaison should send an email to the school as soon as there is a known vacancy at that school. The email should include the expectations and selection process.

Section 5:
Meetings

GENERAL MEETING INFO

SAACs traditionally have a high turnover rate due to the transiency of college students. The conference office is instrumental in maintaining consistency from year to year and representative to representative. One way to achieve consistency is for the conference office to maintain accurate historical records of committee actions and rosters.

Meeting Schedule

When scheduling meeting dates, conference SAACs should consider a set meeting schedule of once monthly. If a monthly schedule is unattainable, it is required to meet biannually. We suggest that you meet at least on a quarterly basis. As part of the Division I legislative process, national SAAC representatives distribute legislative information to each conference and campus SAAC. It is helpful to present proposed legislation to representatives from each school, and this is done in conjunction with the conference SAAC liaison and the Division I SAAC representative.

Many conferences will schedule summer meetings that include SAAC representatives and advisors from each school, as well as the conference commissioner. This meeting can include updates from the campus and conference levels to senior level administration. Conference SAACs are encouraged to plan initiatives and community engagement opportunities for the coming school year at this meeting.

MEETING FORMAT

Videoconferences are a great way to meet and discuss important agenda items. In addition to videoconferences, in-person conference SAAC meetings are suggested to occur at least once annually.

Meeting Agenda

The purpose of the agenda is to provide structure for the meeting and organize meeting topics so that issues are addressed in an orderly manner, giving time for discussion of more pressing issues. Creating and distributing agendas via email to SAAC members ahead of time for their review may also be helpful in ensuring that meetings run efficiently. An agenda should include the following sections:

Welcome — Introductory segment whereby members are welcomed before proceeding to the items of business.

Meeting minutes or report — A permanent record of meeting schedules, discussions and action items should be kept for historical purposes. They are an excellent reference source for future committees. It is a good idea to review the action items listed in the minutes of the previous meeting at the beginning of each meeting to address any outstanding issues.

Updates — It is important for each committee member to provide updates on issues, concerns and actions that have taken place on their campus. It is also important to have

reports from conference SAAC subcommittees and other interested parties. Conference SAAC meetings may include the following:

- National SAAC updates, whereby items pertaining to the activities of the national SAAC are discussed. The national SAAC representative should lead this update, and items of importance should be taken back to the next national SAAC meeting.
- Institutional SAAC updates, whereby the following are discussed: current campus issues and activities, community engagement opportunities and upcoming events.
- Conference SAAC updates, whereby issues of importance to the conference SAAC are discussed (e.g., member selections, future meeting times and dates, conference-wide community engagement projects).
- New business — Current issues and concerns that affect the conference and student-athletes should be discussed. Topics for this section should be solicited from committee members and the conference office for the agenda before the meeting. Any supplements to enhance the discussion at the meeting should be distributed before the meeting along with the agenda.

See example from the **Missouri Valley Conference** as a reference.

Legislative Changes
As a member of your Conference SAAC, you have a unique opportunity to influence the future of NCAA Division I athletics. One critical way to do this is through the legislative process.

Legislative packets outline proposed changes to NCAA rules and regulations. These proposals can impact various aspects of student-athlete life, from eligibility requirements to competition rules. Many of the issues relate directly to student-athlete well-being, so taking the time to fully discuss each piece with your campus SAAC and potentially as a conference SAAC is important.

Each national SAAC representative is to review the DI Publication of Proposed Legislation within their meeting materials prior to in-person legislative reviews; the materials are provided by the NCAA to DI SAAC representatives with ample time for review. The Conference SAAC representative then shares information with a representative from each campus SAAC within the conference for review. The national SAAC representative will then collect and compile the feedback and sentiment presented by each school within the conference and will share them with the national SAAC at each of the committee's in-person meetings. The feedback gathered forms the basis for the national SAAC's position at the NCAA Convention and can determine the national SAAC's vote at the Division I business session. Assistance from the conference office is available and may be necessary to help explain the process and the proposed legislation. Legislative information is consistently reviewed on a 90-day cycle to ensure ample time to receive feedback, with the exception of emergency and expedited legislation from certain NCAA groups.

Robert's Rules of Order
NCAA committees use Robert's Rules of Order when making decisions. Click **here** to view a one-page document outlining the parliamentary procedure.

Section 6:
Communications

COMMUNICATION BEST PRACTICES
One of the most important components of a successful SAAC is encouraging excellent communication among representatives. Clear, consistent communication allows for stronger ties with members, which can strengthen the overall output of the committee.

Webpage
The **DI committee webpage** and its resources can be used as a template for a conference SAAC webpage. The latest information regarding the committee's activities and its members is easily accessible. Having an information hub also allows the committee to solicit feedback and showcase the many accomplishments your SAAC has achieved. The following includes suggested information for a SAAC webpage:

- Conference SAAC's mission and purpose.
- Conference SAAC roster with pictures of the representatives.
- Links to the conference's schools.
- Community engagement link with pictures of community engagement projects. (Case studies or video contest entries.)
- Other links that may be unique to your conference.

GroupMe/Group Chat
Many committees have found creating a group chat on an app like GroupMe is a quick and easy way to make sure all committee members receive pertinent information and reminders. We suggest making a group chat to centralize all communications to simplify the process and ensure timely responses.

SAAC Social Media Presence
Campus SAACs within the conference may already have a presence on social media platforms such as Instagram and X. We suggest you also have a conference SAAC account that showcases and highlights student-athletes. If conferences already have active accounts, consider post collaborations with the conference office and conference SAAC. It is important to be realistic about what the SAAC has the time and resources to manage. If the account is not updated frequently or maintained properly, the page may detract from what the SAAC is trying to accomplish. Follow @ncaa_d1saac on Instagram and X for content ideas from DI National SAAC.

Social Media Tips
- Take the time to shout out student-athletes and other teams in your conference when they do big things.
- Remember that professors, coaches, teammates, peers and other important people are watching and listening to what you post on social media.
- Privacy settings only go so far. Social media is always public, and future employers will be considering how you present yourself online.
- If your conference office administrators give you guidelines to follow for social media, follow them closely.
- Have a dedicated individual to manage the social media pages if it is not done by staff.

Student-Athlete Social Media Presence
Student-athletes are ambassadors for the schools they compete for and should portray a positive image of themselves, their school and conference when using social media. Not only are they reflecting their team, school, conference and family, but they are also conveying their own personal brand.

Use of SAAC Logos
Chairs from all three divisional SAACs collaborated in 2021 on a SAAC logo to be used by campus, conference and national SAACs. The purpose of the logo is to create logo consistency to strengthen the SAAC brand. Therefore, the mark, **available here**, should be paired with a school's athletics logo or conference logo, and it should replace any existing campus and conference SAAC logos.

Section 7:
SAAC Initiatives and Responsibilities

Community Engagement

In Division I athletics, community engagement goes beyond traditional community service. While service often focuses on one-time volunteer efforts, engagement emphasizes building lasting relationships. It involves connecting with local communities through volunteer initiatives and inviting them to campus to experience Division I contests and other events.

Below are examples of community engagement projects and fundraisers that SAACs have successfully organized in the past:

- Make-A-Wish fundraisers.
- Team IMPACT opportunities.
- Boys and Girls Club Afternoon of Learning.
- Volunteer opportunities at local homeless shelters, food banks and the American Red Cross.
- Reading to local schoolchildren.
- Junior athlete days, when children come to school for a day and get to spend time and play with the athletes.
- Old shoe collection.
- Canned food drives.
- Blood drives.
- College idols — when local school children shadow a student.
- Volunteering at local hospitals.
- Special Olympics.
- Peer mentoring.
- Adopt-a-family programs during the holidays.
- Student-Athlete Appreciation Day.
- National Girls and Women in Sports Day.
- Teddy bear drives.
- Coats for Kids.
- Pen pal program with local schools.
- Spare change and toiletries drive.
- Student-athlete values survey.
- International student-athlete mentorship.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

NCAA Legacy Lab

The **NCAA Legacy Lab** helps Division I sophomore and junior student-athletes explore entrepreneurship while they are still competing. During this multiday program, participants turn their skills, stories and ideas into sustainable ventures and choose one of three learning tracks:

- Brand in Motion: Explore how to monetize your name, image and likeness (NIL) responsibly and effectively.
- Blueprint to Breakthrough: Learn the essentials of starting, operating and growing a business.
- Built to Serve: Design ventures that prioritize social responsibility alongside profitability.

NCAA Career in Sports Forum

The **NCAA Career in Sports Forum** is an annual educational program for 200 selected NCAA student-athletes across divisions, designed to explore career paths in sports, with a focus on collegiate athletics. This unique three-day forum enables student-athletes to network with athletics professionals and learn the skills needed to pursue a career in the sports industry.

NCAA Student-Athlete Leadership Forum

The **NCAA Student-Athlete Leadership Forum** provides a transformative experience, fostering personal and professional growth. Participants develop leadership skills, understand the impact of personal values and core beliefs, and build a support network of like-minded peers. This program encourages self-awareness and equips student-athletes with tools to reach their potential.

NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship

The **NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship** is awarded annually to high-achieving student-athletes in their final year of competition who excel academically and athletically. The scholarship is awarded to student-athletes in all seasons and throughout each division.

NCAA Postgraduate Internship Program

The **NCAA Postgraduate Internship Program** offers a one-year professional development opportunity based at the NCAA national office in Indianapolis. Open to college graduates from NCAA member schools, this program prepares participants for a career in intercollegiate athletics administration through hands-on learning experiences.

Emerging Leaders Seminar

The **Emerging Leaders Seminar** provides leadership, educational and transitional programming for current graduate assistants and interns from NCAA member schools, conference offices and affiliate organizations. The three-day program educates, develops and connects selected learners and equips young professionals with the skills necessary to accelerate their career progression in college sports.

Section 8:
Important Links

NCAA SAAC LINKS

Division I SAAC page

Division I SAAC Instagram

Division I SAAC X

NCAA LINKS

NCAA Division I Instagram

NCAA Division I X

NCAA Scholarships and Grants

NCAA Homepage

NCAA YouTube