



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S ATHLETICS
SEPTEMBER 26, 2024, MEETING**

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- **None.**

2. Nonlegislative items.

- a. Division I Academic Progress Rate policies.** The NCAA Committee on Women's Athletics discussed how emerging sports are not currently included in institutional APR calculations and agreed to refer the issue to the NCAA Division I Committee on Academics to consider reviewing its policy surrounding non-NCAA Championship Sports being excluded from APR calculations.

(1) Recommendation. The committee asks the Committee on Academics to consider removing emerging sports from its non-NCAA Championship Sports policy so that they are included in APR calculations in the future.

(2) Effective Date. Immediate.

(3) Rationale. The committee agreed that adding emerging sports to the APR calculations would help incentivize institutions to add/retain emerging sports and assist institutions in evaluating if emerging sports receive proper academic support on their campuses.

(4) Estimated Budget Impact. None.

(5) Student-Athlete Impact. Emerging sport student-athletes would be included in APR calculations.

- b. Eligibility extensions.** The committee discussed fact patterns regarding extensions of eligibility waivers for student-athletes that compete in emerging sports and made a recommendation to the divisional Committees on Student-Athlete Reinstatement for additional flexibility.

(1) Recommendation. That the Committees on Student-Athlete Reinstatement apply more flexibility in considering the years a student-athlete has situations outside of their or the institution's control, but prior to the sport being part of the emerging sport program, as potential denied participation opportunities.

(2) Effective Date. Immediate.

- (3) Rationale. The committee considered whether an extension should be approved when a student-athlete that competes in an emerging sport and participates at either an NCAA institution or a non-NCAA institution prior to the sport being part of the emerging sport program is unable to participate for more than one year for reasons considered outside of either the student-athlete's or institution's control, as determined by each division's legislation. The committee recommended the Committees on Student-Athlete Reinstatement apply more flexibility in considering the years a student-athlete has situations outside of their or the institution's control, but prior to the sport being part of the emerging sport program, as potential denied participation opportunities. This denied participation opportunity could be considered as part of an extension of eligibility waiver request. The committee agreed the application and governance process to add a sport to the emerging sport program is out of the control of student-athletes and thus provides limited relief to help both the student-athlete and institutions trying to build their women's sports programs.
- (4) Estimated Budget Impact. None.
- (5) Student-Athlete Impact. More flexibility for emerging sport student-athletes when assessing extension of eligibility waivers.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Welcome and announcements.** The committee chair Ragean Hill welcomed committee members to the in-person meeting and asked attendees to introduce themselves.
2. **Review of previous reports.** The committee approved the report from its May 14, 2024, videoconference.
3. **Emerging sports program updates.**
 - a. **New program guide for current sports.** NCAA staff updated the committee on improvements to the application process and ongoing support for current sports in the Emerging Sports for Women Program. The committee reviewed a draft document updated from previous feedback including information for sports accepted into the program. Staff noted a few additional details that will be added before finalizing the document in October.
 - b. **Education engagement overview.** Staff summarized initiatives from the 2023-24 academic year designed to educate and engage constituents on the emerging sports program and outlined additional efforts planned for the 2024-25 academic year.

4. **Application to the Emerging Sports for Women Program – women's flag football.** The committee acknowledged receiving an application from women's flag football for the Emerging Sports for Women Program and took the following actions:
 - a. **Formation of review subcommittee.** The committee formed a subcommittee to review the application in detail and provide a recommendation to the full committee for consideration during its February 2025 meeting.
 - b. **Timeline and next steps.** The committee reviewed the timeline and next steps for women's flag football in the Emerging Sports for Women Program if a recommendation to add the sport is made to the divisional legislative bodies during the committee's February 2025 meeting.

5. **Legislative and policy items impacting emerging sports.** The committee provided feedback on the following items that intersect with emerging sports for the purpose of streamlining the process:
 - a. **Division I Academic Progress Rate policies.** The committee discussed how emerging sports are not currently included in institutional APR calculations and agreed to refer the issue to the NCAA Division I Committee on Academics to consider reviewing its policy surrounding non-NCAA Championship Sports being excluded from APR calculations. (See Nonlegislative Action Item A above.)
 - b. **Division I Notification-of-transfer windows for emerging sports.** The committee reviewed whether emerging sports should be added to Division I Figure 13-1 (notification of transfer windows). In August 2022, Division I Proposal No. 2022-20 (recruiting, academic eligibility and financial aid – undergraduate four-year transfer regulations) was adopted and established transfer windows for each sport. This proposal established a time period for student-athletes considering transferring to enter the NCAA Transfer Portal. Currently, Bylaw 13.1.1.3.1(f) (notification of transfer – undergraduate student-athletes) specifies that: "In emerging sports for women, the student must provide written notification of transfer during the applicable period (30 consecutive-day period or May 1-15 for fall sports or 45 consecutive-day period for winter and spring sports) beginning seven days after selections are made for a recognized national intercollegiate championship event in the sport."

Given emerging sports championship selection dates and championship dates were unknown at the time the legislation was adopted in 2022, the dates were not included in Figure 13-1 and have not been included in previous iterations. The committee agreed that emerging sports should be included with their season counterparts to ease the process for both student-athletes and administrators and agreed to direct NCAA staff to update Figure 13-1 accordingly.

- c. **Eligibility extensions.** The committee discussed fact patterns regarding extensions of eligibility waivers for student-athletes that compete in emerging sports and made a recommendation to the divisional Committees on Student-Athlete Reinstatement for additional flexibility. (See Nonlegislative Action Item B above.)
 - d. **Division III playing and practice seasons – waiver requests.** Staff updated the committee on recent legislative changes in Division III regarding playing and practice seasons, as well as a recent waiver request for rugby and an anticipated waiver for stunt resulting from the legislative changes.
6. **Engagement with NCAA President Charlie Baker.** NCAA President Baker joined the meeting to speak on his commitment to growing women's sport opportunities and to discuss topics related to women's sports. President Baker specifically highlighted the impact of the House settlement, including revenue-sharing and Title IX, and the overall landscape of college athletics.
7. **Feedback on Division II Proposal No. 2025-7 (eligibility – athletics eligibility – seasons of competition: 10-semester/15-quarter rule – criteria for determining season of eligibility – minimum amount of competition – up to four dates of competition – men's wrestling amount of competition).** Per a request from the Division II governance structure, the committee was asked to take a position on a membership-sponsored proposal, Division II Proposal No. 2025-7. The proposal specifies that in men's wrestling, a student-athlete representing a Division II institution during their initial year of collegiate enrollment may participate in up to four dates of competition without using a season of competition.

After discussion, the committee opposed the proposal based on its possible equity impact in that the proposal is specific only to men's wrestling and does not include women's wrestling.

8. **Emerging sports updates.** The committee received its biannual update from the six sports in the Emerging Sports for Women Program. The updates included the sports that have been in the program for fewer than five years (acrobatics and tumbling, stunt and women's wrestling), and the sports that have been in the program for more than five years (equestrian, rugby and triathlon). New sports-sponsorship numbers for each sport from 2023-24 and projected sponsorship numbers for 2024-25 were shared.

The committee recently established a five-year review for sports as part of its overall review of the Emerging Sport for Women Program. The review allows the sports' governing bodies to share their plan to achieve championship status within the next five years and to share any noteworthy challenges to reaching the legislated 40 programs that meet minimum contest and participant requirements. The review also includes receiving feedback from institutions and conferences sponsoring the sport and an overall comparison of sports-sponsorship numbers for the sport. Because three sports have been in the program longer

than five years, the committee reviewed information from their biannual updates and five-year review items and discussed the sports in detail. Formal correspondence that includes key items from the committee's discussion and any recommendations will be shared with the sports' leadership for their awareness and consideration.

9. NCAA Student-Athlete Advisory Committee updates.

a. Division I. The Division I SAAC representative updated the committee on the SAAC's efforts regarding several items, including: notification-of-transfer windows in all sports; developing a feedback instrument to satisfy the recommendation from the Division I Transformation Committee that Division I student-athletes be surveyed annually regarding their experiences; the NIL landscape and educational efforts to help student-athletes make informed decisions; and reviewing various eligibility models .

b. Division II. The Division II SAAC representative updated the committee on the SAAC's review of legislation for the 2025 NCAA Convention, including its support for women's wrestling becoming an NCAA championship sport. The representative further noted that the SAAC determined its goals for the 2024-25 academic year, including activating civic engagement efforts.

c. Division III. The Division III SAAC representative was not present during this portion of the meeting due to a conflict. Staff updated the committee on the SAAC's ongoing review of sports wagering legislation, as well as Division III proposals for the Convention.

10. CWA policies and procedures. The committee reviewed and approved its updated policies and procedures for 2024-25.

11. NCAA Woman of the Year update. The committee received an update regarding the 2024 NCAA Woman of the Year award. This year, a record 627 nominations representing multiple ethnicities and NCAA-sponsored sports within Divisions I, II, and III were received. The Woman of the Year Selection Committee will choose the Top 30 (10 from each division) and Top 9 (three from each division) in the coming weeks. The committee will conduct a virtual meeting in October to select the 2024 NCAA Woman of the Year, which will be announced at the Convention.

12. Discussion of current trends in athletics and the impact on women's sports. The committee acknowledged receipt of a letter from the NCAA Gender Equity Task Force in June 2024 emphasizing the importance of equity and Title IX being at the forefront in ongoing settlement discussions and during NCAA national office budget discussions. (Attachment) The committee endorsed the efforts of the task force and urged that the letter be discussed among other NCAA leadership bodies.

13. **Future meetings.** The committee will meet jointly with the Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee on Friday, September 27, from 8:30 a.m. to noon Eastern time. The committee also will convene on the following dates:
- a. October 23, 2024;
 - b. February 12, 2025;
 - c. April 9, 2025; and
 - d. May 7, 2025
14. **Adjournment.** The meeting adjourned at 7:36 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.

NCAA Committee on Women's Athletics September 26, 2024, Meeting	
Attendees:	
Laura Amaya, Roberts Wesleyan University.	
Greg Bamberger, Fairmont State University.	
Katherine Rowe Fell, University of Findlay.	
Sharief Hasim, Susquehanna University.	
Ragean Hill, University of North Carolina at Charlotte.	
Marybeth Lamb, Bridgewater State University.	
Gabriella Miller, Wisconsin Lutheran College.	
Michael Perez, California State University, Fullerton.	
Chuck Sack, Neumann University.	
Tracy Shoemake, Texas State University.	
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 Loh, Florida Southern College.	
Quinton Ross, Alabama State University.	
Steve Stoute, Canisius College.	

Guests in Attendance:
Gary Brown.
NCAA Staff Liaisons in Attendance:
Maison Hubbard, Ashlesha Lokhande and Gretchen Miron.
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance for Portions of the Meeting:
Charlie Baker, Lydia Bell, Debbie Brown, Gail Dent, Rachel Denton, McKinzie Green, Chelsea Hooks, Sorelle Ineza, Corey Jackson, Jordan Jones, Mariah Murdock, Josh Perez, Stephanie Quigg, Angela Red, Tori Sutherland, Amy Wilson and Julie Zike.



June 27, 2024

VIA EMAIL

NCAA Board of Governors
NCAA Division I Board of Directors
NCAA Division I Council
NCAA Presidents Cabinet

Dear NCAA Governance Leaders:

College sports is at a critical juncture. Legal settlements, the evolving name, image and likeness environment, and future revenue sharing opportunities require a deliberate focus and commitment to many things to ensure college athletics are equitable. The NCAA's Gender Equity Task Force writes this letter to you—leaders within the NCAA divisional governance structure and national office—to reiterate the crucial need for gender equity and Title IX to be at the forefront of all ongoing and future conversations about college sports, particularly in Division I.

Fifty-two years after Title IX passed, inequities remain throughout intercollegiate athletics. Women still have far fewer opportunities to compete at the collegiate level. Based on [NCAA Sports Sponsorship and Participation Rates](#) in 2022-23, men had over 71,000 more participation opportunities than women. Financial resource gaps continue to persist between men's and women's programs. Division I already has the greatest gap in spending between men's and women's teams in several areas, [generally spending twice as much](#) on their men's programs than their women's programs. A recent [Government Accountability Office report](#) reinforced these gaps and identified inconsistencies in Title IX enforcement that can create barriers to schools proactively complying with Title IX.

While some progress has been made to close these gaps, the dynamic environment, particularly in Division I, threatens the support of broad-based athletics programs and women's opportunities. We are in an incredibly exciting time for women's sports. Although we are in an uncertain legal environment, it is irresponsible to take a wait-and-see approach to equity as it threatens to put institutions at risk of Title IX non-compliance. Instead, leaders must consider Title IX and equity in ongoing conversations to ensure that there are not unintended consequences that negatively impact women when discussing and acting on these challenging topics.

The task force acknowledges how difficult and unknown the next steps of this process may be. When facing uncertainty, it is a moral imperative to maintain an evident commitment to equity in the actions we take. We recognize that institutions, conferences and the

national office face budget implications that must be addressed to move forward in a productive way for the future of intercollegiate athletics for all student-athletes. During these belt-tightening exercises, the Gender Equity Task Force also encourages leaders to maintain services that support equity and inclusion. Too often diversity, equity, and inclusion programs, education and support services are among the first budget cuts made. These cuts are short-sighted, particularly when prioritizing equity will continue to be critical for departments across the country.

In any deliberations about ongoing or future legal settlements and the evolving collegiate landscape, the Gender Equity Task Force advises that leaders consider the following:

- Include Title IX experts and/or Title IX attorneys to advise on equity implications in conversations and decision-making processes related to legal settlements, revenue sharing and other relevant discussions.
- Affirm to member institutions and conferences they must follow all aspects of Title IX (e.g., participation opportunities, financial aid, treatment and benefits) and support their student-athletes in a gender equitable manner, especially when considering revenue distribution implications.
- Prioritize equity in the student-athlete experience across the Association.
- Foster relationships with the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights to encourage collaboration and proactivity related to athletics equity.
- Ensure the NCAA membership is aware of recent changes to [Title IX Regulations](#) and [Office for Civil Rights resources](#) that emphasize athletics equity responsibilities.
- Affirm the NCAA national office's commitment to gender equity including external reviews as needed to follow through on previous gender equity reviews.

Campus and conference leaders must heed these considerations as they discuss the impact of legal settlements and the evolving landscape within their communities.

Thank you for taking the time to consider and implement the task force's recommendations. Rather than hoping for the best, we implore you to be proactive and prioritize gender equity to help protect current and future athletic opportunities. The task force is committed to supporting college sports through this challenging time and welcomes any future opportunities to collaborate or advise on gender equity concerns for the Association.

Sincerely,

NCAA Gender Equity Task Force

Noreen Morris, Chair
Northeast Conference

Judy Sweet, co-Chair
Gender Equity Consultant

Chuck Ambrose
Husch Blackwell

Jacqie McWilliams
Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association

Renee Bostic
State University of New York at New Paltz

Bernard Muir
Stanford University

Joan McDermott
Colorado Mesa University

Sara Otey
Ohio Athletic Conference

ASW:dfb

cc: NCAA Division I Commissioners
NCAA Committee on Women's Athletics
NCAA Committee to Promote Cultural Diversity and Equity
NCAA Division II Executive Board
NCAA Division II Management Council
NCAA Division III Presidents Council
NCAA Division III Management Council
NCAA Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee
Selected NCAA Staff Members