



DIVISION III

DISCOVER | DEVELOP | DEDICATE

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2026

Division III Issues Forum

Thursday, January 15, 2026



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Division III Analysis: Identifying Potential Tensions and Strategic Risks



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Agenda

- Background.
 - Division III recent reviews and actions.
- Analysis parameters.
- Discussion and feedback.
 - Division III – what makes the Division III student-athlete experience unique?
 - Identify perceived tension points.
- Next steps.



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Background - Reviews

Division III reviews (2024-present).

- Deloitte financial review to identify risks and opportunities.
- Lewis Rice review of Division III grants, programs and initiatives.
- Division III Philosophy Statement Working Group.



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Background - Actions

Deloitte review.

- Opportunities.
 - Championships livestreaming enhancements.
 - New VP of championships.
 - Mental health program.
- Risks.
 - Roadmaps to address loss of revenue.
 - Division III budget policies and procedures.
 - Presidents Council Futures Subcommittee.



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Background - Actions

Lewis Rice review.

- Developed consistency in promotion, selection and feedback of programs, grants and initiatives.
- Developed objectives and measurable goals.
- Connect program participation to future opportunities.
- Hired a new Division III coordinator to oversee programs and grants (Jan. 2025).



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Background - Actions

Philosophy Statement Working Group.

- Engaged the membership, sought feedback and proposed 2024 Convention legislation.
- 89% of the delegates voted to adopt the legislation.
- Philosophy Statement articulates the division's fundamental principles, reflects its unique values and positions the division for today's intercollegiate athletics landscape.



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Gravity Issues

The following issues are like gravity; they are **situational**, **affect everyone**, and **aren't things Division III can directly fix**.

- Fewer students are graduating high school.
- Fewer students are electing to attend colleges and universities.
- Reduced immigration to the US.
- Reduced government funding to institutions.
- Campus budget and fiscal constraints.
- Staff and coach recruiting and retention issues.



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Steps We Can Take As Division III

- 1 Discuss how to **organize around these problems.**
- 2 Identify **points of tension** that can be addressed by Division III.
- 3 Develop **solutions.**
- 4 Socialize with **membership.**
- 5 **Implement** ideas, concepts and new policies.

The presidents/chancellors at yesterday's Forum focused on **Step 1.**

Today's Issues Forum discussion will focus on **Step 2:** define points of tension that can be addressed by Division III.



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Roundtable Discussion

What makes the Division III student-athlete experience unique?



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Open Dialogue



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Roundtable Discussion: Identification of Possible Points of Tension.

Student-athlete experience. Areas to consider:

- Access to national championships.
- Eligibility.
- Sports sponsorship.
- Participation opportunities.
- Playing and practice seasons.
- Playing rules.
- Additional tension points.



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Open Dialogue



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Roundtable Discussion: Identification of Possible Points of Tension.

Member responsibility and oversight. Areas to consider:

- Appropriate campus investment in athletics.
- Health and safety.
- Legislative authority and process.
- Membership requirements.
- Prohibition of financial aid based on athletics.
- Additional tension points.



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Open Dialogue



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Next Steps.

- 1 Discuss how to **organize around these problems.**
- 2 Identify **points of tension** that can be address by Division III.
- 3 Develop **solutions.**
- 4 Socialize with **membership.**
- 5 **Implement** ideas, concepts and new policies.

Next steps will focus on **Step 3**: develop solutions to the identified points of tension.



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Thank You



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