

**REPORT OF THE  
NCAA DIVISION III ANALYSIS WORKING GROUP  
JUNE 16, 2026, MEETING**

**ACTION ITEMS.**

**1. Legislative items.**

- **None.**

**2. Nonlegislative items.**

- **Division III Analysis.**

**a. Recommendation.** That the Presidents Council approve the recommendations from the Division III Analysis Working Group to forward identified options to select Division III governance committees and the membership to mitigate the identified core tensions as well as move select options to a parking lot for future discussion. [Attachment]

**b. Effective date.** Immediate.

**c. Rationale.** With feedback from stakeholder engagement interviews and a survey sent to Division III commissioners and athletics directors, the working group developed 36 options to mitigate the six identified tensions. After discussion and review, nine options were put in the parking lot to be addressed in the future, if needed. To increase its capacity to further develop some of the options, coupled with the understanding that existing governance committees were currently exploring some options, the working group is recommending that 12 options be referred to specific committees for further exploration. It also is recommending the Presidents Council refer five options back to the membership for consideration as they address campus and conference processes. The remaining 10 options are divided into three implementation categories: short-term (3-12 months, medium-term (12-24 months) and long-term (24+ months).

Over the next five months, the working group will hold a series of videoconferences and an in-person meeting to further evaluate the remaining 12 options with the collected research and data, continue to seek membership feedback, and propose actionable solutions to the councils. The working group will present its findings at the 2027 Division III Issues Forum held during the NCAA Convention in January.

**d. Estimated budget impact.** None.

**e. Student-athlete impact.** The identified options provide actionable solutions to mitigate division-wide tensions and improve the Division III student-athlete experience.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

1. **Welcome.** Rob Larson, serving as the acting chair, provided a welcome, and commenced the in-person meeting at 8 a.m. Eastern. The working group reviewed its charge that outlines its objectives and commitment to representing the diversity of the division.
2. **Report from the May 21 meeting.** The working group approved the report from its May 21 meeting as presented.
3. **Gap analysis, emerging themes, and roadmap creation.** With the help of the consultants, the working group reviewed the identified options, sequenced them into a prioritized roadmap, and concluded the review by pressure-testing each option's capacity to ensure alignment with next steps. After this discussion, the working group recommended options to be referred to existing governance committees and the membership for additional review and proposed implementation, as needed. It also identified several options to be reviewed in the future. [See Nonlegislative Action Item.]
4. **Fundamental change option considerations.** The consultants introduced a process for the working group to use to explore fundamental changes if directed by the Presidents Council. The process includes the following steps:
  - a. Frame the question.
  - b. Develop hypotheses of potential solutions.
  - c. Use data to validate.
  - d. Pressure test solutions.
  - e. Synthesize and recommend.
  - f. Stress test and decide.

To demonstrate the process, the consultants provided a case study outlining the steps for exploring a concept to subdivide the division. The case study demonstrated that there are many ways to divide (e.g., resources, competitive aspirations, admissions, etc.), and that a split is not a single decision but a series of decisions, each with its own tradeoffs, costs, and political risk (e.g., championship impact, conference structures, rules and standards, governance oversight, mobility between identified divisions, and naming implications). During future meetings, the working group will further discuss this case study as well as develop case studies for the following fundamental change concepts:

- Five-year (age-based) eligibility adoption – evaluate existing Division III eligibility rules and proposed changes across other divisions. Use data to understand eligibility trends (e.g., how many Division III student-athletes are using a fifth year, credits students are coming into the division with, graduate programs, retention rates, etc.), and pressure test against the division's philosophy.
- Name, Image, Likeness adoption – consider full adoption of NIL including the

creation of a marketplace, establish rules, etc., to respond to existing NIL activity. The case study may also explore questions of whether NIL protects institutional survival or possibly dissolves the division's non-scholarship identity.

- Governance structure design – examine decision-making issues and existing processes (e.g., committee actions and policies versus division-wide voting) and how to organize to be nimbler in strategic decision-making.
  - Rethink championships automatic qualification – address unintended conference behavior driven by AQ requirements. Preserve championship access by identifying opportunities for stability and cost savings to reshape conference realignments decisions for AQ access that may result in inefficient, unstable membership outcomes.
5. **Next steps.** The consultants and working group recapped the meeting's outcomes, confirmed their recommendations regarding future option owners (governance structure, membership, working group), and identified the timing of the consultant's executive summary.
  6. **Additional business.** There was no additional business.
  7. **Future videoconferences and meetings.** Staff has sent a doodle to schedule the working group's early August and late September videoconferences and October/November in-person meeting. Meeting makers will be sent by the end of June.
  8. **Adjournment.** The videoconference ended at 2:02 p.m. Eastern.

*Working Group chair: Marc Camille, Albertus Magnus.*

*Staff Liaisons: Louise McCleary, Division III Governance and Member Services  
Jeff Myers, Division III Governance and Member Services  
Bill Regan, Division III Governance and Member Services*

<b>NCAA Division III Analysis Working Group June 16, 2026, Meeting</b>	
<b>Attendees:</b>	
Jonathan Accardi, Keuka College.	
Eric Bitterbaum, State University of New York at Cortland.	
Meg Nowak Borrego, Framingham State University.	
Jessica Chapin, Brandeis University.	
Brad Duckworth, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.	
G. Anthony Grant, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.	
Portia Hoeg, Centennial Conference.	
Heidi Jaynes, Carleton College.	
Paige Kluba, Piedmont University.	
Alfred Lamptey, University of Mount Saint Vincent.	
Rob Larson, Luther College.	
Frank Merckx, Drew University.	
Joe Onderko, Presidents' Athletic Conference.	
Wayne Webster, Albion College.	
<b>Absentee:</b>	
Marc Camille, Albertus Magnus College.	
Erica Perkins Jasper, Claremont Mudd Scripps.	
Adam Puckett, George Fox University.	
Andrea Talentino, Augustana College (Illinois).	
Lori White, DePauw University.	
<b>NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:</b>	
Louise McCleary, Jeff Myers, Bill Regan, and Lisa Rogers.	
<b>Additional Members in Attendance:</b>	
External consultants.	



# DIVISION III ANALYSIS WORKING GROUP OPTION ALIGNMENT

JUNE 2026



# OPTION ALIGNMENT | ROLLUP ACROSS ALL TENSIONS

	Short-Term (3-12 Months)	Medium-Term (12-24 Months)	Long-Term (24+ Months)
<b>NCAA DIII ANALYSIS WORKING GROUP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>3.3</b> ELIGIBILITY DATA COLLECTION / TRENDS</li> <li><b>3.4/3.2</b> CONSIDER NEW ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS</li> <li><b>4.15</b> FINANCIAL PEER BENCHMARKING SUITE</li> <li><b>4.12</b> LEGISLATIVE COST SCORING (CONF, INST)</li> <li><b>5.1</b> MEMBER SEGMENTATION STUDY</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>2.12</b> COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF TRAD SEGMENT</li> <li><b>6.13</b> GOVERNANCE ARCHITECTURE REVIEW</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>4.14</b> NCAA TECH CENTRALIZATION</li> <li><b>6.12</b> DIII TRIENNIAL STRATEGIC FORUM</li> </ul>
<b>CONFERENCES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>4.10</b> STREAMING AND MEDIA SUPPORT</li> <li><b>6.2</b> CONFERENCE PRESIDENTIAL ENGAGEMENT</li> <li><b>6.4</b> CROSS-CONFERENCE PEER SHARING</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>6.6</b> ADR OBSERVER ACCESS AT MEETINGS</li> </ul>	
<b>INSTITUTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>6.11</b> PRESIDENT-SAAC DIRECT DIALOGUE</li> </ul>		
<b>NCAA COMMITTEES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1.1</b> AGGREGATE FORMAL NPI RESOURCES ✈️</li> <li><b>1.2</b> ESTABLISH BIENNIAL NPI DIAL REVIEW ✈️</li> <li><b>4.4</b> PUBLISH NIL GUARDRAILS ✈️</li> <li><b>2.13</b> COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF NON-TRAD SEGMENT</li> <li><b>6.1</b> EXTEND CHAIR TERM TO 2 YEARS</li> <li><b>2.8</b> PLAN FINANCING FOR EMERGING-SPORT ✈️</li> <li><b>4.1</b> COLLECTIVE PURCHASING CONSORTIUM ✈️</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1.3</b> REQUIRE PUBLISHED RATIONALE FOR BID</li> <li><b>4.2</b> PUBLISH NIL BEST PRACTICES PLAYBOOK</li> <li><b>4.6</b> MODEL 2035 MEMBERSHIP</li> <li><b>5.4</b> EXPAND SPORT SPONSORSHIP TIERS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>4.9</b> DIII CHAMPIONSHIPS PRODUCTION</li> </ul>
<b>PARKING LOT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 Publish Support Staff Best Practices</li> <li>2.3 Support Staff Governance Initiative</li> <li>2.4 Host Coverage for Gameday Staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.7 Restore Week-Based Practice Limits</li> <li>2.9 Allow Non-Physical Coach Contact</li> <li>3.1 Define 'Primarily Four-Year' in DIII Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5.2 Lower the Sport Sponsorship Floor</li> <li>6.5 Formally Recognize ADRs in Governance</li> <li>6.8 Provide Virtual Opportunities for Presidential Engagement</li> </ul>

# TENSION 4: ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

## Options for Committee Handoff

4.1

### Collective Purchasing Consortium

*MC, NADIIIAA*

Optional master contracts for travel, insurance, officiating, and equipment, leveraging collective scale.

4.2

### Publish NIL Best Practices Playbook

*NIL Working Group*

A DIII NIL playbook with case studies, sample operating models, and implementation guidance.

4.4

### Establish NIL Guardrails

*NIL Working Group*

Guardrails on pre-enrollment pay, boosters, and recruit collectives, plus a plain-language compliance guide.

4.6

### Model 2035 Membership

*MC, PC*

Scenario-model DIII membership under varied financial conditions to inform a division-wide strategic plan.

4.9

### DIII Championships Production

*SPFC, Championships*

Monetize championship content through a centralized free streaming platform run with a media partner.

## Options for DIII Analysis Working Group

4.12

### Legislative Cost Scoring

An economic impact score for bylaw proposals before they reach a vote.

4.14

### NCAA Tech Centralization

An NCAA-owned API layer linking athletic platforms for single-source eligibility and compliance data.

4.15

### Financial Peer Benchmarking Suite

An integrated platform combining peer benchmarking, a plug-and-play cost model, an ROI calculator, and impact analysis framework.

## Options for Membership Handoff

4.10

### Streaming and Media Support

A framework for streaming partnerships drawing on early FloSports adopters and shared staffing models.

## Options Deprioritized to Parking Lot

N/A

# TENSION 2: PLAYING SEASONS & RESOURCES

## Options for Committee Handoff

2.8

### Plan Financing for Emerging-Sport Championships

*SPFC*

Build a planning framework and funding pathway to offset championship costs for newly sponsored or emerging sports.

2.13

### Comprehensive Review of Non-Traditional Segment

*ILC*

Commission a comprehensive, sport-by-sport review of the non-traditional season – encompassing the total number of allowable days, mandatory start/end windows, the purpose and philosophy of the segment, health and safety standards, and the role of non-physical coach-athlete contact.

## Options for DIII Analysis Working Group

2.12

### Comprehensive Review of Traditional Segment

Commission a comprehensive, sport-by-sport review of traditional season parameters – including maximum playing season days, contest limits, academic calendar conflicts, health and safety implications, and the case for conference-level flexibility within a national ceiling.

## Options for Membership Handoff

N/A

## Options Deprioritized to Parking Lot

- **2.1** Publish Support Staff Best Practices
- **2.3** Support Staff Governance Initiative
- **2.4** Host Coverage for Gameday Staff
- **2.7** Restore Week-Based Practice Limits
- **2.9** Allow Non-Physical Coach Contact

# TENSION 3: ELIGIBILITY EVOLUTION

## Options for Committee Handoff

N/A

## Options for DIII Analysis Working Group

**3.3**

### **Student-Athlete Eligibility Data & Trend Report**

Conduct a student-eligibility data report (tracking attrition, retention, graduation timing, waiver volume, and credit-withholding prevalence) and produce a trend report to inform future eligibility policy decisions – including any reconsideration of the four-year framework or competition trigger standard.

**3.4/  
3.2**

### **Consider New Standards / Re-Evaluate Competition Trigger**

Evaluate moving from 4 seasons in 10 semesters to a 5-year framework, and separately reopen whether competition (not practice) should trigger the eligibility clock.

## Options for Membership Handoff

N/A

## Options Deprioritized to Parking Lot

- **3.1** Define 'Primarily Four-Year' in DIII Policy

# TENSION 1: CHAMPIONSHIP SELECTION CRITERIA

## Options for Committee Handoff

1.1

### Aggregate Formal NPI Resources

*Championships*

Publish a single annual division-wide NPI summary across all sports, distributed via commissioners.

1.2

### Establish Biennial NPI Dial Review

*Championships*

Review NPI dial settings for each sport every two years, with mandatory coach and sport-committee input before any adjustments are made.

1.3

### Require Published Rationale for Bids

*Championships*

When an isolated high-NPI program misses a host bid, publish a brief rationale clarifying seed-protection, financial, or logistical drivers.

## Options for DIII Analysis Working Group

N/A

## Options for Membership Handoff

N/A

## Options Deprioritized to Parking Lot

N/A

# TENSION 5: MEMBERSHIP STANDARDS

## Options for Committee Handoff

5.4

### Expand Enrollment-Based Sport Sponsorship Tiers

*Membership Committee*

Amend Bylaw 20.11.4 to add enrollment breakpoints with scaled sponsorship minimums, modeling AQ implications first. Larger institutions keep current minimums; smaller ones gain a baseline matched to operating capacity.

## Options for DIII Analysis Working Group

5.1

### Membership Segmentation Study

Commission a neutral, data-driven segmentation study of DIII membership, presented as an issues forum before the 2028 Convention, so future segmentation discussions are informed by evidence rather than politics.

## Options for Membership Handoff

N/A

## Options Deprioritized to Parking Lot

N/A

# TENSION 6: GOVERNANCE OVERSIGHT & PRESIDENTIAL ENGAGEMENT

## Options for Committee Handoff

6.1

### Extend Chair Term to 2 Years

PC

Extend Presidents Council chair terms to two years.

## Options for DIII Analysis Working Group

6.12

### DIII Triennial Strategic Forum

Every three years, convene a member-wide forum producing a strategic agenda of three to five priority issues and DIII positions.

6.13

### Governance Architecture Review

A one-time, 12-month governance review with external facilitation, yielding a refreshed committee map and procedures.

## Options for Membership Handoff

6.2

### Conference Presidential Engagement Framework

Distribute a model framework for a standing athletics agenda item at existing president-level meetings. Voluntary adoption, no new meetings.

6.4

### Cross-Conference Peer Sharing Network

A standing network where commissioners and ADs share operational approaches, documented and distributed to members annually.

6.6

### ADR Observer Access at Meetings

Standing listening-only observer access for ADRs at president-level conference and national governance meetings.

6.11

### President-SAAC Direct Dialogue

Annual president-SAAC meetings at each institution, plus a national Presidents Council chair link to National SAAC each cycle.

## Options Deprioritized to Parking Lot

- **6.5** Formally Recognize ADRs in Governance
- **6.8** Provide Virtual Opportunities for Presidential Engagement