



**REPORT OF THE  
NCAA DIVISION III CHAMPIONSHIPS COMMITTEE  
DECEMBER 12, 2023, VIDEOCONFERENCE**

ACTION ITEMS.

**1. Legislative items.**

- None.

**2. Nonlegislative items.**

- **Men's ice hockey bracket expansion.**

(1) Recommendation. That the Division III Men's Ice Hockey Championship bracket be expanded from 12 to 13 teams.

(2) Effective date. 2024 Division III Men's Ice Hockey Championship.

(3) Rationale. In 2022-23, the number of Division III institutions sponsoring men's ice hockey (84) surpassed the threshold required to warrant bracket expansion per the 1:6.5 access ratio legislated in Division III. (A sport must achieve the sponsorship number the year prior to asking for an increase.) The Championships Committee acknowledged that historically, bracket expansion has occurred when sport sponsorship merits an increase to an even number (e.g., two additional championship berths). All championships bracket expansion since 2011-12 has followed this principle (except for golf, which works best in multiples of three). However, the Championships Committee believes the one-berth expansion is merited based on the following factors:

- Because men's ice hockey has a smaller sponsorship and smaller bracket, the impact of a one-berth expansion is much greater than it would be for larger-sponsored sports; and
- The logistical issues that a one-berth expansion might cause in larger brackets do not exist in this case, as the Division III Men's Ice Hockey Committee assures that the proposed expansion could occur without changing the format of the current postseason (see Attachment A for proposed bracket). Instead of four teams receiving byes into the quarterfinals, only three teams would receive a bye. The proposal also does not result in additional missed class time for participating student-athletes.

Accordingly, the Championships Committee does not consider this proposal running counter to the spirit of the existing expansion policy; nor does the committee consider this as setting an undesired precedent for future expansion requests. Rather, the committee views its support of the proposal as an acknowledgement of growth in a smaller-sponsored sport that will provide additional postseason opportunities for deserving student-athletes.

Finally, the Championships Committee weighed whether its consideration of this proposal should be delayed given its broader review of championship enhancements noted in Informational Item 3 below but agreed that this proposal and the ongoing review are mutually exclusive issues.

(4) Estimated budget impact. \$38,000 to \$73,000.

(5) Student-athlete impact. The proposal increases the postseason participation opportunities for deserving student-athletes.

#### INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Opening remarks and review of schedule and agenda.** Division III Championships Committee Chair Chuck Mitrano welcomed the group and introduced Jason Doviak, director of athletics at Alfred State University, and Duey Naatz, director of athletics at the University of Wisconsin-Stout, who are observing this meeting in preparation to begin their committee service after the NCAA Convention in January.
2. **Recent Championships Committee reports.** The committee approved the report from its November 21 videoconference as presented.
3. **Championship enhancements update.** The committee reviewed results from the membership survey distributed in late October designed to obtain additional input regarding how to prioritize the potential championship enhancements previously identified (increasing access to championships through expanding at large opportunities, including football; increasing per diem to mitigate costs for participating institutions; and providing sport committees the flexibility to add flights to avoid pairing highly ranked teams within a region). The survey also asked whether the three-week period devoted to championships other than football is appropriate; whether capping brackets for sports other than football at 64 is appropriate; and whether Pools B and C should be combined as one collection of at-large berths. Based on the survey results and other input garnered throughout this budget review, Championships Committee members reached consensus on the following to guide discussion at its February meeting during which the committee will finalize recommendations for the Division III Strategic Planning and Finance Committee to consider in March:
  - Increasing per diem to mitigate costs for participating institutions remains the highest priority based on membership feedback.
  - Continue to consider expanding the Division III Football Championship bracket.
  - Pools B and C can be condensed as one collection of at-large selections based on membership feedback. (The committee noted that doing so would result in an additional at-large berth in all 64-team brackets other than men's basketball.)

- Maintain legislation capping team sport championship brackets at 64 teams.
- The length of championship should remain at no more than three weeks (except for football, which already exceeds that limit).
- Consider alternatives to establishing bracket size.

In addition to those assumptions, the committee noted the following:

- The committee agreed to keep the additional flights concept on the table to incorporate into the models the committee will review in February; and

**4. Selection criteria database update.** The committee continued reviewing outreach to date with sport committees and regional advisory committees regarding the potential selection criteria database and the efforts internally to develop accompanying software for sport committees to use during future selections if the database is adopted (the database is among the budget items the Championships Committee will consider in February). The committee also reviewed and offered feedback on a revised FAQ [Attachment B] document developed from questions that have been asked most frequently through the educational sessions held with sport committee members. Fall sport committees will begin considering the database in earnest during their annual meetings in January and February. The Championships Committee emphasized the need for all input to be received in a timely manner to inform its final recommendations in June. Since selection criteria are codified in the administrative regulations, adopting the database (either as permanent legislation or as a pilot) would require a legislative action by Management Council. The Championships Committee also stressed that sport committees should understand that if the database is adopted, the window for making any adjustments would be periodic (i.e., every two or three years) rather than annual, and that those adjustments would need to be approved by the Championships Committee at the appropriate time.

**5. Sport committee reports.**

- a. Men's ice hockey.** The Championships Committee reviewed and supported the request from the NCAA Division III Men's Ice Hockey Committee to expand the Division III Men's Ice Hockey Championship bracket from 12 to 13 teams, effective with the 2024 championship. (See the nonlegislative action item above.)
- b. Wrestling.** The Championships Committee approved the following regional hosts for the 2024 Division III Wrestling Championships: Lycoming College (Southeast); Ohio Northern University (Central); University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point (Upper Midwest); Worcester Polytechnic Institute (Northeast); and the American Rivers Conference (Lower Midwest). The sites were reviewed to ensure adherence to equipment requirements and bid specifications.

**6. Other business.**

- a. **Appreciation of outgoing committee members.** Karen Tessmer, the incoming chair of the committee beginning after the NCAA Convention in January, acknowledged the outstanding contributions of outgoing members Chuck Mitrano and John Neese.
- b. **Umbrella conference discussion.** Mr. Mitrano also noted that the committee at a future meeting may want to discuss existing legislation regarding umbrella conferences and the effect on automatic qualification to determine whether any recommendations are warranted.

**7. Future meeting/videoconference dates.**

- a. February 5-6, 2024 (in-person meeting; Indianapolis).
- b. March 19, 2024, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (monthly videoconference).
- c. April 23, 2024, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (monthly videoconference).
- d. May 14, 2024, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (monthly videoconference).
- e. June 17-18, 2024 (meeting via videoconference).
- f. September 8-10, 2024, (in-person meeting; Indianapolis; will include meeting with sport committee chairs)

*Committee Chair:* Chuck Mitrano, Empire 8

*Staff Liaisons:* Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Championships and Alliances  
J.P. Williams, Championships and Alliances

NCAA Division III Championships Committee December 12, 2023, Videoconference	
<b>Attendees:</b>	
Renee Bostic, State University of New York at New Paltz.	
Chad Eisele, Hampden-Sydney College.	
Chuck Mitrano, Empire 8.	
Maureen Harty, College Conference of Illinois & Wisconsin.	
Shannon Howley, Montclair State University.	
John Neese, Hardin-Simmons University.	
Holly Sheilley, Transylvania University.	
Sara Shoffner, Huntingdon College.	
Karen Tessmer, Worcester State University.	
Leonard Trevino, Chatham University.	
Jason Verdugo, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.	
<b>Absentees:</b>	
Adaobi Nebuwa, Colby College.	

<b>Guests in Attendance:</b>
Gary Brown, NCAA Contractor.
Jason Doviak, Alfred State University.
Duey Naatz, University of Wisconsin-Stout.
<b>NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:</b>
Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Championships and Alliances.
J.P. Williams, Championships and Alliances.
<b>Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:</b>
Margaret Gaines, Eric Hartung, Ashley Jenkins, Louise McCleary, Jeff Myers, and Bill Regan.



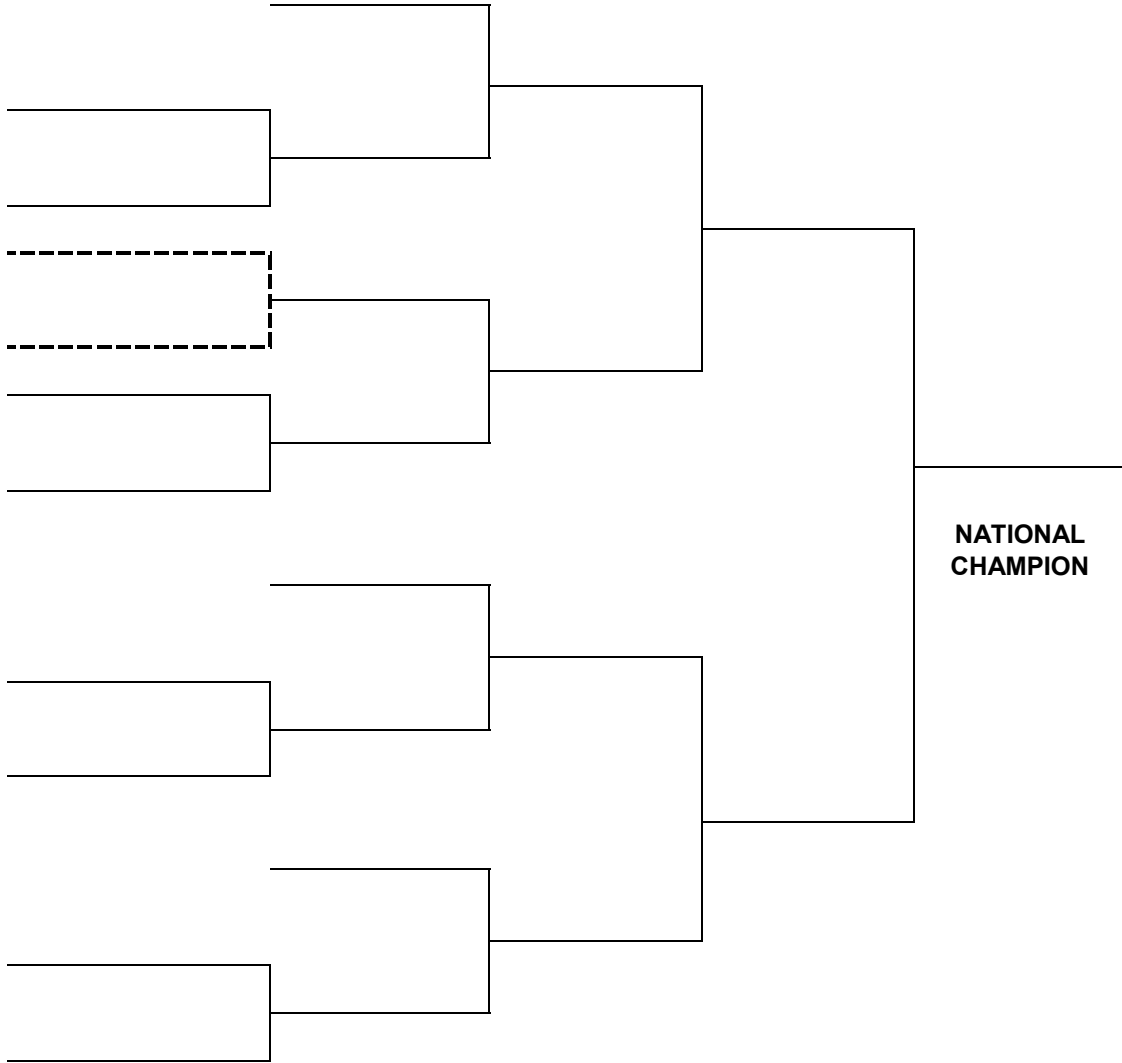
# 2024 Division III Men's Ice Hockey Championship

**First Round**  
March 9

**Quarterfinals**  
March 16

**Semifinals**  
March 21

**Final**  
March 23



\*Indicates host institution; all games are Eastern time

LOW-RANGE ESTIMATE									
Division	Cost Center	Project		Input					
DIII Men's Ice Hockey Operations	03	5308	D3MIH00	Formula					
Request: Increase bracket to 13 teams; 5 first-round sites with 3 byes				Totals					
Transportation	# Teams Hoisting	# Teams Traveling	Student-Athletes	Non-Athletes	Total Travelers	Total Transportation (Note 1)	Avg. per total travelers (Note 1)	Projected total transportation	
Current First Round Travel Opportunities	4	4							
Current Quarterfinal/Regional Round Travel Opportunities	4	4							
Current Semifinals/Finals Travel Opportunities	1	3							
Current Total Travel Opportunities:	9	11							
Proposed First Round Travel Opportunities	5	5							
Proposed Quarterfinal/Regional Round Travel Opportunities	4	4							
Proposed Semifinals/Finals Travel Opportunities	1	3							
Proposed Total Travel Opportunities:	10	12							
Current Travel Party:			23	5	28				
Proposed Travel Party:			23	5	28				
4-year Average Team Travel FY23, FY22, FY19, FY18 (actual per GL) (Note 1)						\$ 158,937			
Add travel inflation for 2023-24 (Note 5)		2.93%				\$ 4,657			
Add travel inflation for 2024-25 (Note 5)		2.93%				\$ 4,793			
Total actual travel plus inflation			253	55	308	\$ 168,387	\$ 546.71		
Projected Total			276	60	336		\$ 546.71	\$ 183,695	
Projected increase in Transportation								\$ 15,308	
Projected increase in Transportation (rounded)								\$ 16,000	
Per Diem	Student-Athletes	Non-Athletes	Total Travelers	Additional Per Diem Days	Avg. days paid per Traveler (Note 2)	Per Diem Rate (Note 3)	Total Per Diem Amount		
Projected Per Diem - Host Teams	23	5	28	28	1.0	\$ 50	\$ 1,400		
Projected Per Diem - Travel Teams	23	5	28	42	1.5	\$ 125	\$ 5,250		
Projected increase in Per Diem							\$ 6,650		
Total projected increase in Per Diem (rounded)								\$ 7,000	
Game Expenses	Add'l Student-Athletes	Add'l Non-Athletes	Additional Participants	Game Expense per participant	Honorarium (Note 7)	Officials (Note 6)	Game Expense (Note 4)	Total Amount for Game Expense	
Projected total	23	5	28	\$ 109	\$ -	5,770	\$ 9,015	\$ 14,785	
Total projected increase in Game Expense								\$ 14,785	
Total projected increase in Game Expense (rounded)								\$ 15,000	
<b>Total projected increase</b>								<b>\$ 38,000</b>	

**Background:**  
 - This analysis assumes adding one additional team to the current 12-team bracket for DIII Men's Ice Hockey. This bracket increase adds one additional first round match with 3 byes in the Quarterfinal round.

**Assumptions and risks:**  
 Note 1: Team Travel expense estimate is based on average expense incurred in FY23, FY22, FY19, and FY18. FY21 and FY20 were excluded due to COVID cancellation or reduced brackets. Team Travel estimates are based on average actual costs incurred and will fluctuate based on the mode transportation (e.g., commercial air, charter air, ground). The more teams traveling, the greater the potential for adverse travel cost volatility.

Note 2: Per diem information based on championships information from TES. Estimates for average per diem days are based on average actuals incurred in prior years and will fluctuate based on mode of transportation and distance from event.  
 Note 3: Projected per diem cost is based on current FY23 per diem rate of \$115 per person per day. Cost may increase if per diem rate is raised between now and implementation.  
 Note 4: Game expense costs are based on the following: Per participant game expense calculated at \$109/participant which is used to project cost for additional athlete participation.

Per Participant Game Expenses:		FY23
Awards/Mementos	\$	32,235
Apparel	\$	4,147
Credentials	\$	341
Total per participant game expenses:	\$	36,724
Total current participants:		336
Current Per Participant Game Expense	\$	109
Per Host Site Game Expenses:		FY23
FY23 First round host site game expenses:	\$	5,073
Additional games		1
Additional host site game expense:	\$	5,073
Add'l host game expense for additional sites	\$	5,073

Committee/site rep travel estimates by site:	
Committee/Site reps per Game:	1
# Additional Sites	1
# Days	2
Rate Per First Round	
Committee/Site Rep - Travel/Mileage	\$300.00
Committee/Site Rep - Hotel	\$220.00
Committee/Site Rep - Per Diem	\$75.00
Projected additional Committee/Site Rep Expense:	\$890.00

Note 5: Travel inflation assumption agrees to current divisional inflation guidance from administrative services  
 Division 3, 2.93%

Note 6: Assumptions for Officials fees and travel estimates by site:  
 Scenario assumes 1 additional first round game played at non-predetermined host site.

Officials	First Round	Game Fee:
Referee:	2	\$245.00
Lineman:	2	\$190.00
Supervisor of Officials:	1	\$250.00
Number of Officials per Site:	5	

# Additional Games		1
# Days		2
Rate Per	First Round	
Officials - Game Fees	varies	\$1,120.00
Officials - Travel/Mileage	\$200.00	\$2,000.00
Officials - Hotel	\$220.00	\$2,200.00
Officials - Per Diem	\$45.00	\$450.00
Projected additional Officials Expense:		\$5,770.00

Note 7: Honorariums not paid at first round host sites.  
 Average First round honorarium per host site:  
 Additional games: 1  
 Additional honorarium expense: \$ - 0%  
 Add'l honorarium expense for additional sites: \$ -

MID-RANGE ESTIMATE		
<b>Transportation</b>		
4-year Total Flight Cost Weighted Average:	\$ 38,308	
Add travel inflation for 2022-23 (Note 5)	\$ 1,122	
Add travel inflation for 2023-24 (Note 5)	\$ 1,155	
Total actual travel plus inflation	\$ 40,586	
# Additional Flights:	1	
Projected increase in Transportation	\$ 40,586	
Projected increase in Transportation (rounded)	\$ 41,000	
Per Diem		
Projected Per Diem - Host Teams	1.0	
Projected Per Diem - Travel Teams	1.5	
Total projected Per Diem increase (rounded)	\$ 7,000	
Game Expenses		
Add 2 years inflation at 2.93%:	\$ 879	
Total projected increase in Game Expense (rounded)	\$ 16,000	
<b>Total projected increase</b>	<b>\$ 64,000</b>	

HIGH-RANGE ESTIMATE		
<b>Transportation</b>		
4-year Average Charter Expense:	\$ 47,013	
Add travel inflation for 2022-23 (Note 5)	\$ 1,377	
Add travel inflation for 2023-24 (Note 5)	\$ 1,418	
Total actual travel plus inflation	\$ 49,808	
# Additional Flights:	1	
Projected increase in Transportation	\$ 49,808	
Projected increase in Transportation (rounded)	\$ 50,000	
Per Diem		
Projected Per Diem - Host Teams	1.0	
Projected Per Diem - Travel Teams	1.5	
Total projected Per Diem increase (rounded)	\$ 7,000	
Game Expenses		
Add 2 years inflation at 2.93%:	\$ 879	
Total projected increase in Game Expense (rounded)	\$ 16,000	
<b>Total projected increase</b>	<b>\$ 73,000</b>	

## Selection Criteria Database FAQ

Below is a list of the most frequently asked questions as the Championships Committee has worked to review a new selection criteria metric (e.g., PairWise):

**Q: What is the selection criteria database?**

A: The selection criteria database is a system that houses the division's statistical data and objectively applies the selection criteria to the data based on the weights established by the sport committee.

**Q: Why update the current championship selection process?**

A: The Championships Committee researched the PairWise metric – currently used in men's and women's ice hockey – to ensure consistency in how selection criteria is applied across team sports in response to membership feedback. The change from the current championships selection process to the selection criteria database will take the data analysis from a subjective application, varying by sport committee, to an objective computer data analysis based on the weights established by each sport committee.

**Q: Does this mean our current selection criteria goes away?**

A: Yes, most of the current selection criteria will no longer be used: head-to-head competition; results versus common Division III opponents; results versus ranked Division III teams; and secondary criteria. Winning percentage and strength of schedule will remain.

**Q: Will any new selection criteria be adopted?**

A: The selection criteria database will continue to use winning percentage and strength of schedule along with a home/away multiplier, quality win bonus (QWB) and overtime results (in applicable sports).

The home/away multiplier can be used to increase the weight of away wins and home losses while decreasing the weight of home wins and away losses. The QWB provides a bonus for wins against top-level teams, the degree of which is determined by the sport committee. Overtime win/loss weights may be applicable in some sports to reflect results that are less than full wins/losses. For example, in ice hockey a win that comes in 3-on-3 overtime is treated as two-thirds of a win and one-third of a loss, with the opponent receiving one-third of a win and two-thirds of a loss.

**Q: What are the benefits of the selection criteria database?**

A: One benefit of the selection criteria database is that all data will be analyzed, and the criteria will be applied objectively to establish the championships field (the at-large berths remaining after AOs are awarded).

Another benefit of the database is that teams are not penalized for winning a contest that it should win. For example, in the current system if a strong team plays a weaker team its



strength-of-schedule will be negatively impacted even though it won the contest – as it should. In the selection criteria database, the team that wins a contest against a lesser opponent will not be statistically impacted by winning a contest it should win. This will greatly benefit stronger teams in weaker conferences.

**Q: What's the selection criteria database and what flexibility will committees have to adjust the dials/weights?**

A: The Selection Criteria Database operates on the NCAA Performance Indicator (NPI). The NPI is a combination of the following: winning percentage; strength of schedule; home-away multiplier; quality win bonus; and overtime results (when relevant).

The weight of winning percentage versus strength of schedule is often referred to as one of the “dials” that a sport committee can adjust, placing any subjectivity within the criteria themselves. For example, a sport committee could set the dials to 70/30; 75/25, etc. Other “dials” a sport committee can also choose to apply are home and away multiplier, quality win bonus (QWB), and overtime win/loss weights.

**Q: Will the formula/weights be consistent across all sports? If not, why would one sport committee weight one criterion differently than another sport committee?**

A: Each sport will use the same NPI criteria framework (winning percentage, strength of schedule, home-away multiplier, quality win bonus, overtime) but each committee will have the ability to determine the weights/values for each. The first dial of winning percentage versus strength of schedule can be set at any two values equaling 100. Home-away multiplier and QWB values may differ from sport to sport if a sport committee elects to use those criteria. Sports with overtime can choose to weight an overtime victory or loss different than a regulation win or loss.

Factors affecting the appropriate values from sport to sport may include the degree of intra-conference vs inter-conference play, the observed home field/court/rink advantage, and playing rules which may dictate overtime play that is conducted in a manner that is different from regulation play.

**Q: What will happen to regional advisory committees?**

A: Regional Advisory Committees will still be called upon to ensure that results are populating correctly into the database. RACs will also be asked to spend some time during the season being trained as site representatives to serve during the preliminary rounds of the championship.

**Q: Do regional rankings go away?**

A: Regional rankings will still be published. The top teams from each region will be taken from the database and published by region based on the selection criteria database descending order list. For example, to establish Region I rankings, the Region I teams will be extracted from the

list in the order they appear to fill the established number of ranked teams (i.e., maximum of seven per region).

**Q: When in the governance cycle would committees adjust dials/weights annually?**

A: Sport committees will use their annual meeting to review the championship rankings and selection and make a recommendation coming to make an adjustment to the dials/weights. Once the weights are established, they cannot be changed until the following year, at the earliest. Dials will not be changed weekly during the season.

**Q: How has this been tested?**

A: The Division III Championships Committee has reviewed selected sport data from the 2018-19 season (a full pre-COVID season) and the 2021-22 season (a nearly full season post-COVID). Staff compared the selected championship field against what would have been selected by the database and saw only slight variances between the two fields, almost regardless of the dial settings which have not yet been reviewed by sport committees. The Championships Committee and staff are in the process of compiling and reviewing data for all team sports from the 2022-23 season.

**Q: What will the education for committees be on adjusting the dials/weights?**

A: NCAA sport liaisons will incorporate a selection criteria training into the already established committee orientation to onboard each committee member.

**Q: How long is the commitment from NCAA with the new selection criteria database software? (There was concern especially coming off the golf product failure.)**

A: If the selection criteria database is vetted and deemed to be the best selection metric for the division and it moves forward, the division would be committed to it as its primary metric. Any future changes would need to be brought forth from the sport committees through the governance structure.

**Q: What is the process for adopting a new selection metric?**

A: Changes to selection criteria can be accomplished through a legislative vote at convention or through an administrative regulation adopted through the governance structure (e.g., recommendation from the Championships Committee to Management and Presidents Council).

**Q: What is the timeline? (Can committees/sports/membership see their previous results?)**

A: Sport committees will have access to the 2022-23 data and will be asked to provide feedback to the Championships Committee for its February 2024 meeting. The Championships Committee could make a recommendation to adopt the selection criteria database as the selection metric for Division III team sports with the earliest adoption date of September 2024.

**Q: If/when changes are made how is the membership going to be made aware of the changes?**

A: If the selection criteria database is adopted the membership will be notified through various membership communications including the Championships Newsletter, the Division III Monthly Update, a direct email communication etc. The established values (e.g., how the dials are set) will also be published in each sport's prechampionship manual annually.

**Q: Will individual-team sports included in the selection criteria database transition?**

A: Currently, only team sports are being considered for the transition to the selection criteria database. Individual-team sports will continue to be vetted to bring them into the database if it makes sense to do so.

**Q: Will the selection criteria database rankings be publicly available?**

A: Yes, the rankings will be posted to each sports landing page on NCAA.com in the same way they are currently published.

To ask additional questions or to provide feedback, please contact Laura Peterson-Mlynski ([lpeterson@ncaa.org](mailto:lpeterson@ncaa.org)) or JP Williams ([jpwilliams@ncaa.org](mailto:jpwilliams@ncaa.org)).