

DRAFT

Division III Philosophy Statement

The purpose of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) is to assist its members in developing the basis for consistent, equitable competition while minimizing infringement on the freedom of individual members to determine their own unique objectives and programs. The philosophy 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.

Division III members affirm the purposes and fundamental policy of the NCAA, as set forth in Constitution Article I with emphasis on:

- Division III members shall establish and maintain an environment in which a student-athlete's activities are conducted with the appropriate primary emphasis on the student-athlete's academic experience.
- Division III intercollegiate athletics shall be conducted in a manner designed to protect, support and enhance the physical and mental health and safety of student-athletes.
- Division III members shall be committed to the creation of diverse and inclusive environments with respect for and sensitivity to the dignity of every person.
- Division III athletics shall be conducted in a manner free of gender bias.

NCAA Constitution Article 2 establishes the independent authority of Division III to organize itself and determine its own governing structure and membership.

- Institutional presidents and chancellors have the ultimate responsibility and final authority for the conduct of Division III intercollegiate athletics at the national, conference and institutional levels.
- Institutional and conference members determine policy at the national level through the Division III governance and legislative processes.
- Key constituents who play an integral role in the governance and operation of Division III at the national, conference and institutional levels include student-athletes, Presidents and Chancellors, Athletics Direct Reports, Directors of Athletics, Senior Woman Administrators, Faculty Athletics Representatives, Coaches, and Conference Commissioners.

Division III members abide by the following principles that help to define and distinguish the division and its policies and legislation.

Student-Athlete Collegiate Experience

- Seek to establish and maintain an environment in which a student-athlete's athletics activities are conducted as an integral part of their educational experience with a focus on intercollegiate athletics as primarily an undergraduate experience.
- Assure that student-athletes are supported in their efforts to meaningfully participate in nonathletic pursuits to enhance their overall educational experience.

DRAFT

Student-Athlete Athletics Experience

- Support student-athletes in their efforts to reach the highest levels of athletics performance, with a primary emphasis on regional, in-season competition, and may include opportunities for participation in conference and national championships.
- 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.
- Encourage the development of sportsmanship in all constituents, including student-athletes, coaches, administrative personnel and spectators.

Member Responsibility and Oversight

- Encourage participation by providing a broad-based athletics program.
- Provide equitable opportunities with support for gender and ethnic/racial diversity.
- The athletics program should support the institution's educational mission by financing, staffing and controlling the athletics program through the same general procedures as other departments of the institution.
- 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.
- Assure all teams are provided with adequate facilities, competent coaching and appropriate competitive opportunities.
- Assure student-athletes are considered members of the student-body in the areas of admissions, enrollment, student financial aid, academic and career support, and degree completion.
- Assure alignment with the initial and progress towards degree standards, and academic performance of other students at the institution.