

Division III Philosophy Statement

Colleges and universities in Division III place the highest priority on the overall quality of the educational experience and on the successful completion of all students' academic programs. They seek to establish and maintain an environment in which a student-athlete's athletics activities are conducted as an integral part of the student-athlete's educational experience, and an environment that values cultural diversity and gender equity among their student-athletes and athletics staff. To achieve this end, Division III institutions:

- a. Expect that institutional presidents and chancellors have the ultimate responsibility and final authority for the conduct of the intercollegiate athletics program at the institutional, conference and national governance levels;
- b. Place special importance on the impact of athletics on the participants rather than on the spectators and place greater emphasis on the internal constituency (e.g., students, alumni, institutional personnel) than on the general public and its entertainment needs;
- c. Shall not award financial aid to any student on the basis of athletics leadership, ability, participation or performance;
- d. Primarily focus on intercollegiate athletics as a four-year, undergraduate experience;
- e. Encourage the development of sportsmanship and positive societal attitudes in all constituents, including student-athletes, coaches, administrative personnel and spectators;
- f. Encourage participation by maximizing the number and variety of sport offerings for their students through broad-based athletics programs;
- g. Assure that the actions of coaches and administrators exhibit fairness, openness and honesty in their relationships with student-athletes;
- h. Assure that athletics participants are not treated differently from other members of the student body;
- i. Assure that student-athletes are supported in their efforts to meaningfully participate in nonathletic pursuits to enhance their overall educational experience;
- j. Assure that athletics programs support the institution's educational mission by financing, staffing and controlling the programs through the same general procedures as other departments of the institution. Further, the administration of an institution's athletics program (e.g., hiring, compensation, professional development, certification of coaches) should be integrated into the campus culture and educational mission;
- k. Assure that athletics recruitment complies with established institutional policies and procedures applicable to the admission process;
- l. Exercise institutional and/or conference autonomy in the establishment of initial and continuing eligibility standards for student-athletes;
- m. Assure that academic performance of student-athletes is, at a minimum, consistent with that of the general student body;
- n. Assure that admission policies for student-athletes comply with policies and procedures applicable to the general student body;
- o. Provide equitable athletics opportunities for student-athletes and give equal emphasis to men's and women's sports;
- p. Support ethnic and gender diversity for all constituents;
- q. Give primary emphasis to regional in-season competition and conference championships; and
- r. Support student-athletes in their efforts to reach high levels of athletics performance, which may include opportunities for participation in national championships, by providing all teams with adequate facilities, competent coaching and appropriate competitive opportunities.

The purpose of the NCAA is to assist its members in developing the basis for consistent, equitable competition while minimizing infringement on the freedom of individual institutions to determine their own special objectives and programs. The above statement articulates principles that represent a commitment to Division III membership and shall serve as a guide for the preparation of legislation by the division and for planning and implementation of programs by institutions and conferences.