

**Division:** III

**Legislative Cite:** 20.11.1

**Title:** Division III Philosophy Statement.

**Text:**

**20.11.1 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.

- (a) Division III members affirm the purposes and fundamental policy of the NCAA, as set forth in Constitution Article [1](#) with emphasis on:
  - (1) 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.
  - (2) 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.
  - (3) 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.
  - (4) Division III athletics shall be conducted in a manner free of gender bias.
- (b) NCAA Constitution Article [2](#) establishes the independent authority of Division III to organize itself and determine its own governing structure and membership.
  - (1) 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.
  - (2) Institutional and conference members determine policy at the national level through the Division III governance and legislative processes.
  - (3) Key institution and conference constituents who play an integral role in the governance and operation of Division III at the national, conference and institutional levels include, but are not limited to athletics direct reports, athletics diversity and inclusion designees, athletics health care administrators, coaches, conference commissioners, directors of athletics, faculty athletics representatives, presidents and chancellors, senior compliance administrators, senior woman administrators and student-athletes.
- (c) Division III members abide by the following principles that help to define and distinguish the division and its policies and legislation.
  - (1) Student-Athlete Collegiate Experience.
    - (i) Primarily focus on intercollegiate athletics as a four-year undergraduate experience.
    - (ii) 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.
    - (iii) Assure that student-athletes are supported in their efforts to meaningfully participate in nonathletic pursuits to enhance their overall educational experience.
  - (2) Student-Athlete Athletics Experience.

- (i) Support student-athletes in their efforts to reach the highest levels of athletics performance, with a primary emphasis on conference and regional competition, while providing access to national championships.
  - (ii) Prioritize the experience of the participants and the internal constituency (e.g., students, alumni, institutional personnel) rather than on the entertainment needs of spectators or the general public.
  - (iii) Develop and maintain an environment that promotes sportsmanship and a positive culture for student-athletes, coaches and administrative personnel, recognizing the role intercollegiate athletics can play in human development. Ensure spectators contribute to a positive sporting experience in support of all participants.
- (3) Member Responsibility and Oversight.
- (i) Encourage participation and provide equitable opportunities with support for gender and ethnic/racial diversity. Give equal emphasis to men's and women's sports.
  - (ii) 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.
  - (iii) Assure all teams are provided with appropriate facilities, competent coaching and competitive opportunities.
  - (iv) Assure student-athletes are treated similarly to the student-body in areas that include, but are not limited to, admissions, enrollment, financial aid, academic and career support, academic performance and degree completion.
  - (v) Assure that financial aid is not awarded to any student on the basis of athletics leadership, ability, participation or performance. *(Adopted: 1/16/24 effective 8/1/24)*

## Proposals

Proposal Number	Title
2024-1-2	DIVISION MEMBERSHIP -- DIVISION III MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS -- AMEND THE DIVISION III PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT - PRECLUDE ATHLETICALLY RELATED FINANCIAL AID
2024-1-1	DIVISION MEMBERSHIP -- DIVISION III MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS -- AMEND THE DIVISION III PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT - ADD FOCUS ON UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE
2024-1	DIVISION MEMBERSHIP -- DIVISION III MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS -- AMEND THE DIVISION III PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

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