

# Division II 2025 Membership Survey Executive Summary

Division II has conducted several versions of a membership-wide survey as a way of obtaining input on the programs and services being provided, and on what initiatives should steer the division's future direction. The 2013 and 2018 surveys not only helped inform the division's strategic plans, but they also reiterated core values within the membership and, accordingly, helped shape policy and legislation to support those values in key operational areas.

The 2025 survey was sent to all Division II member schools in January (current active members and those in the membership process; schools reclassifying to other divisions were not included).

The survey garnered 2,234 responses, which included a 76% response rate from athletics directors. Additionally, the survey included specific questions for athletics directors and athletic trainers to gather additional information on the culture of athletic training in Division II.

The survey was the final phase of information gathering to receive membership input as the division finalizes the 2026-32 operating plan.

Following are highlights and key takeaways from each topic area in the 2025 survey. A more complete summary of the survey is located at the [Division II Operating Plan page](#).







## DIVISION II PHILOSOPHY

- There was strong agreement across all institutional staffing groups that their school supports the educational mission of college athletics by fostering a balanced approach to academic pursuits, civic engagement and athletics competition.
- Top characteristics ranked by members included membership/conference stability, grants and scholarships and community engagement.

### Most Valuable Characteristics to Division II Members

	Pres./ Chanc. (N=106)	AD (N=230)	Ath. Trainer (N=179)	Coach (N=1,003)	FAR (N=96)	Other Ath. Admin. (N=480)	Conf. Staff (N=61)
Membership/ conference stability	76%	75%	67%	62%	66%	64%	83%
Grants and scholarships	56%	41%	55%	77%	53%	60%	25%
Community engagement	53%	42%	73%	59%	69%	56%	25%
Revenue distribution	52%	48%	30%	27%	28%	39%	58%
Conference Strategic Priorities Fund	39%	32%	41%	35%	33%	33%	65%
Partial-scholarship model	35%	45%	15%	28%	38%	32%	32%
Number of participation opportunities in NCAA national championships	32%	53%	24%	49%	21%	39%	63%
Regionalization philosophy for regular-season scheduling	32%	36%	28%	27%	22%	29%	26%
Strategic positioning platform (Life in the Balance; Make It Yours)	25%	29%	29%	19%	49%	29%	16%



Highest priorities for future budget allocations and uses of new revenue as shared by presidents and chancellors and athletics directors include championships enhancements and revenue distribution.

### Highest Priority for Future Allocations

	AD (N=230)	Pres./Chanc. (N=106)
Championships enhancements	81%	54%
Revenue distribution to schools	71%	79%
Championships per diem	71%	43%
Student-athlete programming	52%	49%
Revenue distribution to conferences	50%	65%
Branding/marketing	40%	55%
Grants for athletic training	41%	53%
Mental health/wellness initiatives	45%	50%
Grants for athletic communications	23%	28%
Officiating initiatives	20%	24%

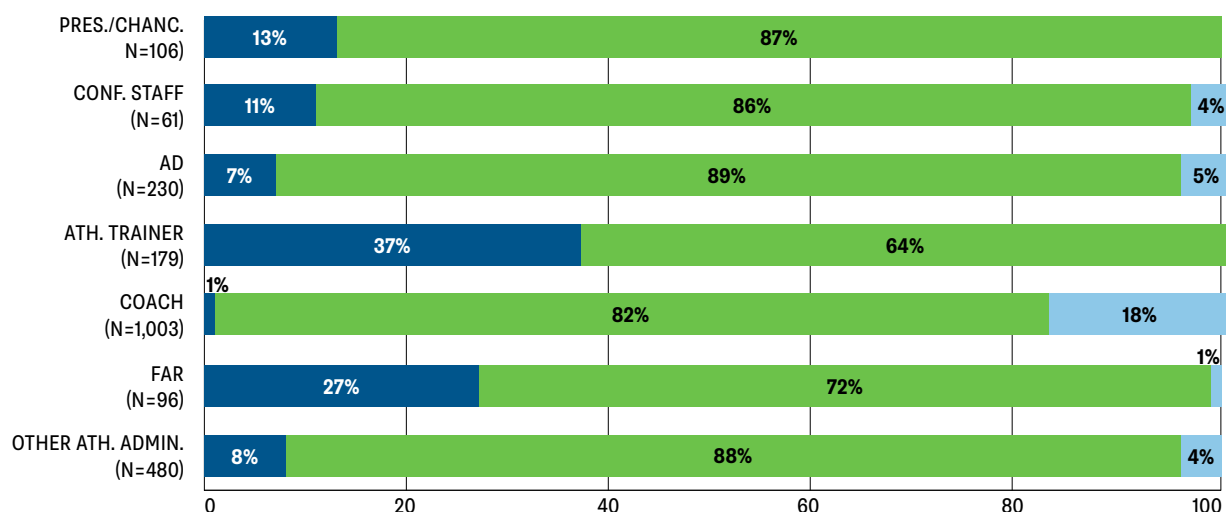
**Note:** Presidents/Chancellors and AD responses only.



## ATHLETICS OPERATIONS

- 76% of athletics directors indicate that they report directly to the president/chancellor (up from 65% in 2018), and 71% of athletics directors indicate that they are a member of the president's/chancellor's senior management team (up from 52% in 2018).
- Some respondents are concerned about the status of Division II within the NCAA. A much larger proportion are worried about the current status of intercollegiate athletics overall. Both sets of percentages indicating concern are up from the 2018 survey.
- Most respondents across categories believe campus student-athlete advisory committees are organized, productive leadership groups that can influence change.
- Among all response groups, student-athlete participation in athletically related activities (e.g., practice, competition) each week, in general, was considered "just right." These responses will be compared in the fall with student-athlete responses collected in the 2025 GOALS survey.

### In general, student-athlete participation in athletically related activities (e.g., practice, competition) each week is:



**Note:** Some categories do not total 100% due to rounding.

Too Much    Just Right    Too Little

## ATHLETICS HEALTH CARE ON CAMPUS

- Athletic training and mental health/wellness were rated the highest among the categories that would benefit from grants and funding from the NCAA.
- There is disagreement between athletic trainers and athletics directors on whether the person responsible for scheduling practices consults with the head athletic trainer about the scheduling of student-athlete practices and competitions.

### Consultation With Athletic Trainer on Key Issues

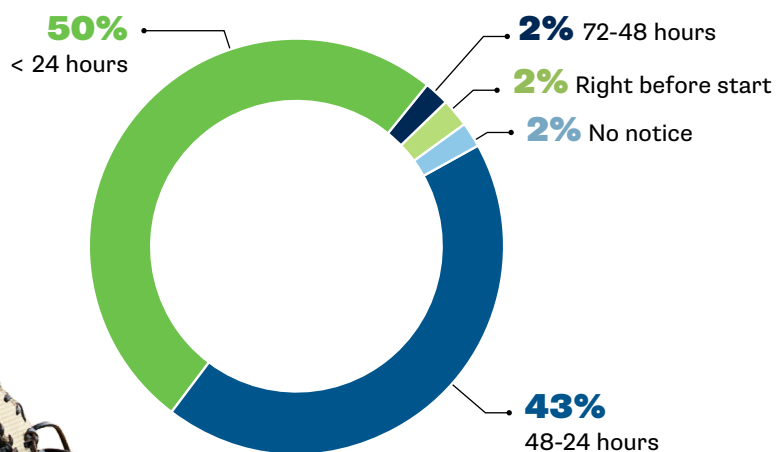
	Scheduling practices and competition		Legislative/policy changes considered by the NCAA/conference	
	Athletic Trainer	AD	Athletic Trainer	AD
Yes, always	1%	24%	9%	53%
Yes, frequently	8%	44%	28%	36%
Sometimes	28%	26%	36%	9%
Rarely	37%	6%	18%	1%
Never	25%	1%	10%	0%

**Note:** Some categories do not total 100% due to rounding.  
Athletic Trainer N=169; AD N=216

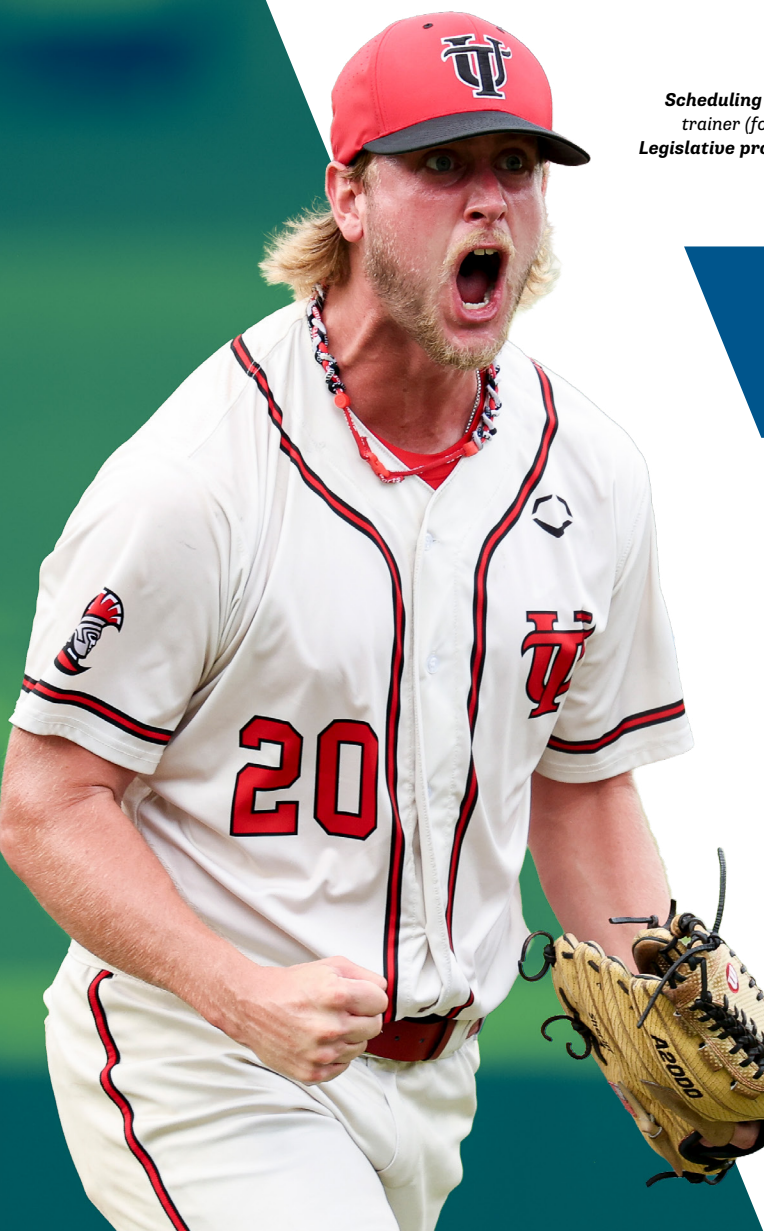
**Scheduling prompt:** Does the person responsible for scheduling practices consult with the head athletic trainer (for ATs, are you consulted) about the scheduling of student-athlete practices and competition?  
**Legislative prompt:** Do you consult with the head athletic trainer (for ATs, are you consulted) on legislative and/or policy changes considered by the NCAA and/or your conference?

**97% of athletic trainers indicate that they are given little notice (less than 48 hours) of scheduling changes for practice and competition for reasons other than inclement weather.**

**Athletic Trainer: How much notice are you given regarding changes to practice and competition schedules that are not due to inclement weather?**



**Note:** Some categories do not total 100% due to rounding.







## CHAMPIONSHIPS

- The top priorities for resource allocation were championships bracket changes to minimize first-round conference opponents, expansion of bracket/field size for championships, funding to ensure the No. 1 seed in the region has the opportunity to host, and per diem.

### Top Priorities for Future Championships Resource Allocation

	AD (N=230)	Coach (N=1,003)	FAR (N=96)	Ath. Trainer (N=179)	Other Ath. Admin. (N=480)	Conf. Staff (N=61)
Expansion of bracket/field size for championships	76%	72%	61%	43%	61%	75%
Bracket changes to minimize first-round conference opponents	75%	70%	66%	70%	70%	77%
Per diem	66%	45%	38%	56%	51%	52%
Funding to ensure No. 1 seed has opportunity to host	53%	51%	60%	62%	57%	54%
Transportation to the site	52%	48%	53%	62%	50%	52%
Reimbursement for ground transportation when traveling by air	39%	32%	43%	35%	38%	38%

Light orange indicates a decrease of 10 to 19 percentage points from 2018.  
Dark orange indicates a decrease of 20 percentage points or more from 2018.

Light green indicates an increase of 10 to 19 percentage points from 2018.  
Dark green indicates an increase of 20 percentage points or more from 2018.

**Note:** Not asked of presidents/chancellors. Percentages represent frequency of top five placement by respondents in the respective group. **Prompt:** Please rank the following priorities in order of importance in future championships resources.



Among all athletics department groups, there is little support for the current Division II regionalization model for national championships (e.g., teams selected and bracketed regionally).

### Opinion on Division II Regionalization Model (Percentage responding “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”)

	AD (N=208)	Coach (N=872)	FAR (N=83)	Ath. Trainer (N=163)	Other Ath. Admin. (N=424)	Conf. Staff (N=54)
The top seed in each region should continue to earn the right to host preliminary rounds.	85%	73%	69%	76%	80%	75%
The DII regionalization model causes my institution to schedule most of its regular-season contests with in-region opponents.	<b>74%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>62%</b>	63%	70%	<b>61%</b>
The regionalization philosophy should be considered satisfied at the time of selections.	57%	51%	53%	46%	53%	59%
I support the regionalization model for Division II national championships (e.g., teams selected and bracketed regionally).	<b>39%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>56%</b>	42%	40%	<b>38%</b>

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**Note:** Not asked of presidents/chancellors. Responses on a 6-point scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree) with a “Don’t know/not applicable” option.

- There is support, particularly from athletics directors (63%) and conference office staff (86%), to use a results-based metric as the only tool for selecting teams for championships.
- There is little support from athletics administrators and coaches that the student-athlete experience at the Division II championships festival is worth the financial investment by Division II. Further, there is little support that the student-athlete experience at the festival is worth the changes in scheduling (e.g., earlier start date, changes in date formula).
- The top priority for the championships bracketing review is unclear, given the feedback is mixed between avoiding first-round conference matchups and ensuring the top teams (e.g., top eight nationally ranked teams) do not play each other. However, there is strong support among all response groups for switching seed lines to avoid first-round conference matchups.

### GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE, LEGISLATION AND CONVENTION

- There is strong support, particularly among presidents/chancellors (91%) and athletics directors (94%) in the one-school, one-vote model for deciding legislative proposals.
- There is little support among all response groups for the division to consider moving away from its current process that includes considering legislation every year versus considering legislation every other year. Additionally, there is little support to move to a virtual format for the annual NCAA Convention.
- Across all groups, there is agreement that the current requirements of membership of at least eight schools to be considered an active Division II conference and sponsorship of at least 10 sports to be considered an active Division II member school are appropriate.

