



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION II CHAMPIONSHIPS COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 24-25, 2025, VIDEOCONFERENCE**

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- None.

2. Nonlegislative items.

a. Football championship bracket expansion.

- (1) Recommendation. Expand the NCAA Division II Football Championship bracket from 28 teams to 32.
- (2) Effective date. 2025 championship.
- (3) Rationale. This recommendation comes as a result of two actions taken at the 2025 NCAA Convention: 1) the Division II Executive Board's approval of additional exceptions to the triennial budget process that include bracket adjustments when a Division II championship policy is triggered; and 2) the Division II membership's adoption of a proposal to establish football as an automatic qualification (AQ) sport instead of the previous earned access model. Division II Championships Committee policy states that bracket expansion should be explored as soon as possible when more than 50 percent of the bracket is composed of AQs. Football will have 16 AQ eligible conferences for the 2025 season. With a current bracket size of 28, that would result in 57 percent of the bracket being composed of AQs. There would be no change to the championship date formula as the four No. 1 seeds would no longer have byes in this model.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. The mid-range estimate for this expansion is approximately \$545,000 to accommodate travel and per diem for the four additional teams. (The funds would come both from remaining unused funds from the last triennium and from funds anticipated for the next triennium.)
- (5) Student-athlete impact. Bracket expansion would provide a championship experience for an additional four teams, with each team consisting of a squad size of 58 individuals. These 232 student-athletes would be provided with a lifetime memory that would not otherwise be available to them if the bracket is not expanded.

b. Football bracketing principles and priorities.

- (1) Recommendation. Pending approval of the expanded bracket in Item 2-a above, modify the principles the Division II Football Committee uses to bracket the eight teams from each of the four super regions as follows:

- Teams awarded the No. 1 seed in each of four super regions shall be placed in the appropriate positions in the bracket in their selected super region (i.e., seed Nos. 1 and 4 in the upper half with two unseeded teams; and seed Nos. 2 and 3 in the lower half with two unseeded teams).
 - Teams selected in the Nos. 5, 6, 7 and 8 spots in each super region will be considered “unseeded” and can be paired with any Nos. 1, 2, 3 or 4 seeds in the first round. Unseeded teams may be placed in any super region if doing so reduces the number of flights in the first/second round.
 - Teams that reach the field via AQ and are not ranked in the top eight of the final ranking on the day of selections will be paired with a No. 1 seed in the opening round in their home super region (unless preliminary-round flights can be reduced by being paired with a No. 1 seed in an alternate super region). If multiple teams earn berths in the field via AQ and are not ranked in the top eight in the final rankings on the day of selections, the lowest-ranked AQ in the region will be paired with the No. 1 seed first. Subsequent AQs outside the top eight may be placed based on their rank and the integrity of the bracket.
 - All 32 teams will play first-round games and there will not be any byes. Seed Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4 in each super region will be paired with any unseeded team using the following pairing priorities:
 - Priority 1: Unseeded teams will be placed into the bracket to maximize reduction of first-round flights.
 - Priority 2: Unseeded teams will be placed into the bracket in a fashion that will reduce the likelihood of second-round flights.
 - Priority 3: Repeating regular-season matchups in the first round of the championship should be avoided, provided that doing so does not increase the number of flights (per Priorities 1 and 2).
 - Priority 4: Teams shall be paired accordingly based on what their seed would have been prior to being listed as “unseeded.”
- (2) Effective date. 2025 championship.
- (3) Rationale. This policy aims to create a fair and consistent approach for determining playoff matchups when an automatic qualifier is ranked outside the top eight teams in a given super region. It ensures that the overall integrity of the playoff seeding is maintained while also acknowledging the unique situation of automatic qualifiers. This pairing helps ensure that any AQ team ranked outside the top eight does not unfairly disrupt the balance of the bracket, while still respecting the AQ process. By placing the lowest-ranked AQ against the No. 1 seed, the integrity of the playoff bracket is preserved and ensures that the highest-ranked teams are appropriately

challenged. This policy also ensures that automatic qualifiers that are not ranked in the top eight are placed in a way that maintains fairness within the playoff bracket. By pairing the lowest-ranked AQ with the No. 1 seed, the integrity of the competition is preserved, and all teams have a clear and equitable path in the championship.

(Note: Based on results from the 2025 Division II membership survey regarding bracketing priorities and regionalization, the Division II Football Committee is requesting the ability to revisit these recommended priorities during its 2026 annual meeting.)

- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. This will provide a better student-athlete experience, as it will ensure that the lowest-ranked AQ team if outside of the top eight teams in the final super region rankings will be paired against a No. 1 seed in the first round.

c. Postseason officiating crew sizes in football.

- (1) Recommendation. Permit officiating crews in the Division II Football Championship to continue using the same number of officials as their respective conferences have used throughout the regular season.
- (2) Effective date. 2025 championship.
- (3) Rationale. The recommendation, which the committee believes meets the newly approved officiating exception to the triennial budget process, would allow conferences that use eight-person crews to continue using eight-person crews, with the alternate official being included as the eighth member of the crew. There would not be an additional alternate official that would be assigned to games involving eight-person crews. Conferences that use seven-person crews in the regular season would continue using seven-person crews in the postseason with an alternate official still being assigned.

This adjustment is necessary to maintain consistency in officiating mechanics and to prevent disruption to the quality of officiating during the playoffs. This adjustment will not be considered when crews are selected for postseason games. It will not factor in for selections, so seven-person crews will not be penalized with fewer games only because of their on-field number. There will not be any fee increases needed for games officiated with seven on-field officials and an alternate official.

The Division I Football Championship Subdivision previously implemented a similar policy without issue. Their success demonstrates that there is no significant negative impact from allowing officiating crews to use the same number of officials throughout the postseason as they did during the regular season.

- (4) Estimated budget impact. \$3,930 maximum. The proposed adjustment to the officiating fee structure for eight-person crews is designed to cover the additional cost

of the eighth official. The increase in fees for the “alternate” that will be on the field in these playoff games is as follows:

- \$125 per game fee increase for the alternate in the first three rounds (\$325 fee);
- \$135 per game fee increase for the alternate for the semifinals (\$335 fee); and
- \$160 fee increase for the alternate for the championship game (\$360 fee).

For a 28-team bracket, the total potential budgetary impact would be **\$3,430**. If the 32-team bracket is approved, the total potential budgetary impact would be **\$3,930**. Not all games will be worked by eight-person crews, meaning that the actual budget impact will most likely be lower than the maximum projection.

- (5) Student-athlete impact. Allowing officiating crews to continue using the same number of officials in Division II playoff games as they used in the regular season ensures consistency in officiating mechanics and reduces unnecessary adjustments of officiating mechanics, which adds to the student-athlete postseason experience.

d. Additional women’s golf officials.

- (1) Recommendation. Add one additional rules official at each of the four regional sites in the NCAA Division II Women’s Golf Championships.
- (2) Effective date. Immediate.
- (3) Rationale. The Division II women’s golf regional field sizes have historically been smaller than the men’s, but with all four regional sites expanding to 96 participants, it is important to add one official per region. This adjustment increases each regional officiating crew from four to five members, aligning the number of officials at both the men’s and women’s regional sites. For example, the Central Region field size is doubling from nine to 18 teams, and adding a fifth official will help ensure effective management of the larger field. As this aligns with men’s golf from a gender equity standpoint, the Championships Committee believes this satisfies an exception to the triennial budget process.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. \$7,000 annually.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. This aligns Division II women’s golf with already established precedent in Division II men’s golf to ensure gender equity across the two championships and a quality student-athlete experience at both.

e. Change to access ratio policy.

- (1) Recommendation. Adjust the Division II team sport access ratio policy from 4.25:6 to 4:6.
- (2) Effective date. September 1, 2025.

- (3) Rationale. During its annual review of the access ratio policy, the Championships Committee determined that adjusting the low end of the ratio is warranted given the current sport sponsorship data and championship brackets. Doing so provides the flexibility for sports below the current 4.25 to comply with the access ratio policy and facilitates/expedites opportunities for emerging sports as well.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. The recommendation protects and, in some cases, expands championship participation opportunities for Division II student-athletes.

f. Cross country selection procedures.

- (1) Recommendation. Modify the cross country selection criteria so that head-to-head competition has more weight when selecting at-large teams. A head-to-head win would count as a 1.5 win, whereas second-tier comparisons would count as a 1 win.
- (2) Effective date. 2025 championships.
- (3) Rationale. The current selection criteria count head-to-head wins as equal to a second-tier comparison with common opponents. The committee feels that head-to-head should mean more than comparisons to common opponents.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Welcome and review of agenda.** Championships Committee Chair Regan McAthie welcomed the group and introduced new members Carlin Chesick, senior associate commissioner and senior woman administrator at the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference representing the Division II Management Council; Vaughn Williams, director of athletics at Bentley University representing the Division II Management Council; and Haley White, a field hockey and tennis student-athlete at Lincoln Memorial University representing the Division II Student-Athlete Advisory Committee.
2. **Review of previous reports.** The committee approved the report from its January 9 videoconference, as presented.
3. **Budget review.**
 - a. **Budget-to-actuals.** The committee reviewed championships budget-to-actuals for the 2024-25 fiscal year through January 31, noting that not all expenses for fall sports have been finalized.

- b. Division II budget guidelines and principles.** The committee received an overview of the Division II Executive Board's recently approved changes to the budget guidelines and principles, including the addition of the three proposed exceptions to the triennial budget:
- Championship bracket adjustments, provided a championships policy has been triggered (for example, potential expansion when a sport's current bracket exceeds the 50 percent AQ threshold, or the sponsorship of the sport places the access ratio outside of the 4.25 to 6);
 - Technology (e.g., video replay, web streaming requirements); and
 - Officiating expenses (e.g., adjusting fees to attract quality officials).

These exceptions have been added to the division's budget guidelines and principles accordingly.

- c. Review of championships access data.** Given the approved changes to the budget guidelines, the committee reviewed the current championships access data and noted that based on the 2024-25 bracket sizes and automatic qualifying conferences, football (which due to legislation adopted at the 2025 Convention is now an AQ sport rather than earned access) and men's lacrosse, warrant bracket expansion. The Division II Football Committee already has submitted its proposal to expand the football bracket from 28 to 32 teams (see Nonlegislative Action Item 2-a.) The Division II Men's Lacrosse Committee is discussing a revised format to accommodate an increase to their bracket as well and is expected to submit a recommendation to the Championships Committee for consideration in June.

The review also prompted the Championships Committee to consider and ultimately recommend adjusting the low end of the access ratio from 4.25 to 4 to provide the Championships Committee and sport committees more flexibility in bracketing and providing maximum championship participation opportunities for the Division II membership in both existing and potentially new sports. (See Nonlegislative Action Item 2-e.)

[Note: Considering the ongoing discussion the Division II Men's Lacrosse Committee is having about expanding its championship bracket (currently at 16 teams but with 10 potential automatic qualifying conferences by 2026), the Championships Committee advised considering a bracket size that would comply with both the access ratio policy and stay as close to 50% AQs as possible.]

- d. Men's and women's tennis bracket discussions.** The committee reviewed ongoing discussions regarding the proposed changes to the men's and women's tennis brackets considering both sports at the time were not in compliance with the access ratio policy of 4.25 to 6. Men's tennis is recommending a reduction to 34 (preferred) teams in order to comply. If the adjustment to the low end of the access ratio (from 4.25 to 4) is approved as recommended in Nonlegislative Action Item 2-f, women's tennis can stay at 48.

The men's and women's tennis committee is also considering recommending that both genders reduce to eight teams at the finals site rather than the current 16 teams. This would reduce the number of regional sites and increase the number of teams at each regional. The committee is also interested in making changes to the regional sites to ensure smooth operations, including adding a site representative (tennis is the only team sport that currently does not have site representatives at preliminary rounds) and additional officials since there will be more teams at regionals. The Championships Committee agreed that these proposals had merit and asked staff to provide the budget impacts of these requests at a future meeting.

- e. **Per diem.** The Strategic Planning and Finance Committee (SPFC) asked the Championships Committee for feedback regarding future per diem increases (the division approved a \$20 increase for FY25 to align with the Division III rate). After discussion, the Championships Committee recommended a \$10 increase for 2025-26 (from \$135 to \$145) and subsequent \$5 annual increases unless circumstances suggest otherwise.

(Note: In addition to the planned annual increase in per diem, the Championships Committee has previously discussed potentially implementing a high-cost city per diem. Staff will provide additional information, including a budget analysis, during the committee's June meeting in conjunction with the budget priorities identified through the Division II membership survey for further discussion.)

4. Committee updates.

- a. **Summary of actions.** The committee reviewed the summary of actions from the Management Council and Executive Board meetings conducted at the January Convention.

- b. **Nominating Committee.**

(1) Sport and playing rules committee appointments. The Championships Committee approved the following sport and playing rules committee appointments, effective as specified:

- **NCAA Division II Men's Basketball Committee** (one September vacancy) – **Rachel Burleson**, director of athletics, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (Florida), Sunshine State Conference.
- **NCAA Men's Basketball Rules Committee** (one September vacancy) – **Tony Dominguez**, head men's basketball coach, Western Washington University, Great Northwest Athletic Conference.
- **NCAA Division II Men's and Women's Cross Country Committee** (one September vacancy) – **Carissa Cessna**, assistant athletics director for compliance, Missouri Southern State University, Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association.

- **NCAA Division II Field Hockey Committee** (one September vacancy) – **Marissa Kocher**, head field hockey coach, Roberts Wesleyan University, East Coast Conference.
- **NCAA Division II Football Committee** (one-year term extension; new Super Region 2) – **Brett Gilliland**, director of athletics, University of West Alabama, Gulf South Conference.
- **NCAA Division II Football Committee** (one September vacancy) – **Aaron James**, head football coach, Tuskegee University, Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.
- **NCAA Football Rules Committee** (one immediate vacancy) – **Doug Geiser**, head football coach, Ashland University, Great Midwest Athletic Conference.
- **NCAA Division II Men’s Lacrosse Committee** (one September vacancy) – **Daniel McCabe**, director of athletics, Adelphi University, Northeast-10 Conference.
- **NCAA Division II Women’s Lacrosse Committee** (one September vacancy) – **Jennifer Pawlowski**, head women’s lacrosse coach and compliance assistant, Gannon University, Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference.
- **NCAA Men’s and Women’s Skiing Committee** (one September vacancy) – **Mark Anderson**, head men’s and women’s skiing coach, University of Alaska Anchorage, Great Northwest Athletic Conference.
- **NCAA Division II Men’s Soccer Committee** (one September vacancy) – **Matt O’Sullivan**, head men’s soccer coach, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, California Collegiate Athletic Association.
- **NCAA Division II Women’s Soccer Committee** (two September vacancies) – **Sarah Meier**, associate director of athletics and senior woman administrator, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs, Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference (South Central Region); and **Kyle Ferguson**, director of athletics, Fresno Pacific University, Pacific West Conference (West Region).
- **NCAA Men’s and Women’s Swimming and Diving Rules Committee** (one September vacancy) – **Sara Smith**, head men’s and women’s swimming and diving coach, Roberts Wesleyan University, East Coast Conference.
- **NCAA Division II Men’s and Women’s Tennis Committee** (two immediate vacancies) – **Jon Coles**, faculty athletics representative, Grand Valley State University, Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (Midwest Region); and **Adrienne Singletary**, assistant director of athletics, Coker University, South Atlantic Conference (Southeast Region).

- **NCAA Division II Men's and Women's Track and Field Committee** (one September vacancy) – **Bethany Blomquist**, assistant athletics director for internal operations and senior woman administrator, Azusa Pacific University, Pacific West Conference.
- **NCAA Men's and Women's Track and Field Rules Committee** (one September vacancy) – **Dana Schwarting**, head men's and women's track and field coach, Lewis University, Great Lakes Valley Conference
- **NCAA Division II Women's Volleyball Committee** (one immediate vacancy) – **Sara Higley**, senior associate athletics director, Ferris State University, Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.
- **NCAA Division II Wrestling Committee** (one September vacancy) – **Christina Chow**, senior associate athletics director for compliance, University of North Carolina at Pembroke, Conference Carolinas.

(2) Nominating Committee policies and procedures. The Championships Committee approved a change to the Division II Nominating Committee policies and procedures to allow for temporary placement (e.g., maternity/paternity leave, medical leave) of national sport committee members for situations in which the individual will not be able to participate in ranking calls and the selection call by allowing a current regional advisory committee (RAC) member to serve as the temporary chair for the region. The temporary chair will lead the weekly RAC calls and participate on the weekly national committee ranking calls and selection call. Currently there is no policy for temporary replacements of sport committee members. The Nominating Committee believes this replacement process will assist in these limited circumstances and will direct all Division II sport committees to adopt this process within their policies and procedures.

- c. Membership Committee.** The committee received an update from the Membership Committee that included the following:
- Status of mergers, partnerships, acquisitions and accreditation decisions that impact current Division II institutions.
 - Potential noncontroversial legislation to eliminate the use of the Association's registered marks by an institution in provisional year three of the Division II provisional membership process and to specify that an institution in the Division II membership process is limited to using Division II-specific logos. This legislation would be effective immediately once approved by the Division II Management Council.
 - Potential noncontroversial legislation to specify that, in men's ice hockey, an active Division II institution is eligible to compete in the Division I Men's Ice Hockey Championship provide there is not a men's ice hockey championship conducted in Division II (effective August 1, 2025).

- Acceptance of an application from Ferrum College, which is seeking to reclassify from Division III to Division II, to enter the expedited process effective September 1, 2025.
 - Acceptance of an application from Middle Georgia State University, which is seeking to transition from the NAIA, to enter the provisional membership process. The Membership Committee will formally consider the application during its July meeting.
 - Update on the legislation adopted by Division I at the 2025 NCAA Convention that amended the period for Division II institutions reclassifying to Division I (three years rather than four) and established certain entry and exit benchmarks.
- d. **Playing Rules Oversight Panel.** The committee reviewed reports from the panel's most recent meetings as information.
- e. **Student-Athlete Advisory Committee.** Haley White updated the committee on the SAAC's meeting at the NCAA Convention during which members elected a new chair and vice chair and assigned members to various Division II and Association-wide governance committees. The SAAC is developing documents for internal use that give new SAAC members an idea of what to expect during their terms. Other SAAC initiatives underway include drafting a new letter to congress that urges protection of the student-athlete experience. At its April meeting the SAAC will review results from a student-athlete-specific football survey regarding whether to move the Division II Football Championship game to January. The SAAC also is planning its next two super region conventions (April in Indianapolis for the Central and Midwest Regions, and November in Denver for the South Central and West Regions).
5. **Sport committee reports.**
- a. **Field hockey.** The committee reviewed the report from the field hockey committee's annual meeting as information, noting the committee's desire to have the selection show on Sunday, similar to Divisions I and III, rather than on Monday as is done currently. The committee will continue exploring whether this is feasible and may submit a formal recommendation once that review has been completed.
- b. **Football.**
- (1) **Bracket expansion.** The Championships Committee supported the football committee's request to expand the bracket from 28 teams to 32, effective with the 2025 championship. (See Nonlegislative Action Item 2-a.)
- (2) **Bracketing principles.** Pending approval of the expanded bracket, the Championships Committee also supported the football committee's recommendation to modify the bracketing principles accordingly. (See Nonlegislative Action Item 2-b.)
- (3) **Officiating crews.** The Championships Committee also supported the football committee's recommendation to allow officiating crews in the Division II Football

Championship to continue using the same number of officials as their respective conferences have used throughout the regular season. (See Nonlegislative Action Item 2-c.)

(4) Championship date formula discussion. The Championships Committee noted as information the football committee's discussion regarding the potential modification of the current championship date formula that would result in playing the NCAA Division II Football Championship game the first week of January. While the committee is waiting until it reviews the results later this spring from a survey of current Division II football student-athletes to finalize its stance on this matter, the committee currently supports retaining the current championship date formula, which would include keeping week zero and playing the championship game in December before the holiday break. However, the football committee plans to reconvene May 6 to revisit the issue (as well as review the feedback from the student-athletes and other stakeholders) and submit a formal recommendation for the Championships Committee to consider during its June meeting.

c. Men's and women's cross country.

(1) 2026 and 2027 Midwest Region host. The Championships Committee approved the University of Wisconsin-Parkside to host the Midwest Regional for the 2026 and 2027 NCAA Division II Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships.

(2) Selection procedures. The Championships Committee supported the cross country committee's recommended modifications to the selection criteria. See Nonlegislative Action Item 2-g.)

d. Women's golf. The committee supported allowing an exception to the triennial budget process to fund one additional rules official at each of the four regional sites in the NCAA Division II Women's Golf Championships. (See Nonlegislative Action Item 2-d.)

e. Women's lacrosse. The committee approved Rochester Institute of Technology as the host for the joint Divisions II and III Women's Lacrosse Championships in 2026.

f. Men's soccer. The committee reviewed the report from the men's soccer committee's annual meeting as information only.

g. Women's soccer. The committee reviewed the report from the women's soccer committee's annual meeting as information only.

h. Men's and women's soccer. The Championships Committee approved a request from the men's and women's soccer committee to increase the bench size at the championships from 32 to 36. The recommendation comes as a result of teams participating in the Division II soccer championships increasingly having to put student-athletes in the stands because of bench size limits. While the soccer committees still believe that a reasonable limit is needed to continue to ensure operational control of the event, they believe an increase of four is

appropriate to improve the overall student-athlete experience while having no budget impact. The Championships Committee agreed with that rationale.

i. Women's volleyball.

(1) Video review enhancements. The committee considered but did not support the recommendation to enhance the challenge video review requirements to host a regional round of the Division II Women's Volleyball Championship. The committee cited the potential financial burden on host institutions and the lack of data to support whether these enhancements are necessary and/or would be effective.

(2) 2025 championship site. The Championships Committee also approved that the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference and the Sioux Falls Sports Authority host the 2025 Division II Women's Volleyball Championship at the Sanford Pentagon in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The previously announced host for the 2025 championship rescinded its bid. The volleyball committee evaluated previous host sites to gauge interest and availability. Sioux Falls quickly expressed interest and confirmed availability of the facility, and the volleyball committee feels confident in their ability and formally asked the Championships Committee to approve awarding them the right to host.

j. Supplemental sport committee reports. The committee reviewed additional reports from sport committees that required no action to be taken.

6. Additional discussion items.

a. Site selection updates and 2028 festival site recommendation. Staff provided an update on the championships with outstanding site issues though 2028 (those that weren't filled in the last cycle or that experienced site changes for various reasons). Additionally, the committee reviewed potential sites for the 2028 Spring Championships Festival.

b. Review of fall championship misconduct issues. The committee reviewed one of two misconduct cases from the men's soccer championship and noted the sport committee's decision to issue a public reprimand and penalties as specified. While no additional action was required from the Championships Committee, members did agree that the penalties were appropriate in this case for future precedent. The other case is pending, and the committee will receive an update once it is resolved.

c. NPI feedback process. Staff updated the committee on feedback from the Division II Executive Board, Management Council and SAAC joint breakfast at the NCAA Convention during which members discussed and supported using a results-based metric as the sole selection criterion for team sport championships. The Championships Committee during its January videoconference agreed to ask sport committees to provide feedback specific to using the NCAA Power Index (NPI), and staff noted that NPI developer Tim Danehy will attend upcoming sport committee meetings to facilitate those discussions.

- d. **Potential Division II Women's Bowling Championship.** The committee reviewed a draft survey that will be sent to the membership in March regarding the potential for establishing a separate Division II Women's Bowling Championship. The committee provided feedback on additional questions that would be helpful. The survey feedback, as well as a budget analysis, will be provided at a subsequent meeting.
- e. **Football AQ waiver request.** The committee reviewed and approved a request from the Gulf South Conference to waive the six-institution requirement for AQ in football for the 2025-26 academic year. The conference will have only four members for the 2025 season, as Mississippi College announced unexpectedly that they were discontinuing the sport in November. The committee acknowledged that as a compelling circumstance that did not offer the conference the time necessary to rectify the situation. The committee reiterated that the waiver applies only for the 2025-26 academic year, and the conference will need to submit a second request if it is not in compliance by the 2026-27 academic year.

(Note: Cade Smith, University of Alabama in Huntsville, recused himself from this discussion and decision.)

- f. **Championships Committee policies and procedures.** The committee reviewed and approved the edits to the committee's policies and procedures, which include: (1) adding football as an AQ sport and removing language pertaining to earned access; (2) adding women's wrestling as a championship sport; (3) codifying the conflict of interest policy; and (4) adding language pertaining to the voting process for positions on membership-sponsored proposals. This language aligns with the Division II Management Council's policies and procedures, and all Division II committees are being asked to consider incorporating these changes into their policies and procedures as well.
- g. **Review of bench limits and average roster sizes.** As a follow up to discussions during the committee's September meeting, staff provided an overview of the current bench limits, squad sizes and travel party limits for team sports as compared to the sports sponsorship data. The committee believes this information will be helpful as the committee continues evaluating the appropriate numbers.
- h. **Regional advisory committee policies and procedures.** The committee considered and approved an update to the RAC policies to clarify that conferences are permitted to extend RAC terms beyond the initial three years. This has been the application in practice but needed to be updated for clarity.

7. Staff updates.

- a. **Legal.** The committee heard from the NCAA's legal counsel regarding litigation affecting the NCAA overall and Division II in particular.
- b. **NCAA fan database.** Staff updated the committee on the ongoing progress and success of the NCAA fan database, which has consistently been among NCAA President Charlie Baker's priorities since he assumed office.

- c. **Fall NCAA.com broadcast analytics.** Staff provided an overview of the broadcast analytics from the fall championships streamed on ncaa.com.
- d. **Fall championship social media analytics.** Staff provide an overview of the fall championship social media analytics and engaged the committee in a discussion regarding the value of live highlight cutting for select social media (which data indicate improve engagement).
- e. **Gender equity update.** John Baldwin joined the meeting to provide a presentation on the staff's continued efforts regarding gender equity, including the annual process to evaluate all 90 NCAA championships with a consistent rubric.
- f. **Community engagement.** Jill Willson joined the meeting and summarized the successful events that took place during the fall championships and previewed plans for the winter sports festival in Indianapolis and the men's and women's basketball championships.
- g. **2025 NCAA Convention update.** Staff updated the committee on legislation adopted at the January Convention.

8. Future meetings and videoconferences.

- April 3, 2-3:30 p.m. Eastern time (videoconference).
- May 1, 2-3:30 p.m. Eastern time (videoconference).
- June 25-26, (in-person meeting; Indianapolis).
- February 19-20, 2026 (in-person meeting; Indianapolis).

Committee Chair: Regan McAthie, Concordia University, St. Paul
Staff Liaison(s): Karen Kirsch, Championships and Alliances
Micaela Liddane, Championships and Alliances
Chelsea Hooks, Academic and Membership Affairs

Division II Championships Committee February 24-25, 2025, Videoconference
Attendees:
Terry Beattie, West Chester University of Pennsylvania.
Carlin Chesick, Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference.
Chris Colvin, Conference Carolinas.
Neil Duval, Saint Anselm College.
JJ Hayes, Palm Beach Atlantic University.
Erin Lind, Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (Management Council vice chair).
Regan McAthie, Concordia University, St. Paul.
Roberta Page, Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania (Management Council chair).

Christina Paone, Walsh University.
Gary Pine, Azusa Pacific University.
Jay Poerner, Lone Star Conference.
Cade Smith, University of Alabama in Huntsville.
Stan Wagnon, University of Central Oklahoma.
Haley White, Lincoln Memorial University.
Vaughn Williams, Bentley University.
Absentees:
None.
Guests in Attendance:
Gary Brown, NCAA Contractor.
Jill Willson, Double L Consulting.
NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:
Karen Kirsch, Championships and Alliances.
Micaela Liddane, Championships and Alliances.
Chelsea Hooks, Academic and Membership Affairs.
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:
John Baldwin, Eric Breece, Randy L. Buhr, Donisha Carter, Zach Christopher, Lindsey Eldred, Nate Flannery, Terri Steeb Gronau, Leslie Havens, Brian Higgins, Cara Hubert, Maritza Jones, Ryan Jones, Mariah Martin, Ryan Rea, Angela Red, Ryan Richardson, Jennifer Roe, Rachel Seewald, CJ Sowards and Jared Tidemann.