



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S ATHLETICS
FEBRUARY 12, 2025, VIDEOCONFERENCE**

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- **Emerging Sports for Women – Women's Flag Football.**
 - (1) Recommendation. Add women's flag football as an emerging sport for women and establish legislation related to athletics personnel, amateurism, recruiting, financial aid, playing and practice seasons and membership, as specified.
 - (2) Effective date. Immediate.
 - (3) Rationale. The continued growth in high school girl's flag football and the number of collegiate institutions sponsoring the sport demonstrate the rapid growth of the sport and its potential to reach NCAA championship status at the collegiate level. Enough women's flag football teams met the prescribed guidelines of the Emerging Sports for Women Program application to demonstrate significant interest and sustainability within college. Additionally, the sport is relatively inexpensive to sponsor and attracts additional demographics of potential student-athletes. In addition, there is a shared commitment at the collegiate level to increase participation opportunities from institutions and conferences, as well as funding and resources from national governing bodies to further support the sport's growth. Finally, the immediate effective date will allow schools that sponsor the sport in the 2026 spring championship season to count towards the requirement of 40 institutions to establish a national collegiate championship in a women's sport.
 - (4) Estimated budget impact. Will vary based on institutional decisions related to sponsorship.
 - (5) Student-athlete impact. This recommended legislation will grow meaningful intercollegiate sport participation opportunities for female student-athletes.

2. Nonlegislative items.

- **None.**

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Welcome and announcements.** Committee on Women's Athletics chair Ragean Hill welcomed committee members to the videoconference and noted that Alia Scotka, a

student-athlete from the University of West Florida representing the Division II Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, has joined the committee.

2. **Review of previous reports.** The committee approved the report from its September 26, 2024, meeting.
3. **Women's flag football application status.** NCAA staff updated the committee on the documents submitted by RCX Sports Foundation and USA Football, the joint women's flag football applicants, including the competition schedules and letters of commitment from member schools currently sponsoring the sport. Committee members also were informed that the committee's subcommittee reviewing the women's flag football application met in December 2024 for an initial review and asked the applicants to provide additional scheduling documents to complete the application, since they were not available for the original deadline. The subcommittee reconvened in January 2025 to review the updated documents and unanimously endorsed that the committee recommend each division introduce legislation to add women's flag football to the Emerging Sports for Women Program. (See Action Item above.)
4. **2025 NCAA Convention recap.**
 - a. **Women's wrestling vote and next steps.** Staff shared that during the 2025 NCAA Convention the three divisions adopted women's wrestling as the NCAA's 91st championship and established an NCAA Women's Wrestling Committee. Staff further noted that the Women's Wrestling Committee will begin its work immediately to administer the first NCAA National Collegiate Women's Wrestling Championship in the winter of 2026.
 - b. **New Association-wide committee update.** Staff provided an update on the adoption of legislation to establish a new Association-wide committee during divisional governance meetings held in conjunction with the 2025 Convention. The NCAA Board of Governors directed the divisions to adopt legislation to establish the new committee as part of its charge to review the purpose of Association-wide committees and streamline their operations when possible. The new committee is the result of the four current NCAA committees and taskforce collaborating to recommend a single, centralized Association-wide committee to address all matters related to supporting student-athlete opportunities.

Staff further highlighted the new committee's composition and the transition process of the new committee. The committee also discussed key issues the new committee should address when it begins meeting in fall 2025 and will finalize the list at its April 9 videoconference.

- c. **Educational sessions regarding women's sports.** Staff highlighted the three educational sessions held at the Convention on women's and emerging sports, including a featured session with administrators from institutions and conferences that sponsor emerging sports. The featured session focused on ways to expand new opportunities for women in intercollegiate athletics and the new storytelling features from the historic ESPN broadcast deal.

5. Emerging sports program updates.

- a. **Discussion and additional requests for the biannual review.** The committee reviewed the criteria emerging sports are required to meet and submit biannually for review during the committee's fall and spring meetings. The committee agreed the criteria remains relevant, with no additional information required.
- b. **Updates and next steps for sports in the five-year review.** Staff updated the committee on the three sports in the five-year review (equestrian, rugby and triathlon). Each of these sports has been in the program longer than five years and began their review in fall 2024 to provide the committee a better understanding of the challenges they are facing. In fall 2024, the committee provided feedback to each of the three sports and requested additional information from equestrian and rugby. The committee reviewed the three sports again, including the requested information that was provided, and clarified additional requests for equestrian and rugby for its final meeting in April. The committee also discussed the merits of the five-year review process and determined that it is useful and should be maintained.

6. NCAA Student-Athlete Advisory Committee updates.

- a. **Division I.** The Division I SAAC representative updated the committee on the SAAC's recent meeting at the Convention during which members discussed how to mitigate the increasingly litigious environment in athletics and the potential deregulation of sports betting to allow betting on professional sports. The SAAC also continued reviewing various eligibility models (e.g., number of years) to consider whether to make a specific recommendation in the future.
- b. **Division II.** The Division II SAAC representative was not able to attend the videoconference.
- c. **Division III.** The Division III SAAC representative updated the committee on the SAAC's recent meeting at the Convention during which members elected new leadership within the committee and received updates from the SAAC's subcommittees and various staff. SAAC members also continued discussing the potential deregulation of sports betting to allow betting on professional sports.

7. **NCAA Woman of the Year update.** The committee received an update regarding the 2024 NCAA Woman of the Year that was awarded during the Convention. The recipient, Alexandra Turvey, is a 21-time All-American swimmer from Pomona-Pitzer Colleges who is pursuing a dual masters and Ph.D. as a medical researcher. For the first time, the NCAA Woman of the Year participated in a live interview on CBS Morning the day after she won the award. Staff also reviewed the process for selection of the 2025 Woman of the Year as the award transitions to oversight by the NCAA Honors Committee. To aid in the transition, some existing members of the award committee will serve on the Honors Committee through the 2026 NCAA Convention.
8. **Other business.**
 - a. **House settlement and landscape of collegiate athletics.** The committee received an update from NCAA legal counsel related to the House settlement and the other litigation affecting intercollegiate athletics. Thereafter, staff updated the committee on the current landscape and issues relevant to the committee's mission. Staff also noted that during the February Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee videoconference, MOIC expressed interest in collaborating with the committee and the Gender Equity Task Force to communicate to the Board of Governors and NCAA senior leadership the need to continue existing initiatives and programs that benefit all student-athletes. Staff noted that it will keep the committee apprised of this initiative and coordinate the effort as necessary in the coming weeks.
 - b. **Update on national office equity education and progress.** Staff updated the committee on processes underway within the national office to ensure equitable student-athlete experiences.
9. **Future meetings.** The committee will conduct its final meeting April 9 via videoconference and will meet jointly with the Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee for the final time via a May 7 videoconference.
10. **Adjournment.** The meeting adjourned at 3 p.m. Eastern time.

Committee Chair: Ragean Hill, University of North Carolina at Charlotte.
Staff Liaisons: Maison Hubbard, Academic and Membership Affairs.
Micaela Liddane, Championships and Alliances.
Ashlesha Lokhande, Office of Inclusion.
Gretchen Miron, Office of Inclusion.

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Attendees:	
Greg Bamberger, Fairmont State University.	
Sharief Hasim, Susquehanna University.	
Ragean Hill, University of North Carolina at Charlotte.	
Marybeth Lamb, Bridgewater State University.	
Katherine Loh, Florida Southern College.	
Gabriella Miller, Wisconsin Lutheran College (via videoconference).	
Michael Perez, California State University, Fullerton.	
Quinton Ross, Alabama State University.	
Chuck Sack, Neumann University.	
Tracy Shoemake, Texas State University (via videoconference).	
Sean Sullivan, Salve Regina University.	
Marion Terenzio, State University of New York at Cobleskill.	
Dawn Turner, Lander University.	
Betsey Walkowiak, University of Detroit Mercy.	
Absentees:	
Katherine Rowe Fell, University of Findlay.	
Alia Scotka, University of West Florida.	
Steve Stoute, Canisius College.	
Guests in Attendance:	
Gary Brown, NCAA Contractor.	
NCAA Staff Liaisons in Attendance:	
Maison Hubbard and Ashlesha Lokhande.	
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance for Portions of the Meeting:	
Debbie Brown, Gail Dent, Niya Blair Hackworth, Ashley Hammers, Melody Lawrence, Kevin McColaugh, Jean Merrill, Leilyn Miles, Stephanie Quigg, Jennifer Roe, Joshua Perez Sales, Jeff Smith, Jared Tidemann and Amy Wilson.	