



**2020 NCAA Division III COVID-19
Question and Answer Guide
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Updates will be made to this document on a continuous basis as necessary. On release of subsequent editions of this guide, newly approved questions and answers will be highlighted in yellow.

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INTRODUCTION

On March 13, 2020, the day after the winter and spring championships were cancelled, the NCAA Division III Administrative Committee took the following actions:

- Issued a blanket waiver providing relief to all Division III member institutions from failing to satisfy sports sponsorship requirements due to actions taken in response to COVID-19.
- Issued a blanket waiver for all spring sport student-athletes that participation would not result in the use of a season for the 2019-20 academic year nor would the 2020 spring semester count towards their overall semester limits.
- Directed that institutions be provided flexibility as may be necessary to support the best interest of their student-athletes with respect to reasonable extra benefits that may be offered under Bylaw 16 to address unforeseen needs of the student-athletes, including those related to equipment, travel, academic and other support services arising or resulting from the impact of COVID-19.
- Directed that institutions be provided flexibility as may be necessary to support the best interest of their student-athletes with respect to the type, frequency and timing of athletically related and other activities that occur under Bylaw 17 through the end of the academic year. On March 26, the Administrative Committee clarified this directive and stated that at this time and in all sports (regardless of season), this flexibility is extended into the summer period.
- The biggest concerns at this time are student-athlete well-being, including mental and physical health and the ability to maintain strong connections between and among student-athletes and their respective institutions. As such, reasonable activities under Bylaws 16 and 17 that are designed to improve connectivity and help student-athletes in these areas should be permitted; provided the activities otherwise comply with applicable laws, institutional requirements and other school obligations under NCAA policies and legislation, including those related to health and safety.

The Administrative Committee will continue to meet weekly to evaluate and manage the various compliance issues as well as others that arise due to actions taken in response to COVID-19.

The following question and answer document is intended to assist member institutions in navigating NCAA compliance issues. Additionally, this document will be updated as new questions arise or additional compliance-related actions taken by the governance structure.

PROCESS

Question No. 1: What is a blanket waiver?

Answer: A blanket waiver is a decision by an appropriate governance body to temporarily provide relief from NCAA legislation for specific extenuating circumstances that have a reasonably demonstrated widespread impact.

Question No. 2: Does an institution have to file anything to receive the benefits of a blanket waiver?

Answer: No. An institution does not have to submit a separate waiver request to receive the benefits/exceptions granted in the blanket waiver. The waiver applies to all institutions and/or student-athletes that are addressed/described in the blanket waiver.

Question No. 3: What is the effect of the blanket waivers approved by the Division III Administrative Committee?

Answer: The blanket waiver from the Administrative Committee does the following:

- An institution's failure to satisfy sports sponsorship requirements related to **spring sports for the 2019-20 academic year** resulting from actions taken in response to COVID-19 will not result in a violation of the conditions and obligations of membership.
- Any spring sport student-athlete will not be charged with a season of participation or the use of semester.

Question No. 4: Does the blanket waiver impact a fall or winter student-athlete?

Answer: No. The blanket waiver is specific to student-athletes who are spring sport student-athletes in 2019-20 academic year. If the student-athlete is a multisport student-athlete that participates in a spring sport, then the blanket waiver would apply to the student-athlete's spring sport participation.

Question No. 5: What does it mean when the Administrative Committee states that institutions should apply flexibility in the best interest of its student-athletes?

Answer: The Administrative Committee recognizes that these are circumstances not contemplated by existing NCAA regulations and that institutions should be focused on the well-being of their student-athletes. The Administrative

Committee also recognizes that these situations will differ to a degree from campus to campus and member schools must navigate these challenges while taking into consideration state and local laws and unique institutional risks, policies and requirements. Thus, rather than approve a blanket waiver that may not address specific institutional needs, the Administrative Committee is urging institutions at this time to apply common sense principles in the best interest of their student-athletes.

To apply this flexibility, institutions do not need to seek approval from NCAA staff; but rather they are encouraged to work with applicable institutional medical, legal and risk management personnel to determine how best to leverage the available flexibility to address individual student-athlete needs and corresponding institutional considerations. Institutions should feel free to contact staff through NCAA Requests/Self-Reports Online to assist with these or any questions.

Question No. 6: What is an extension waiver and when is it necessary?

Answer: An extension waiver provides relief from the 10-semester limitation. A student-athlete would need an extension waiver if they had seasons remaining, wanted to use those seasons, but not enough semesters in which to complete those seasons. The waivers are processed through the NCAA Division III Committee on Student-Athlete Reinstatement and are submitted online via RSRO. The guidelines for these waivers are found [here](#).

There is also a previously approved waiver list found [here](#). If an institution's waiver request is the same as the one on the list, then the institution may self-apply without the necessity of requesting the waiver through RSRO.

Question No. 7: What is a season-of-participation waiver, when is it necessary and how to apply?

Answer: A season-of-participation waiver grants a student-athlete an additional season of participation. The waivers are processed through the Committee on Student-Athlete Reinstatement and are submitted online via RSRO. The guidelines for these waivers are found [here](#).

BYLAW 20.11 - MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Question No. 1: What happens if an institution does not meet sports sponsorship requirements as a result of the cancellation of remaining competition for the 2019-20 academic year?

Answer: On March 13, 2020, the Division III Administrative Committee approved a blanket waiver of any deficiencies in sports sponsorship requirements related to spring sports occurring as a result of actions taken in response to COVID-19. This would include minimum contest and participant requirements for spring sports, along with the one sport per season requirement for the spring. The blanket waiver does not extend to fall or winter sports. Therefore, an institution is still required to meet minimum contests and participant requirements for any fall or winter sports that it uses towards meeting its minimum sports sponsorship.

Question No. 2: What is the Division III membership requirement related to the NCAA Regional Rules Seminar attendance and will the requirement be waived for institutions required to attend this year?

Answer: Division III legislation requires an active member institution to send at least one institutional staff member to the NCAA Regional Rules Seminar at least once every three years. This requirement remains unchanged for the 2020 Regional Rules Seminars. NCAA staff will contact institutions that must attend in 2020 with further information on how to fulfill this requirement.

Question No. 3: Will the deadline for submission of the Institutional Self-Study Guide or Conference Self-Study Guide be extended this year?

Answer: The Division III Membership Committee extended the submission deadline of the 2019-20 Institutional Self-Study Guide (ISSG) to May 31, 2021. An institution may submit the 2019-20 ISSG at any point up until that date. Further, institutions in the current ISSG class will not move to a new class and shall submit their next ISSG by June 1, 2025.

BYLAW 13 - RECRUITING

Question No. 1: Have there been any new restrictions on recruiting imposed for Division III?

Answer: No. Unlike the actions taken in Divisions I and II, the Division III Administrative Committee has not imposed any additional restrictions on

recruiting in Division III; however, coaches and staff must continue to follow all current Division III recruiting legislation.

Question No. 2: Are institutions still required to request permission to contact before recruiting a four-year college prospective student-athlete currently enrolled at another institution?

Answer: Yes. However, a release is not needed if the student has officially withdrawn or graduated from the previous institution.

Question No. 2a: Are institutions required to request permission to contact before recruiting a four-year college prospective student-athlete that is enrolled at an institution that indicates it will be closing at the end of the academic year?

Answer: Yes. However, institutions that are closing may issue a blanket waiver to contact that applies to all students. An institution would not need a permission to contact if the student withdrew from their institution or if the academic year has ended and the institution is closed.

Question No 2b: Can student-athletes takeover institutional or team athletics social media (e.g., Instagram) accounts outside the season to post content created by student-athletes (e.g., a day-in-the-life of the student-athlete, their voluntary workouts, and features on student-athletes)?

Answer: Yes. Pursuant to the flexibility advised by the Division III Administrative Committee, it is permissible for the student-athletes to use the institution's team social media account to post stories they created. If this activity is done outside the team's playing and practice season, student-athlete participation must be voluntary, as outlined in question 2a above, and the virtual workouts performed by the student-athletes may not be conducted or supervised by the coaches

Question No. 3: Is the "Self-Release" for Division III student-athletes still available?

Answer: Yes. The availability and process for the self-release have not changed.

Question No. 4: May a coach use online video platforms and apps (e.g., Hangouts, FaceTime, Zoom, Skype) to contact prospective student-athletes?

Answer: Yes. But these communications must remain private and cannot include multiple prospective student-athletes unless the communication satisfies one of the following:

- (1) The communication occurs after May 1 and all prospective student-athletes that are part of the communication have deposited with the institution (staff interpretation April 24, 2020); or
- (2) The communication is one allowed pursuant to the NCAA Division III Subcommittee for Legislative Relief blanket waiver issued April 2, 2020 (See response to Question No. 8).

Question No. 5: May an institution reimburse a prospective student-athlete for expenses incurred in anticipation of making a campus visit (e.g., prospective student-athletes had purchased flights to come to campus for a visit.)?

Answer: The institution could reimburse a prospective student-athlete in the same manner it would to any prospective student.

Question No. 6: Is it permissible for prospective student-athletes to participate in a virtual tour/event of a member institution's campus sponsored/organized by the institution's admission department (or another department outside of athletics)?

Answer: Yes. It would be permissible for prospective student-athletes to take part in a general admission's virtual campus visit/events (e.g., Zoom, Skype, Twitter) that is available to the general prospective students.

Question No. 7: Is it permissible for a virtual tour/event conducted/arranged by admissions to include an institutional coaching staff member or time with the institution's athletics department?

Answer: It is permissible for a virtual tour/event conducted by admissions to include an institutional coaching staff member provided the programming is being provided by the institution's admission department and is available to prospective students generally.

Questions No. 8: May a coach or an athletics department conduct a virtual recruiting event (e.g., junior day) or visit involving one or multiple prospective student-athletes and those accompanying the prospective student-athlete(s)?

Answer: Yes. The Division III Management Council Subcommittee for Legislative Relief issued a blanket waiver (April 2, 2020) that would allow a coach or athletics department to conduct a recruiting event or visit virtually, provided the event itself would be permissible if done in person.

Question No. 9: May student-athletes participate in virtual visits conducted by the institution's athletics department or coach?

Answer: Yes. A current student-athlete may participate in a virtual campus visit being conducted by the institution's athletics department and/or coach.

Question No. 9a: May a prospective student-athlete join a virtual team meeting?

Answer: Yes. The blanket waiver referenced in Question No. 8 permits a coach or athletics department to conduct a recruiting event or visit virtually, provided the event would be permissible if done in person. Since a prospective student-athlete may attend a team meeting when visiting a member's campus, it is permissible for the prospective student-athlete to join a virtual team meeting conducted by the coach. However, a non-committed prospective student-athlete may not attend multiple team meetings beyond this singular event as they are not yet enrolled student-athletes.

Question No. 9b: May a committed prospective student-athlete join a virtual team meeting?

Answer: Yes. The Division III Management Council Subcommittee for Legislative Relief issued a blanket waiver (June 25, 2020) to allow a committed prospective student-athlete to participate in virtual team meetings up to the institution's first day of classes for the 2020 fall term or the team's first day of practice, whichever is earlier. The prospective student-athlete's participation in virtual team meetings must be voluntary.

For purposes of this blanket waiver, committed (e.g., institution has received the prospective student-athlete's financial deposit in response to the institution's offer of admission or if no financial deposit is required then a commitment that is required of all students at the institution) prospective student-athletes include incoming prospective student-athletes beginning initial collegiate enrollment and transfer prospective student-athletes.

Question No. 10: Is it permissible for a coaching staff member to send workouts to a prospective student-athlete?

Answer: Yes. Consistent with the current application of Division III legislation, it is permissible for a prospective student-athlete to receive workouts from an institution's coaching staff member after the prospective student-athlete's paid-acceptance of the institution's written offer of admission and/or financial aid.

Question No. 11: Does the blanket waiver issued by the Division III Management Council Subcommittee for Legislative Relief on April 2, 2020, allow the institution to provide a meal to the prospective student-athlete (e.g., order a meal to be delivered to the prospective student-athlete while the virtual visit is occurring)?

Answer: No. The blanket waiver provides additional flexibility with respect to communicating with prospective student-athletes virtually and does not allow benefits, such as meals, to be provided to prospective student-athletes in their homes.

Question No. 12: Does the blanket waiver issued by the Division III Management Council Subcommittee for Legislative Relief on April 2, 2020, allow coaches to attend a prospective student-athlete's virtual celebratory signing ceremony?

Answer: No. The blanket waiver provides additional flexibility with respect to events that would normally be taking place on an institution's campus. Because, Bylaw 13.9.1.1.1 prohibits celebratory signings from taking place on an institution's campus and prohibits a coach from being present for the signing, coaches would be prohibited from attending these events virtually.

BYLAW 14 - ELIGIBILITY: ACADEMIC AND GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Question No. 1: What is the impact on student-athlete eligibility of the blanket waiver issued March 13, 2020, by the Division III Administrative Committee?

Answer: The blanket waiver provides relief for spring sports student-athletes regarding their use of a season and semester. For spring sport student-athletes it effectively views the 2020 spring semester as if it did not happen (from an eligibility perspective). Therefore, spring sport student-athletes would not be charged with a season of participation for the 2019-20 academic year nor the use of a semester for the 2020 spring semester.

Question No. 2: Which student-athletes does the March 13 blanket waiver apply?

Answer: It applies to all spring sport student-athletes: This includes the following: Baseball, Golf (M/W), Lacrosse (M/W), Rowing, Softball, Tennis (M/W), Outdoor Track and Field (M/W), Volleyball (M), National Collegiate Beach Volleyball (W) and National Collegiate Water Polo (W). Even if your institution conducted your conference season in the fall for golf or tennis, these student-athletes would still benefit from the blanket waiver. Meaning, they would not be charged with the use of a season for the 2019-20

academic year in the spring sport and only the fall semester would count against the allowable semesters.

Question No. 3: What is the impact of a spring sport student-athlete that was in their 10th semester during the 2020 spring semester?

Answer: The student-athlete would only get one semester, meaning, they would need to do one of the following: (1) Not attend full time in the fall and do not participate in intercollegiate athletics during that semester; or (2) Seek a waiver through the Division III Committee on Student-Athlete Reinstatement to extend the student's eligibility period.

However, the Division III Committee on Student-Athlete Reinstatement recently approved an extension request for a spring sport student-athlete who was in their 10th semester during 2020 spring term to allow that student-athlete to enroll in both semesters and participate. The committee received several of these requests and during its May 2020 meeting, added this type of request to their previously approved list ([DIII SAR Previously Approved Request List](#)). Therefore, the institution may self-apply the relief without filing a formal student-athlete reinstatement application provided all of the following are satisfied:

1. The student-athlete was unable to participate in a spring sport during the 2020 spring semester/quarter, due to COVID-19 or the student-athlete received a self-applied season of participation waiver – participation while eligible during the 2020 spring semester/quarter, due to COVID-19; and the student-athlete was not charged with the use of a semester/quarter during 2020 spring semester/quarter.

And

2. The student-athlete was otherwise eligible for competition during the 2020 spring semester/quarter.

The extension must be used in the term immediately following the expiration of the student-athlete's 10-semester/15-quarter period of eligibility. This means that a student-athlete who was not charged with use of a semester for spring 2020 could participate in the fall 2020 as their 10th semester and then participate in the spring 2021 due to the relief provided through the Division III Committee on Student-Athlete Reinstatement's previously approved waiver.

Question No. 3a: Does the extension request approved by the Division III Committee on Student-Athlete Reinstatement that appears on the DIII SAR Previously Approved Waiver List apply to a spring sport student-athlete who was not in their 10th semester during the spring 2020 term?

Answer: Yes. An institution may self-apply the extension for any student-athlete that satisfies the listed criteria and needs the extension to participate in 4 seasons of participation. For example, a student-athlete with the following enrollment and participation history:

- Enrolled full-time 2017-18 academic year participates in sport of lacrosse
- Enrolled full-time 2018-19 academic year participate in sport of lacrosse
- Enrolled full-time 2019-20 academic year – COVID-19 prevents participation
- Enrolled full-time 2020-21 academic year participate in sport of lacrosse
- Enrolled full-time 2021-22 academic year- doesn't participate in spring 22 term because of an experiential learning requirement.

This student-athlete would be eligible to participate in the 2022-23 academic year and enroll full time for both the fall and spring terms. The blanket waiver provided by the Division III Administrative Committee removes the spring 2020 term from counting against the total number of full-time terms for this student-athlete and the previously approved extension request provided by the Division III Student-Athlete Reinstatement Committee provides the student-athlete with one additional term (semester or quarter), provided the student-athlete meets all outlined conditions.

Question No. 4: How does the blanket waiver approved by the Administrative Committee on March 13 impact enrollment status for the 2020-21 academic year?

Answer: A student-athlete wishing to participate during the 2020-21 academic year will be subject to all NCAA enrollment and eligibility requirements. Specifically, they would have to be enrolled in a full-time program of studies leading to baccalaureate degree (or graduate program) and be in good academic standing as defined by the institution.

Question No. 4a: If an institution alters its fall academic calendar, (e.g. divides their fall term into multiple segments), does this change the requirement that a student-athlete must be enrolled full-time?

Answer: No. A student-athlete must be enrolled in at least a minimum full-time program of studies leading to a degree in order to practice. A student-athlete must be enrolled in at least 12 credit hours in order to compete. Altering the institution's academic calendar does not change the requirement that a student-athlete must be enrolled full-time for the entire fall term in order to be eligible to practice and compete. For example, if an institution determines its entire fall term will be between October 1-January 28, but divides the fall term into two segments (segment one occurring between October 1 - November 20 and segment two occurring November 30 - January 28), this would not change the enrollment requirement that the student-athlete would need to be enrolled full-time for the entire fall term. It does not matter in which segment the student-athlete takes the courses (e.g., 6 credits in the first segment and 6 credits in the second segment or 12 credits in the first or second segment), so long as the student-athlete is enrolled full-time for the entire fall term (October 1-January 28).

Question No. 5: Can a student-athlete that graduates this year participate during the 2020-21 academic year while enrolled less than full time?

Answer: No. the student-athlete would have to be enrolled full time in either a graduate program or second baccalaureate program.

Question No. 6: Can a student-athlete that graduates this year participate during the 2020-21 academic year while enrolled full time in classes that lead to a minor or for a certificate program?

Answer: No. The student would have to be enrolled full time in a graduate program or second baccalaureate program.

Question No. 7: Is there a waiver opportunity to allow a student-athlete to participate while enrolled less than full time?

Answer: Yes. An institution may request a waiver through the Division III Management Council Subcommittee for Legislative Relief for a student-athlete to participate while enrolled less than full time. The guidelines/directives for those waivers are found [here](#). These waivers are submitted through RSRO.

At its meeting on April 23 the subcommittee discussed how to review waivers of full-time enrollment for the 2020-21 academic year submitted on behalf of spring sport student-athletes that would have completed their final season of participation in spring 2020. The subcommittee acknowledged the unfortunate and unique position these students are in. The subcommittee also stressed the importance of reviewing these waivers on a case-by-case basis as each student-athlete's situation is unique as their academic paths and institutional options vary. While this makes specific parameters difficult to establish, the subcommittee stressed the importance that Division III athletics involves and must remain students participating against students. Therefore, these waivers must be reviewed through that lens and the institution should show how attending less than full time still qualifies the individual as a student that should be eligible for athletics participation. To help with that analysis, the subcommittee advised that institutions show the enrollment status of the student for the entire year and how the courses proposed to be taken, while less than full time, are in furtherance of an academic or career goal. Finally, the proposed academic path should be certified as acceptable by an academic authority (outside of athletics) at the institution.

Question No. 8: Can a student-athlete that used the less than full-time enrollment exception per Bylaw 14.1.8.1.6.1 (final semester/quarter -- practice or competition) during the 2020 spring semester, use the exception again?

Answer: Yes. While typically a student-athlete could only use the exception once, the blanket waiver issued by the Administrative Committee effectively nullified the semester for purposes of eligibility and, therefore, the exception could be used again.

Question No. 8a: What does the noncontroversial legislation approved by Management Council at its April 2020 meeting permit, that expands the scope of the final term exception for full-time enrollment?

Answer: The Division III Management Council approved noncontroversial legislation, effective for the 2020-21 academic year, expanding the scope of the final term exception. The existing final term exception allows a student-athlete to compete while enrolled less than full time in their final semester prior to graduation if they are taking the classes necessary to complete their degree. It does not allow students to apply the final term exception if they are only taking classes necessary to complete their minor or certificate program.

The noncontroversial legislation approved by Management Council would now permit a student-athlete who has completed all the requirements for their degree, but is continuing their work toward a minor or undergraduate certificate program, to apply the final term exception to the full-time enrollment requirement provided they have not previously used the exception, and they are carrying the courses necessary to complete their minor or undergraduate certificate program.

Question No. 8b: May a student-athlete who has graduated use the exception to enroll less than full time while working on a minor or undergraduate certificate program?

Answer: No. This exception does not permit a student-athlete who has graduated to be enrolled less than full time while working toward completion of a minor or undergraduate certificate program. A student-athlete is considered graduated for purposes of this exception, if the student has completed all academic and administrative requirements for graduation, as defined by the institution, and the institution considers the student graduated. Please note, the exception can only be used in the term prior to graduation.

Question No. 8c: May a student-athlete use this exception if the student-athlete already used the final term exception to less than full-time enrollment requirements?

Answer: No. It is important to recognize that this is not a separate exception to allow another term of participation while enrolled less than full time. Rather, it provides student-athletes more options to use the current final term exception, which may only be used once. (Please see Question No. 8 above if the student-athlete used the exception during the spring 2020 semester.)

Question No. 9: Does a student-athlete need to be enrolled full time to participate in virtual practices conducted by the institution?

Answer: Currently no. However, for the 2020-21 academic year all existing eligibility requirements apply.

Question No. 10: May the spring 2020 term be used to fulfill the academic year-in-residence (Bylaw 14.02.10) required for transfer eligibility and organized competition participation?

Answer: Yes. The spring 2020 term maybe used to fulfill the academic year in residence even if the student-athlete does not complete the term as a full-time student, provided the student-athlete was enrolled as a full-time student at the beginning of the term.

Question No. 11: Does the blanket waiver for the season of participation and use of a semester apply to a Division III student-athlete who chooses to transfer to another Division III institution for the 2020-21 academic year?

Answer: Yes.

Question No. 12: Does the blanket waiver for the season of participation and use of a semester apply to a student-athlete who was enrolled at an institution in another division or athletics association (e.g., NAIA; NJCAA) during spring 2020 and transfers to a Division III institution for the 2020-21 academic year?

Answer: No. However, a transfer student-athlete's use of a season of participation would be based on the determination made by the other division or association. If the association/division determined that the undergraduate student-athlete only used three seasons, the student-athlete would have one season of participation remaining upon transfer to the Division III institution.

The analysis is slightly different for use of a semester. The student-athlete is subject to the Division III definition to determine if the student-athlete used a semester/quarter for the Spring 2020 term. If the student-athlete wanted to participate beyond ten semesters/15 quarters, the student-athlete would need to be granted an extension request through Student-Athlete Reinstatement to receive an additional term.

BYLAW 16 - AWARDS, BENEFITS AND EXPENSES FOR ENROLLED STUDENT-ATHLETES

Question No. 1: What benefits may an institution provide to student-athletes impacted by actions taken in response to COVID-19?

Answer: Division III Administrative Committee (March 13, 2020) directed institutions to apply flexibility through the end of the academic year.

Such flexibility would include, but would not be limited to (1) Providing storage or shipment of student-athlete belongings; (2) Lodging and transportation expenses for the student-athletes to travel home as a result of school closures, evacuations and quarantines; and (3) Reimbursement (e.g. monetary, travel vouchers and company credits for future use) for out-of-pocket expenses associated with student-athlete participation in intercollegiate athletics or academic endeavors.

Question No. 2: May institutions continue to provide benefits incidental to student-athletes' participation in intercollegiate athletics (or that are otherwise permitted under Bylaw 16)?

Answer: Yes. Such benefits have included, but would not be limited to, providing workout programs, equipment (and retention through summer) and continued rehabilitation and medical services. (See Playing and Practice Season section of Question and Answer Guide for any additional parameters.)

Question No. 3: May institutions fundraise for their student-athletes who are impacted by COVID-19?

Answer: Yes, provided the fundraiser satisfies the requirements of Bylaw 16.11.1.13. Specifically, the proceeds must be designated for a specific purpose and any excess proceeds must be given to a not-for-profit organization, with all receipts kept on file by the institution.

Further, institutional staff members and representatives of the institution's athletics interests would be permitted to donate to such fundraisers.

Question No. 4: May an institution provide its student-athletes with an occasional meal while the campus is closed (e.g., have a meal delivered to the student-athletes at their homes when conducting a virtual meeting)?

Answer: No. The flexibility provided through the actions of the Division III Administrative Committee was intended to address the type of benefits outlined in Question Nos. 1 and 2 above. Providing occasional meals virtually is beyond the scope of the flexibility identified by the committee.

BYLAW 17 - PLAYING AND PRACTICE SEASONS

Question No. 1: What type of flexibility does the March 13 directive and March 26 clarification issued by the Division III Administrative Committee allow?

Answer: Institutions should determine the type, frequency and timing of interactions that are appropriate for the health and well-being of their student-athletes. The Administrative Committee recognized the unique circumstances facing student-athletes at this time and the potential challenges imposed by Bylaw 17 regulations that would otherwise limit certain interactions with athletics staff that could be beneficial to the well-being of student-athletes during this period. Given these unique circumstances, the Administrative Committee

acknowledged that institutions should exercise flexibility with respect to interactions with student-athletes. **This increased flexibility should be exercised for the purposes of fostering the well-being of the student-athlete and/or the connectivity between and among student-athletes and their respective institutions.**

Specifically, the following should guide institutions on how they may apply this flexible approach:

- Institutional staff may interact with student-athletes (in a group or individually) in virtual meetings that do not involve physical activities for the purpose of sharing nonathletics and/or athletics information. The meetings may include for example: chalk talk; lecture on or discussion of strategy related to the sport; review of game film or videos related to the sport. (See Bylaw 17.02.1.1 generally).
- Coaches may recommend self-directed workouts for student-athletes to use while residing at home or away from campus; provided the workouts are approved by applicable institutional athletics and/or medical personnel and otherwise adhere to applicable legislative, policy and institutional requirements (e.g. Interassociation Recommendations Preventing Catastrophic Injury And Death In Collegiate Athletes) and institutional staff may not supervise or conduct such workouts.
- Institutional staff may ask student-athletes to discuss their workouts and/or other school-related activities with their coaches and/or strength and conditioning coaches.
- Student-athletes may share pictures, videos or comments about their workouts and/or other school-related activities with institutional staff.
- Institutional staff may share sport-related pictures, videos and/or other educational materials for the purpose of demonstrating proper form or technique (these exercises could be sport specific).

Question No. 2: Does the institutional discretion directed by the Administrative Committee apply to the summer?

Answer: Yes, for now. If circumstances change then this increased flexibility could be reviewed by the Administrative Committee or Division III Management

and President Councils. This flexibility does not change the preseason start dates for the 2020-21 fall sports.

Question No. 2a: Do the virtual interactions with student-athletes during the summer need to be voluntary?

Answer: Yes, all virtual interactions with student-athletes during the summer must be voluntary. As noted previously, the increased flexibility should be exercised for the purposes of fostering the well-being of the student-athlete and/or the connectivity between and among student-athletes and their respective institutions. Consequently, any interactions should be conducted in a manner that benefits the student-athlete and an institution cannot require a student-athlete to engage in any interactions.

A student-athlete that does not engage in those interactions should not incur any adverse consequences. Likewise, engaging in those interactions should not result in incentives or awards for attending. This flexibility should be administered in a manner beneficial to the student-athlete and the student-athlete should determine whether or not to engage in those interactions.

Question No. 3: May institutions provide equipment for student-athletes to use during the summer?

Answer: Yes. Bylaw 16.11.1.9 states that a student-athlete may use institutional athletics equipment during a summer vacation period.

Question No. 4: When may an institution begin practice for fall sports for the 2020-21 academic year?

Answer: The Division III Administrative Committee (June 10, 2020) approved lengthening the preseason to permit institutions to begin practice for all fall sports (including football) on August 10 or the first day of classes, whichever is earlier. This means that for the 2020-21 academic year, institutions will not need to utilize the fall preseason practice formula in Bylaw 17.02.12 or first practice date for football in Bylaw 17.10.2.1 to determine the first permissible practice date for fall sports.

This flexibility is permissive and does not require institutions to begin practice for fall sports any earlier than they normally would. Institutions are encouraged to make the best decisions for their department and the safety of their student-athletes.

Question No. 5: Is an institution still limited to one administrative day before the beginning of the preseason practice for the 2020-21 academic year?

Answer: No. In addition to approving August 10 or the first date of classes as the first permissible practice date for fall sports, the Division III Administrative Committee also approved that institutions shall have unlimited administrative days to conduct non-athletically related activities (i.e., those days in which the institution may provide housing and meals expenses to student-athletes prior to the start of practice) for 2020-21.

Question No. 6: Does the first permissible practice date flexibility for fall sports also apply to the sports of golf, rowing, and tennis?

Answer: Yes. Preseason practice for the fall period for golf, rowing and tennis may also begin August 10 or the first day of classes, whichever is earlier.

Question No. 7: Are fall sport student-athletes required to have a day off during the preseason?

Answer: For fall sports other than football, and for the sports of golf, rowing and tennis, a calendar day off from athletically related activity is not required for preseason practice that occurs before the first day of classes. Once classes begin, student-athletes are required to have one calendar day off from all athletically related activities per defined week (Bylaw 17.1.4.1).

For football, student-athletes still must have one calendar day off from physical athletically related activities after the week including the acclimatization period (Bylaw 17.10.2.3). Once classes begin, student-athletes are required to have one calendar day off from all athletically related activities per defined week (Bylaw 17.1.4.1).

Question No. 8: Has the length of the playing and practice season for fall sports changed as a result of the change to the first permissible practice date?

Answer: No. While the recent Division III Administrative Committee flexibility permits an earlier practice start date during the 2020 fall term, there has been no change to the length of the overall playing and practice season. Bylaw 17.1.1.3.1 states that fall sports are limited to a maximum of 18 weeks and Bylaw 17.1.1.3.4 states that golf, rowing and tennis are limited to a maximum of 19 weeks.

Question No. 9: Has the first permissible contest date for fall sports changed as a result of the change to the first permissible start date?

Answer: No. The legislated first permissible contest date or date of competition for the regular season remains unchanged.

Question No. 10: Have the maximum contest/dates of competition limitations for institutions and student-athletes been lowered for the 2020-21 academic year?

Answer: No. The current maximum contest/dates of competition limitations for both institutions and student-athletes remain unchanged.

Question No. 11: Can a coach engage in athletically related activity with their student-athlete if the institution does not sponsor competition for fall sports in 2020?

Answer: Yes, provided that the athletically related activity is within the declared playing season. (Bylaw 17.1.1).

Question No. 12: If a student-athlete engages in athletically related activity within the declared playing season in which no outside competition will be conducted, will the student-athlete be charged with a season of participation?

Answer: No. A student-athlete is only charged with a season of participation when the student-athlete participates (practices or competes) during or after the first contest in the traditional segment. If the student-athlete's engagement in athletically related activity does not include outside competition, the student-athlete may practice without being charged with a season of participation.

CHAMPIONSHIPS

Question: How does the cancellation of the spring sport season impact a conference's automatic qualifiers status if they were in a grace period or waiting period?

Answer: For purposes of automatic qualification status, the spring sport season will be addressed as follows:

Waiting Period: The 2020 spring season will be counted toward a conference's two-year waiting period so long as the conference can demonstrate it would have had seven institutions that would have satisfied automatic-qualification requirements, including meeting sport-sponsorship minimums, and but for COVID-19 would have competed.

Grace period: The 2020 spring season will be counted as a grace period year, so long as a conference can demonstrate it would have met the criteria for a grace period year, including at least four core institutions meeting the sports sponsorship minimums and but for COVID-19 would have competed. An institution or conference may submit a waiver requesting an extension of the grace period to the Division III Championships Committee. (Note that the Championships Committee will review waiver requests on a case-by-case basis and determine if mitigation presented warrants an approval.)

RESOURCES

For more information related to the COVID-19 pandemic, visit the following resources on the [NCAA's COVID-19 webpage](#):

1. Resources on the resocialization of collegiate sport: [Core Principles of Resocialization of Collegiate Sport](#), [Action Plan Considerations](#) and [FAQ](#).
2. Resources on actions taken on Division III regulations and policies: [Division III Administrative Committee Actions since March 13](#) and [Approved Blanket Waivers for NCAA Bylaws impacted by COVID-19](#).