



2026 Application for NCAA Division II Membership

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS AND MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

[APPLICATIONS MUST BE COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED THROUGH THE NCAA PROGRAM HUB NOT LATER THAN **February 1, 2026**]

Pursuant to NCAA Division II Bylaw 7.1.1 (general), membership in the NCAA is available to colleges, universities, athletics conferences or associations and other groups that are related to intercollegiate athletics that have acceptable academic standards (e.g., the institution is accredited by one of the six regional accrediting agencies) and that are located in the United States, Mexico and Canada, its territories or possessions. Such institutions or organizations must accept and observe the principles set forth in the constitution and bylaws of the NCAA. **An institution must also receive a bona fide invitation for membership from an active Division II conference before applying for Division II membership.**

In accordance with Bylaw 7.5.1.3 (administrative requirements for application), an institution applying for NCAA Division II membership shall complete an application, signed by the chancellor or president and be submitted to the NCAA national office not later than February 1, 2026. Applications submitted by February 1, 2026, are for those institutions that want to begin the NCAA Division II membership process in the 2026-27 academic year. Additionally, following submission of the online application, the application fee and a video of all athletics facilities must be submitted to the national office. The video must be three to five minutes in length with audio description of facilities only. Background music and interviews should not be included.

The video should be directed to:

Jeremy Christoffels

Assistant Director of NCAA Division II for Governance and Member Services

OVERNIGHT DELIVERY

1802 Alonzo Watford Sr. Drive
Indianapolis, Indiana 46202

Telephone: 317-917-6222

An application fee of \$33,000 shall accompany the application; this includes the expenses for the one-day evaluation visit that will occur in spring 2026. Additional information (e.g., final sports sponsorship and financial information, update on progress since submission of application) shall be received in the national office not later than June 1, 2026.

The NCAA Division II Membership Committee has the authority to accept or not accept an application to enter the Division II membership process.

If the committee accepts the application for the institution to enter the Division II membership process, the institution shall enter year one of the provisional period. The provisional period shall be a minimum of three years but may be longer based on the assessment of the committee.

If the committee does not accept an institution's application to enter the Division II membership process, a portion of the \$33,000 application fee shall be refunded as determined by the committee.

An additional fee of \$14,000 for the membership process and NCAA annual dues is required following the first two years of the Division II membership process. If an institution is required to repeat a year in the process, an additional \$14,000 shall be due every year thereafter until the institution: (a) Is accepted into active Division II status; (b) Withdraws from the Division II membership process; or (c) Has its membership terminated as a provisional member.

Institutions are required to complete and submit the application through the NCAA Program Hub. All documents required for the application must be uploaded in PDF format and be bookmarked. Please note the Membership Committee will review all documents submitted, including the institution's compliance manual, athletics department policies and procedures and student-athlete handbook to confirm and assess the development of policies and procedures for Division II membership. The Membership Committee is in part guided by its guiding principles as it relates to strategic membership growth.

THE 2026 APPLICATION WILL BE AVAILABLE BY OCTOBER 1 THROUGH THE NCAA PROGRAM HUB.

Please use the Program Hub Quick Reference Guide to create a profile to access the system.

NCAA Division II Membership Committee Minimum Requirements to be Considered for Division II Membership.

In order for an application to be considered by the Membership Committee for entrance into the Division II membership process, an institution must demonstrate that it meets the following minimum requirements. **Ultimately, the Membership Committee has the authority to accept or not accept an institution's application to enter the Division II membership process, even if the institution meets the minimum requirements at the time of application.** Class size will be determined by the committee annually. Every application pool is considered on its own merit. Recommendations for an institution's improvement provided by the committee post selection will not guarantee approval in the next cycle.

Accredited Four-Year Baccalaureate Degree(s) Granting Institution.

The institution shall demonstrate that it is accredited by one of the six regional accrediting agencies. Further, the institution shall demonstrate it has been offering four-year baccalaureate degree(s) for a minimum of one academic year prior to submitting an application to enter the Division II membership process. Institutions located in Canada or Mexico must have received accreditation from one of the six U.S. regional accrediting agencies or have applied to a U.S. regional accrediting agency and be in good standing with its country's national, regional or provincial accreditation agency prior to being considered for acceptance into the Division II membership process.

Good Membership Standing.

The institution shall demonstrate that it will be in good standing (e.g., not on probation or in restricted status) with the organization to which it currently belongs (e.g., NAIA, NCAA) by June 1, 2026, to be considered for acceptance to the Division II membership process.

Minimum Requirements for Good Standing with Accreditation Agency.

The institution shall demonstrate at the time of application and annually that it is in good standing with its regional accrediting agency (e.g., not on warning/notice, not on probation, does not have to show cause, was not continued in accreditation for good cause, no formal notice of concern).

History of a Varsity Athletics Program.

The institution shall demonstrate that it has been offering an athletics program at the varsity level for a minimum of one academic year prior to submitting an application to enter the Division II membership process.

Strategic Plan for the Intercollegiate Athletics Program.

The institution shall provide a clear, detailed strategic plan for its intercollegiate athletics program, including an outline of key goals and priorities, steps to achieve the goals and priorities, associated timeline and commitment of financial and personnel resources. The institution must demonstrate the documented approval of the strategic plan by the institution's governance structure and that implementation of the strategic plan will occur.

Financial Model for the Intercollegiate Athletics Program.

The institution shall demonstrate that it administers its intercollegiate athletics program with prudent management and fiscal practices to ensure financial stability, including, but not limited to, sufficient operating and travel budgets for the effective operation of a Division II department of athletics. Additionally, the institution shall demonstrate that it has appropriate institutional funding to sustain a Division II athletics department.

Commitment of Personnel and Current Staff.

The institution shall demonstrate that it has personnel to operate the intercollegiate athletics program at the Division II level, including, but not limited to:

1. A full-time director of athletics, whose primary responsibility is overseeing the administration of the department of athletics and who has no coaching responsibilities; and
2. A full-time administrator, whose primary responsibility is compliance and who has no coaching responsibilities.

Facilities.

The institution shall demonstrate that it has adequate facilities to operate a Division II intercollegiate athletics program. If the institution is upgrading and/or building new facilities, the institution shall include a detailed plan, including a timeline and a commitment of resources (e.g., finances) to upgrading and/or building the facilities. If the institution is renting facilities, the institution shall demonstrate that it has a long-term agreement in place for use in both practice and competition.

Sports Sponsorship.

The institution shall demonstrate that it is meeting the Division II minimum sports-sponsorship requirement as outlined in Bylaw 7.3.1.7 (sports sponsorship) at the time of application. Institutions must demonstrate that the sports were sponsored per the applicable legislation in the academic year immediately preceding the application date. Plans to sponsor additional sports to meet the legislated requirements in the academic year after the application deadline will not satisfy the sports-sponsorship requirement.

Athletically Related Financial Aid.

The institution shall demonstrate that it is meeting the Division II financial aid requirements as outlined in Bylaw 7.3.1.6.1 (minimum awards) at the time of application. If the institution is not meeting the requirements as outlined in Bylaw 7.3.1.6.1 at the time of application, the institution shall include a detailed plan, including a timeline and commitment of resources (e.g., finances) to demonstrate that it will be meeting the requirements of Bylaw 7.3.1.6.1 by the time the institution begins year two of the provisional period. The institution must include documented approval of the plan and the implementation of the plan by the institution's governance structure.

Conference Membership.

An institution must demonstrate at the time of application that it has received a bona fide invitation for membership from an active Division II conference before applying for Division II membership.

Demonstrated Commitment to the Community.

The institution shall demonstrate that it is committed to the NCAA Division II Community Engagement Initiative for developing student-athletes and communities by actively engaging in shared experiences. The institution shall demonstrate with specific examples, a commitment to engaging the community by the institution and department of athletics including coaches and student-athletes. The institution shall have a procedure for documenting community engagement activities.

Competitiveness of the Varsity Athletics Program.

The institution shall demonstrate a level of competitiveness by sport at the conference, regional and/or national level. The institution shall demonstrate that the varsity athletics program has a

demonstrated history of competitiveness as measured by the rankings in the conference's all-sports trophy or a national all-sports ranking over the three years immediately preceding the application date.

Academic Achievement of Student-Athletes.

The institution shall demonstrate a commitment to the academic success of its student-athletes, measured by the graduation rate of the student-athletes being equal to or greater than that of the general student-body.

Operational Staff.

The institution shall demonstrate it has adequate staffing to cover all responsibilities associated with operating a Division II athletics department to include but not limited to, coaches, athletics communication and athletic training. The staff member(s) may have other minimal duties within the department of athletics which do not detract from the primary designated athletics responsibility. An institution shall demonstrate that it has a senior woman administrator which is the highest-ranking female involved with the management of the institution's intercollegiate athletics program. Additionally, an institution shall demonstrate that it has a faculty athletics representative who is a member of the institution's faculty or an administrator who holds faculty rank and is designated by the institution's chancellor or president.

Demonstrated Commitment to Positive Game Environment.

The institution shall demonstrate a commitment to a positive game environment, including good sportsmanship by all coaches, fans and student-athletes.

Demonstrated Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion.

The institution shall demonstrate a commitment to diversity and inclusion through, but not limited to, designation of a diversity officer, maintaining a gender-equity plan, promoting diversity and inclusion through the development of a core philosophy or mission statement to promote an inclusive culture that fosters equitable participation for student-athletes and career opportunities for coaches and administrators from diverse backgrounds.

Application and Review Procedures.

The institution must fully complete the NCAA Division II Membership Application and the application must be submitted to the NCAA national office through the NCAA Program Hub not later than February 1, 2026, in order to be reviewed by the committee for consideration to enter the Division II membership process in the 2026-27 academic year. The application must be signed by the chancellor or president, director of athletics and the faculty athletics representative.

The Membership Committee, composed of 12 members, shall review and consider all applications received by the February 1 deadline. Please note, the committee will review all documents submitted, including the institution's compliance manual, athletics department policies and

procedures and student-athlete handbook to confirm and assess the development of policies and procedures for Division II membership.

Within five business days following the Membership Committee's July meeting, the NCAA national office will officially release those schools that have been recommended to the NCAA Division II Management Council for acceptance into the Division II membership process.

The committee shall forward to the Management Council those institutions it recommends be accepted to enter the Division II membership process. The Management Council shall review the recommendations during its July meeting.

Appeals of the Committee's Decisions.

All appeals of the committee's decision regarding an institution's acceptance to the Division II membership process shall be filed within 30-calendar days following notice of the committee's decision.

New information identified by the institution after the initial decision of the committee will necessitate additional review by the committee and may delay the process.

Appeals of the committee's decision shall be heard by the NCAA Division II Management Council Subcommittee. Decisions of the Management Council Subcommittee are final.

Policy and Procedure.

Good Standing for Membership.

Minimum Requirement. A provisional member of Division II shall demonstrate that it is in good standing with its regional accrediting agency. An institution is in good standing when the institution:

1. Is not on warning;
2. Is not on probation; and
3. Does not have a show-cause order.

Contacting Committee Members.

All communication regarding an application to enter the Division II membership process must be directed to NCAA staff or the chair of the Membership Committee. Institutions should not contact other members of the committee regarding the institution's application for entrance into the Division II membership process. Such contact may cause that committee member to recuse themselves from consideration of the application.

Mandatory Meeting Attendance.

Institutions accepted to enter the Division II membership process are required to send representatives of the institution to all mandatory meetings during the membership process. During the 2026-27 academic year, the provisional year-one meetings include but are not limited to:

1. Provisional Year-One Orientation including chancellors/presidents, director of athletics, senior woman administrators, faculty athletics representatives, compliance administrators, and any additional individual to whom athletics reports, fall 2026.
2. Visit to an active NCAA Division II member institution selected by the Membership Committee.
3. NCAA Convention provisional membership meeting and business session, January 2027.
4. NCAA Regional Rules Seminar conducted by the NCAA.

Absent a waiver from the Membership Committee, failure to attend mandatory meetings during the membership process may prevent an institution from progressing in the membership process. Please review Bylaw 7.5.1.5.3.1 (assessment program) for a full list of requirements institutions must satisfy during the provisional period.