



Summary of the Feedback from the 2025 Division III Issues Forum

At the 2025 Issues Forum, the Division III membership discussed two topics, name, image and likeness opportunities (NIL) and Administrative challenges the Division III membership is encountering. Additionally, the membership was asked how the division's governance structure can help address these issues and support the membership. Below is a summary of the main points from the feedback received from the participants.

Name, Image and Likeness Discussion.

1. When asked about the current NIL opportunities student-athletes being offered and how are you planning to manage those NIL opportunities, Issues Forum participants noted:
 - The types of opportunities: Deals with local businesses, merchandise endorsements, social media promotions, and brand ambassador roles.
 - Management of NIL: Institutions are using compliance forms, educational sessions, and partnerships with third-party platforms to manage and monitor NIL deals. Some institutions are struggling with the resources to provide adequate support, while some use platforms like OpenDorse, Mogul, and Influxer to manage these opportunities.
2. When asked about the issues the Division III membership is encountering with NIL, participants noted:
 - Challenges: Tax implications, scams, lack of education, compliance with state and NCAA regulations, and limited opportunities for DIII athletes. Participants also noted that student-athletes are hesitant to engage due to the complexity and potential risks.
 - Specific issues: Ignorance of the process by those participating in NIL deals, donors giving to collectives instead of athletics departments, and the need for guidance and education on NIL deals.
3. When asked about the role Division III institutions should have with their student-athletes' NIL, participants noted:
 - Institutional role: Institutions should provide education and guidance but avoid acting as agents. They should help student-athletes understand the rules and implications of NIL deals and refer them to legal counsel when necessary.
 - Support needed: Clear policies, educational resources, and frameworks to help student-athletes navigate NIL opportunities safely.

Reducing Administrative Burdens Discussion.

1. The participants noted the following administrative challenges they are encountering:
 - Staffing issues: Significant shortage of athletic trainers, sports information directors (SIDs) and other support staff. Retention and recruitment are major concerns due to low salaries and high workloads.
 - Budget constraints: Financial challenges, due to rising costs and declining enrollments, impacting the ability to hire and retain staff, maintain facilities, and support athletics programs.
 - Work-Life balance: Extended playing and practice seasons are straining staff and institutional resources, leading to burnout and high turnover rates.
 - NCAA Compliance: Staffing and resources needed to comply with NCAA legislation and the impact of other legislative requirements on institutions and conferences (e.g., compliance forms, transfers and transfer portal, sport sponsorship and automatic qualifier requirements).
2. Participants noted the following as non-financial changes the division could make that would help the membership deal with those challenges:
 - Suggested changes:
 - Improve education and training for student-athletes and staff on NIL opportunities.
 - Streamline administrative processes and reduce the burden of compliance.
 - Enhance communication and support for athletic trainers and SIDs.
 - Promote a better work-life balance for staff through policy changes and support systems.
 - Look for opportunities to help the membership reduce their costs (collective purchasing).
3. Participants identified the following challenges the division needs to address first and the changes that would be most helpful.
 - Top priorities:
 - Address the shortage of athletic trainers and SIDs.
 - Manage the extended playing and practice seasons.
 - Ensure financial stability and adequate support for athletic programs.