

**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION III CHAMPIONSHIPS COMMITTEE
MAY 13, 2025, VIDEOCONFERENCE**

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

• **Non-controversial legislation - National Collegiate Championships – Fencing – Establish Separate Men’s and Women’s Championship. (Bylaw 18.3.1)**

- a. Recommendation. That Management Council approves in concept non-controversial legislation that would divide the National Collegiate Fencing Championship into separate men’s and women’s championships.. The women’s championship (sponsorship of 44) and men’s championship (sponsorship of 35) would be held at the same site and conducted concurrently. The men’s championship would remain in place under the Olympic sport exception (Bylaw 18.2.10.1).
- b. Effective date. 2025-26 season.
- c. Rationale. Under the current scoring format, institutions that sponsor only women’s fencing face a statistical impossibility of winning a national championship. The separation of the two genders into individual championships would allow for a more equitable championship experience and a tangible pathway for all teams to compete for national championships.
- d. Estimated budget impact. \$7,200 increase in the operational budget for four additional sets of team awards.
- e. Student-athlete impact. The proposed championship change would provide competitive equity for the nine programs and 154 student-athletes currently representing women’s-only fencing programs. These student-athletes and coaches would have a tangible pathway toward a collegiate championship and further incentivize grassroots participation in the sport.

f. Nonlegislative items.

• **Per diem increases.**

- a. Recommendation. That the Division III Strategic Planning and Finance Committee recommend an increase in per diem to \$150 (traveling team) and \$60 (hosts) effective for the 2025-26 and 2026-27 academic years (FY26/FY27).

- b. Effective date. September 1, 2025.
- c. Rationale. Due to rising costs associated with championships participation (e.g., meals and hotels) and the controlled nature of this specific per diem increase, the Championships Committee, during its March meeting, discussed the previously approved incremental increases in per diem for future budgets. The committee noted that an increase would provide immediate benefits to participating institutions without exceeding the amount of \$150 that was approved for FY28. The Strategic Planning and Finance Committee, Management Council and Presidents Council indicated initial support for this potential increase during their spring meetings.
- d. Estimated budget impact. The estimated budget impact to implement these per diem increases earlier than originally planned would be an additional \$1.2 million dollars in 2025-26 and \$608,000 in 2026- 27. There would be no additional cost for the 2027-28 academic year, as the \$150/\$60 rate already had been earmarked for that fiscal year. The additional funds would be supported by the amount above the division's mandated reserve.
- e. Student-athlete impact. While the more immediate increase will benefit institutions, it will in turn benefit the student-athlete participants during their postseason experience as well.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

- 1. **Opening remarks and review of schedule and agenda.** Division III Championships Committee Chair Leonard Trevino welcomed the group to the videoconference and previewed key agenda items.
- 2. **Recent Championships Committee reports.** The committee approved the report from its April 15 videoconference.
- 3. **Championships topics.**
 - a. **Playing rules structure.** The committee received an update from staff about ongoing discussions within Division I to revise its governance structure. Part of the proposed changes to the Division I governance structure include moving the approval of playing rules to Division I sport oversight groups. Playing rules currently are managed by association-wide sport playing rules committees and the NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel that includes representatives from all three divisions. Division I is expected to consider and potentially approve changes to its governance structure in June. To accommodate these potential changes, Divisions II and III are being asked to consider potential changes in their playing rules structures as well.

The Division III Championships Committee discussed potential models at length and agreed on some general principles, including that playing rules should continue being as consistent as possible among divisions but that a structure should be in place that allows Division III to continue being able to adopt playing rules that are appropriate and logistically and financially feasible for its membership to implement. The committee will continue weighing options and anticipates making a recommendation for the Management Council to consider at its summer meeting. Feedback also will be sought from the Division III Commissioners Association and the National Association of Division III Athletics Administrators.

- b. **Per diem.** The committee revisited its discussion regarding the previously approved incremental increases in per diem for the upcoming budget cycles and formally recommended the increases as noted in the Nonlegislative Action Item.
- c. **Coaches Connect Program.** Staff informed the committee that the Division III Management Council, during its April meeting, approved the committee's recommendation to create a Division III Coaches Connect Program to enhance the education and engagement of Division III coaches in governance and championships. During its June meeting, the committee will select three sports to initiate the program for the 2025-26 academic year.

4. Other business.

- **Women's lacrosse championship.** Staff informed the committee of a date formula discrepancy affecting the 2027 joint Divisions II and III Women's Lacrosse Championship. Division II has moved its date formula to tie the championship to Memorial Day weekend regardless of the number of weekends in the month of May, while the Division III date formula retains the championship on the fourth weekend in May. Because there are five weekends in May 2027, the date formulas do not align. The Division III Women's Lacrosse Committee will forward a recommendation to the Championships Committee to consider in June.

5. Future meeting/videoconference dates.

- a. June 16-17 (in-person meeting; Indianapolis).
- b. July 15, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (monthly videoconference; tentative).
- c. August 19, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (monthly videoconference).
- d. September 8-9 (in-person meeting; Indianapolis).
- e. October 14, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (monthly videoconference).
- f. November 18, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (monthly videoconference).
- g. December 9, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (monthly videoconference).
- h. February 2-3, 2026 (in-person meeting; Indianapolis)

NCAA Division III Championships Committee

May 13, 2025, Videoconference

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Committee Chair: Leonard Trevino, Chatham University
Staff Liaisons: Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Championships and Alliances
J.P. Williams, Championships and Alliances

NCAA Division III Championships Committee May 13, 2025, Videoconference	
Attendees:	
Renee Bostic, State University of New York at New Paltz.	
Tim Demant, Whitworth University.	
Jason Doviak, Alfred State University.	
Chad Eisele, Hampden-Sydney College.	
Shannon Howley, Montclair State University.	
Duey Naatz, University of Wisconsin-Stout.	
Russ Rogers, Stevens Institute of Technology.	
Leonard Trevino, Chatham University.	
Jason Verdugo, University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire	
Ashley Wagner, Notre Dame of Maryland University.	
Absentees:	
Arturo Casas, Manchester University.	
Maureen Harty, College Conference of Illinois & Wisconsin.	
Sara Shoffner, Huntingdon College.	
Guests in Attendance:	
Gary Brown, NCAA Contractor.	
NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:	
Laura Peterson-Mlynski, Championships and Alliances.	
J.P. Williams, Championships and Alliances.	
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:	
Margaret Gaines, Karen Kirsch, Louise McCleary, Jeff Myers, Bill Regan and Lynda Tealer.	