

NCAA DIVISION II STRATEGIC PLAN

January 2020 Update/Scorecard

Division II in April 2015 formally adopted a six-year strategic plan that builds upon the division's unique attributes and a position of fiscal strength to guide future decisions. The plan supports Division II's balanced and inclusive approach that affords student-athletes the opportunity to explore their varied academic and social interests, to grow as productive citizens and to contribute to their communities.



The Division II Planning and Finance Committee recently oversaw a midterm assessment of the plan based on results from the 2018 Division II Membership Census to ensure that what the division committed to in 2015 remains on course. The midterm assessment reaffirmed the commitment to the plan's mission and vision and to the values that drive them.

Now, of course, the charge is to continue implementing to plan to its fullest extent, and many initiatives already are underway to accomplish that overarching goal. This document summarizes achievements to date and outlines the future direction and next steps for each of the plan's Strategic Positioning Outcome Areas.

Planning Timeline

The Division II Census occurs every five years (2013 and 2018). The current media agreement with CBS/Turner is through 2024, with the new media agreement extending from 2025 to 2032. Additionally, the NCAA has created a five-year strategic plan through 2024. Accordingly, the Planning and Finance Committee adopted the following timeline for the strategic planning process:

- ▶ January 2020 through August 2020 – The Planning and Finance Committee reviews the current strategic plan to determine whether to recommend extending it through 2021-24.
- ▶ January 2021 to August 2021 – Facilitate strategic planning discussions for the new plan and gather feedback from committees and associations.
- ▶ Summer to Fall 2021 – From feedback and discussions, create questions for the 2022 Division II Census.
- ▶ January 2022 – Launch the new census with the membership.
- ▶ April 2022 – Management and Presidents Councils review census results.
- ▶ May 2022 to April 2023 – Use census results to facilitate changes to the strategic plan.
- ▶ July/August 2023 – Management and Presidents Councils approve the plan.
- ▶ January 2024 – Launch the new strategic plan at the NCAA Convention.



STRATEGIC POSITIONING AREA NO. 1 *ACADEMICS AND LIFE SKILLS*

Accomplishments from the Midterm Assessment:

- ✓ Adopted Path to Graduation legislation in 2015 and created an online toolkit to educate/assist with implementation.
- ✓ Established a SAAC network and accompanying newsletter to better inform student-athletes about Division II initiatives and issues.
- ✓ Created a best practices document for FARs to address student-athlete mental health and well-being.
- ✓ Added funding for the Degree-Completion Award Program.
- ✓ Provided institutions with access to the Helper Helper app to monitor community engagement.
- ✓ Established SAAC Super Region Conventions for student-athletes to strengthen their voice in governance.

GOALS

- Degree Completion.
- Leadership Skills.
- Healthy/Productive Lifestyles.
- Community Engagement.

SPO 1 Initiatives in Progress

Academic Advising. The division has allocated \$150,000 in annual funds to directly support athletics academic advising positions on campuses to distribute through the Division II Strategic Alliance Matching Grant Program starting in the 2019-20 academic year. Continuing-education opportunities also will be increased through expanded Division II University modules and updated online resources.

Athletics Aid to Nonqualifiers. The Division II Academic Requirements Committee is reviewing the current restrictions on providing athletics aid to nonqualifiers. Over the last six years, only 3 percent of initial eligibility waivers filed by the Division II membership have been outright denied; meaning 97 percent of waivers granted, at a minimum, access to athletics aid. The ARC will discuss whether this legislative restriction remains appropriate, or if institutions should be provided the discretion to determine at the local level which first-year student-athletes should be given athletics aid.

Health and Safety. The division will collaborate with the Sport Science Institute on the following:

- Administer the first health and safety survey that focuses on the organizational and administrative aspects of athletics health care delivery. Results will be incorporated into the Institutional Performance Program and will allow schools to make comparisons with institutional peer groups.
- Continue to implement a communication plan to increase the number of institutions that voluntarily participate in the NCAA Injury Surveillance Program to build data that help inform injury prevention policies and practices.

- Partner with the Gordie Center for Substance Abuse to track action plans for the 38 institutions that attended the third Division II-specific APPLE Training Institute in March 2019. The next Division-II specific APPLE Training Institute will be held in fall 2020.

Research. The 2019 GOALS study will reflect the athletics, academic, social and wellness-related experiences of student-athletes across all sports and help the division shape policy and devote resources to enhance those experiences in the future. Data on time demands will provide the second assessment of the “Life in the Balance” playing and practice season legislation the Division II membership adopted in 2010-11. New items in the quadrennial study include questions about online courses, recruitment and reasons for choosing a particular college, injuries, and nutrition.

SAAC Initiatives.

- The Division II SAAC will host its third Super Region Convention April 17- 19, 2020, in Los Angeles for institutions in the South Central and West regions.
- The SAAC is developing new initiatives that are part of an overarching goal called the “Total Package Student-Athlete,” as reflected below:
 - TOTAL – *Mental health*. Continue to break the stigma.
 - PACKAGE – *Diversity and inclusion*. Support diversity in all of its forms and promote inclusion.
 - STUDENT – *Professional development*. Help prepare student-athletes for life after college sports.
 - ATHLETE – *Love2Play*. Encourage young athletes to play multiple sports and to have fun while they play.



STRATEGIC POSITIONING AREA NO. 2 ATHLETICS OPERATIONS AND COMPLIANCE

Accomplishments from the Midterm Assessment:

- ✓ Launched the Division II University online education program in May 2018 to transform the way members learn about Division II governance, legislation and compliance, and student-athlete health and safety initiatives.
- ✓ Expanded the Coaches Connection program to include baseball, cross country, track and field, softball, wrestling, swimming and diving, golf and lacrosse (this brings the program representation to 21 of the 24 championship sports in Division II; lacking only men’s and women’s basketball, field hockey and women’s rowing).

GOALS

- Help Create Engaged and Functioning Athletics Operations.
- Help Create Engaged and Functioning Compliance Operations.

- ✓ Adopted legislation in 2017 that streamlines Bylaw 15 (financial aid).
- ✓ Adopted legislation in 2017 that defines academic misconduct and resulting penalties.
- ✓ Adopted legislation in 2017 to clarify the nonchampionship segment in several sports.
- ✓ Adopted legislation in 2016 requiring strength and conditioning certification.
- ✓ Launched the Culture of Compliance initiative to emphasize and educate the shared responsibility for compliance among all Division II stakeholders.
- ✓ Conducted annual identity workshops for coaches.
- ✓ Introduced new online education modules through the National Association of Athletics Compliance.
- ✓ Added professional development sessions in collaboration with the Division II Athletics Directors Association (ADA)
- ✓ Introduced a more effective orientation system for first-time Division II committee members.
- ✓ Created a promotional/instructional resource for institution/conference communications directors.

SPO 2 Initiatives in Progress

Division II University. The 2019-20 academic year marks the first time that coaches earned their annual certification to recruit off campus and participate in athletically related activities by successfully completing six educational modules in the Division II University online education system. In the coming year, Division II will:

- Create future educational modules for coaches, while expanding the system's reach by developing content for other Division II constituents such as chancellors and presidents, directors of athletics and compliance administrators.
- Join Divisions I and III in exploring the possibility of expanding the scope of Division II University through a broader Association-wide pilot program for coaches credentialing.

Coaches Connection. The Coaches Connection program, which uses former coaches to strengthen communication between the coaching constituency and the NCAA national office, expanded to include men's and women's basketball and field hockey. Additionally, a website will be created to further promote the program and provide more information-sharing resources to coaches in all sports.

Enforcement/Infractions Task Force. The Division II Management Council and the Division II Presidents Council appointed a task force to (1) review Division II enforcement and infractions case trends; (2) study changes adopted by Division I related to violation structure and the enforcement and infractions process; and (3) recommend legislative/policy changes that would enhance the enforcement and infractions process in Division II. The task force shall submit a final report to the Management Council and Presidents Council by their summer 2021 meetings.



GOALS

- Create Diverse and Inclusive Environments.
- Create a Culture in which Diversity and Inclusion are Recognized and Valued.

STRATEGIC POSITIONING AREA NO. 3 *DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION*

Accomplishments from the Midterm Assessment

- ✓ Restructured the Division II Coaching Enhancement Grant to better support member schools' needs in creating full-time assistant coaching positions in any of the 24 NCAA-sponsored sports.
- ✓ Created the Division II Ethnic Minorities and Women's Internship Grant to provide funding for full-time, entry-level administrative positions.
- ✓ Collaborated with the Division II ADA to create additional professional development opportunities for women and minority athletics directors.

SPO 3 Initiatives in Progress

Inclusion Forum. The division will fund attendance of implementation teams from approximately 40 Division II institutions to the 2020 NCAA Inclusion Forum April 17-19 in Denver to develop institution-specific action plans that enhance diversity and inclusion on campus.

Senior Woman Administrators. Develop and execute action steps to optimize the role of the senior woman administrator.

African American Male Graduation Rates. The division's governance committees is closely examining factors affecting Federal Graduation Rates and Division II Academic Success Rates of African American male student-athletes, which have remained relatively constant during the past decade while rates for other student-athletes of color, including African American females, have risen.



GOALS

- Provide Outstanding Division II Game Day Experiences.
- Create Fair and Equitable Regional and National Competition.

STRATEGIC POSITIONING AREA NO. 4 *GAME DAY AND CHAMPIONSHIPS*

Accomplishments from the Midterm Assessment:

- ✓ Adopted legislation in 2016 that adds flexibility to automatic-qualification requirements.
- ✓ Required sport committees to be transparent in publishing data used for selections.
- ✓ Enhancements for web streaming national championships via NCAA.com.
- ✓ Expanded the Coaches Connection program to include baseball, cross country, track and field, softball, wrestling, swimming and diving, golf and lacrosse (21 of the division's 24 national championship sports now have a connector).
- ✓ Began providing transportation for community members to the championship venue.

SPO 4 Initiatives in Progress

Joint Men's Basketball Championships. The NCAA will celebrate the 2019-20 men's basketball season by staging the Divisions II and III national championship games April 5 in Atlanta, in conjunction with the Men's Final Four.

Festival Working Group. Enhancements from the group were adopted for implementation starting in 2019-20.

Championships Bid Process. The process for soliciting 2022-26 championship sites started in August 2019 and will conclude in February 2020. Sites will be announced in October 2020.

Football Bracketing. The Division II Football Committee is exploring bracketing options to decrease travel costs without jeopardizing the student-athlete experience. The 2019 championship will pilot an alternate bracketing model.

Triennial Budget Process. Division II sport committees will recommend budget items to the Championships Committee by September 2020 for implementation in September 2021.

Game Day the DII Way. The Division II Management Council's game day initiative will incorporate more of the division's values into the way athletics events are conducted.



GOALS

- Foster Fiscal Responsibility at the Campus, Conference and National Levels.
- Enhance the Public's Knowledge and Appreciation of Division II.
- Continue Developing Member Institutions and Conference that Support the Strategic Position and Philosophy of Division II Intercollegiate Athletics.

STRATEGIC POSITIONING AREA NO. 5 MEMBERSHIP AND POSITIONING INITIATIVES

Accomplishments from the Midterm Assessment:

- ✓ Embraced a new budgeting philosophy that allows the division to benefit current members, provide exemplary championships experiences for student-athletes, encourage membership growth and still maintain a healthy reserve.
- ✓ Launched a "hybrid model" media strategy that combines the value and reach of traditional over-the-air cable and network programming with other digital platforms.
- ✓ Created an Institutional Performance Program (IPP) resource that increases transparency and usability of the data institutions are required to submit annually.
- ✓ Involved veterans and military groups in community engagement efforts.
- ✓ Developed a "Tools to Tell the DII Story" resource library on ncaa.org to help members promote the benefits of Division II to various audiences.
- ✓ Promoted the Make It Yours brand enhancement to internal stakeholders and external audiences.

Initiatives in Progress

Brand activation. Division II's Make It Yours brand supports the Life in the Balance philosophy by encouraging student-athletes to make the Division II experience their own through academics, athletics, community engagement and more.

Broadcast Exposure. The division will continue to promote Make It Yours and Life in the Balance through the current regular-season media agreement, now in its second year, in which the division partners with participating conferences and institutions to broadcast and/or stream select games. Additional games are streamed exclusively on the ESPN app.