



DIVISION II

**MAKE IT YOURS**<sup>®</sup>

CONVENTION

2026

# **NCAA Study of Growth, Opportunities, Aspirations and Learning of Students in College (GOALS)**

Division II Findings

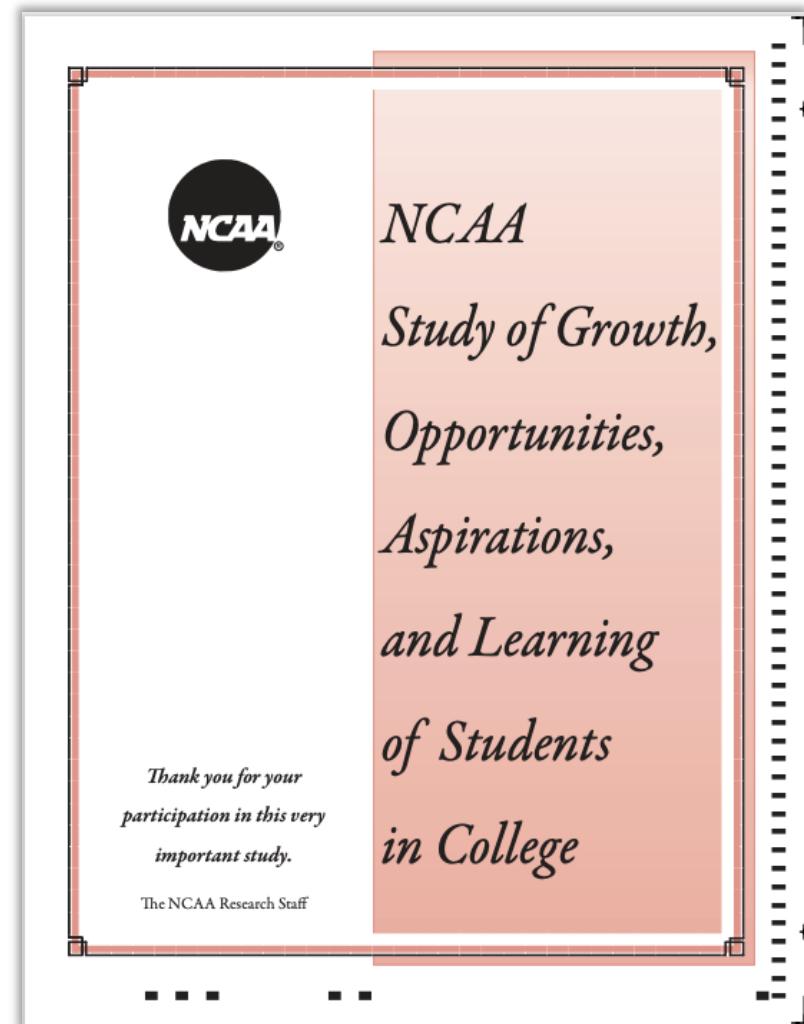


**CONVENTION**

**2026**

# 2025 GOALS Study

- Fifth iteration of this study (2006, 2010, 2015, 2019). Some survey items allow us to examine trends, others are new.
- FARs at all active member schools were asked to survey (via paper or online administration) one to three pre-specified teams on campus. Selected teams were determined by a stratified random sampling procedure.
- Survey was in the field from December 2024 through June 2025.
- 20,887 current student-athletes participated in the study from 493 schools. (**6,151 Division II Student-Athletes**)
- Final data was weighted based on 2024-25 NCAA participation rates to ensure the representativeness of findings.



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# NCAA GOALS Study Topics



**Athletics experiences**

**Academic experiences**

**Social and team experiences**

**Recruitment process**

**Time commitments**

**On-campus support**

**Finances**



**RESEARCH**

**While schedules remain full,  
student-athletes have shifted the  
ways they spend their time.**



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# Student-Athlete Time Commitments

	 Athletic Activities (hours / week)	 Academic Activities (hours / week)	 Socializing or Relaxing (hours / week)
Division I	34	33.5	15.5
Division II	32	33.5	17.5
Division III	29	36.5	17.5

**6.8 hours of sleep nightly**



Note: Self-reported survey data. Median weekly hours shown for athletic, academic and socializing/relaxing activities in-season. Average (mean) hours per night shown for sleep time. Source: NCAA GOALS Study (2025).



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# Student-Athlete Time Commitments

	 Athletic Activities (hours / week)	 Academic Activities (hours / week)	 Socializing or Relaxing (hours / week)
Division I	34 <span>(+1)</span>	33.5 <span>(-2)</span>	15.5 <span>(+2)</span>
Division II	32 <span>(+1)</span>	33.5 <span>(-3.5)</span>	17.5 <span>(+2)</span>
Division III	29 <span>(+1)</span>	36.5 <span>(-3.5)</span>	17.5 <span>(+2)</span>

**6.8 hours of sleep nightly**



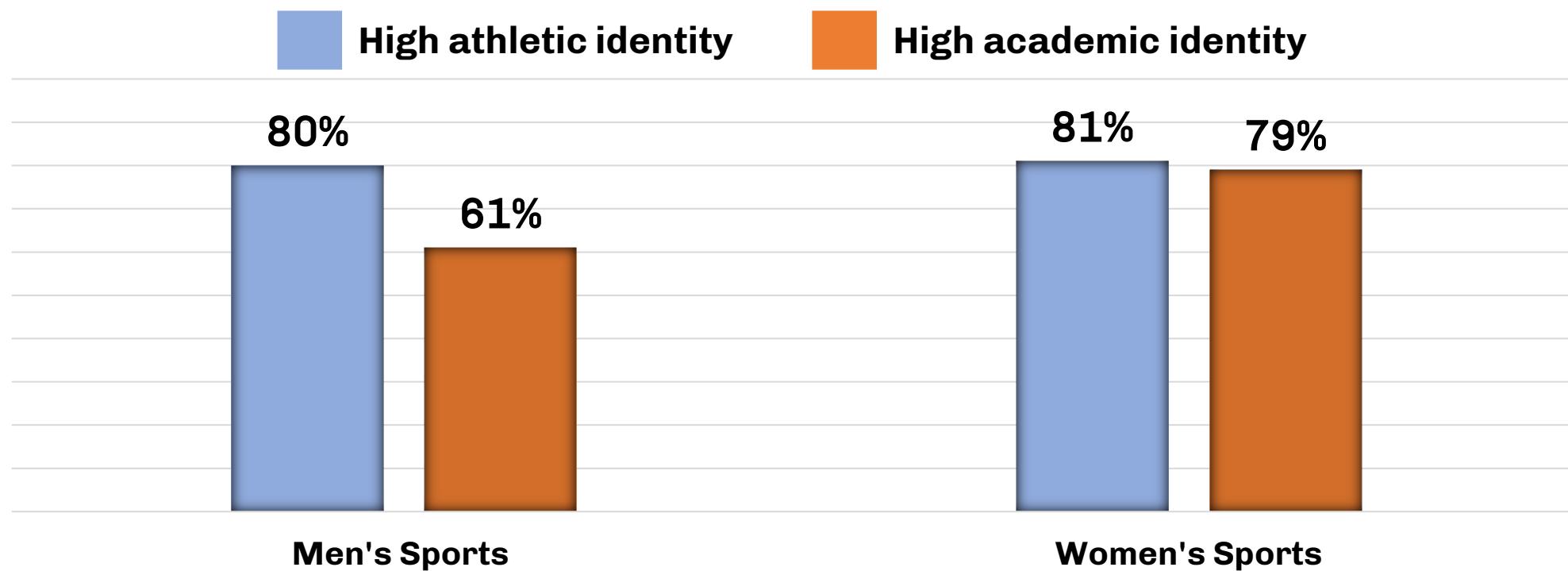
*+/- change in reported time from the 2019 Study*

Note: Self-reported survey data. Median weekly hours shown for athletic, academic and socializing/relaxing activities in-season. Average (mean) hours per night shown for sleep time. Source: NCAA GOALS Study (2025).



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# Athletic and Academic Identity (Division II)



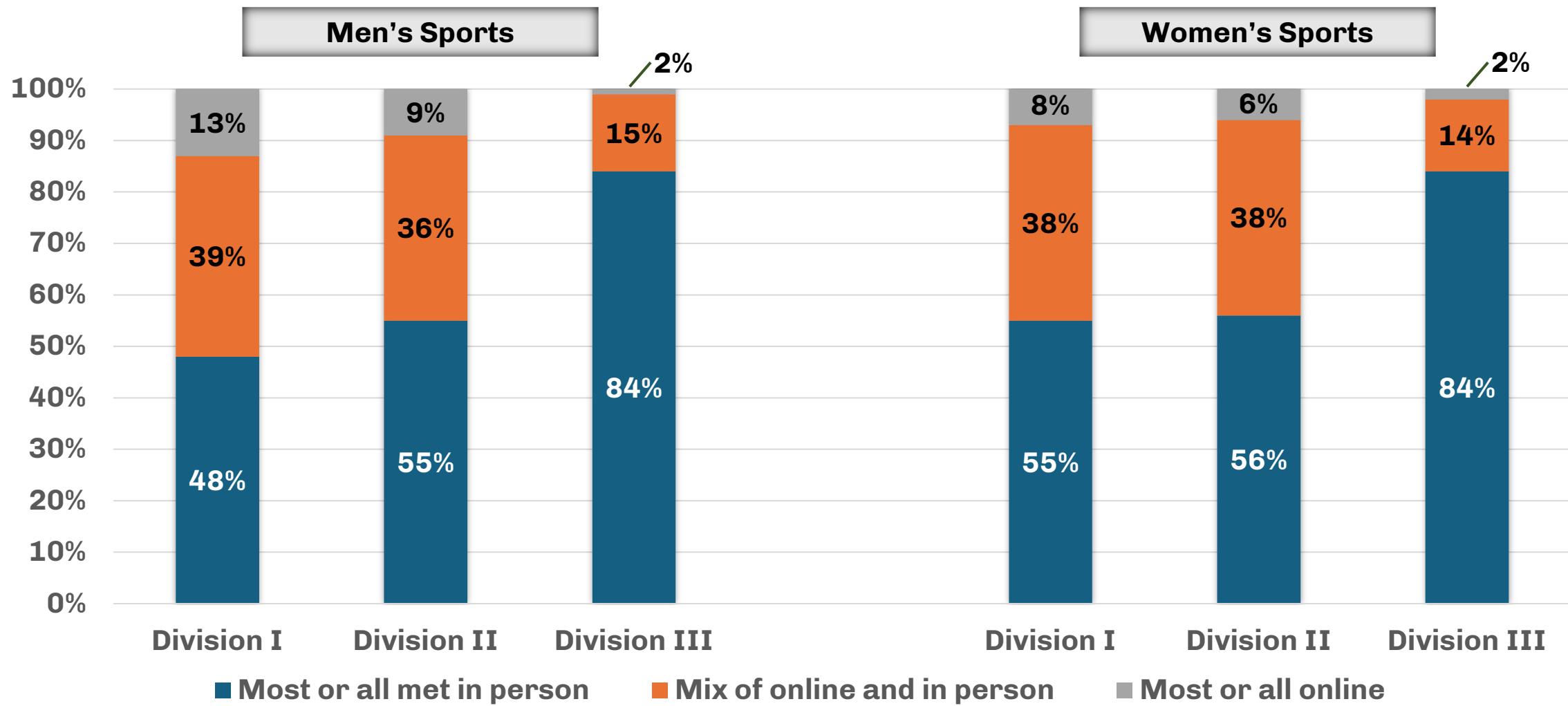
- ▶ In Division II, 54% of men's sports SAs and 67% of women's sports SAs had both high athletic and high academic identity.
- ▶ Men's sports SAs spend similar or slightly more amounts of time on athletics whereas women's sports SAs have consistently reported spending several more hours per week on academic pursuits than men.

Note: High athletic identity and high academic identity are both a mean of 5.0 or higher on 4 items with a 6-point scale (top two points are agree and strongly agree). Source: NCAA GOALS Study (2025).

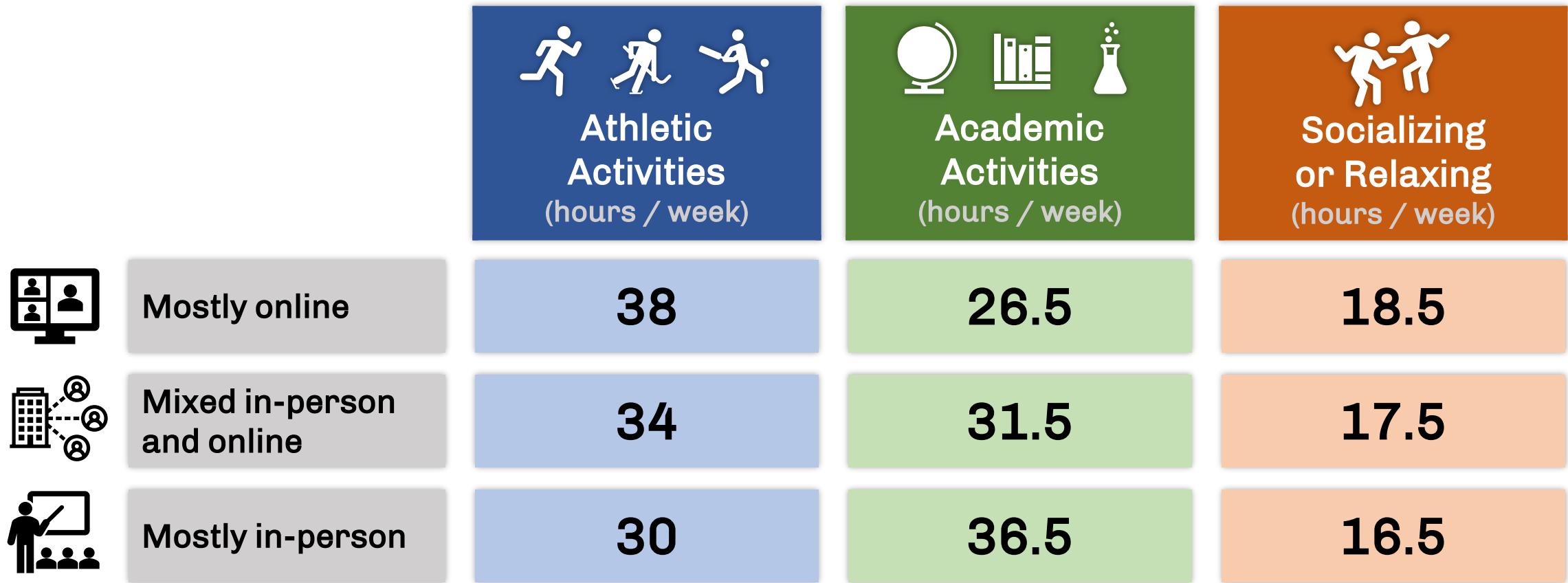


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# How would you describe your classes this academic year?



# Student-Athlete Time Commitments by Course Taking Patterns



- *Student-athletes taking mostly online classes reported the lowest weekly time on academics and the highest weekly time on athletics and socialization/relaxation. This trend is consistent across divisions.*

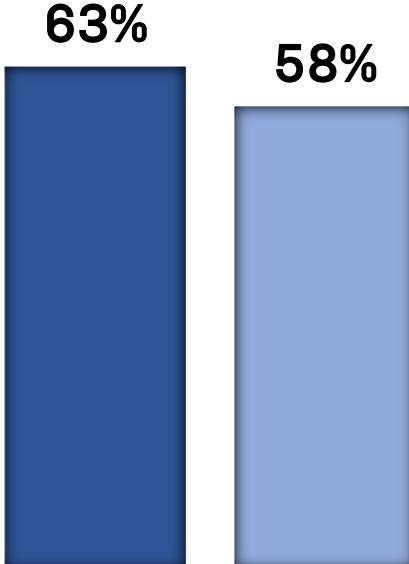
Note: Self-reported survey data. Median weekly hours shown for athletic, academic and socializing/relaxing activities in-season. Source: NCAA GOALS Study (2025).



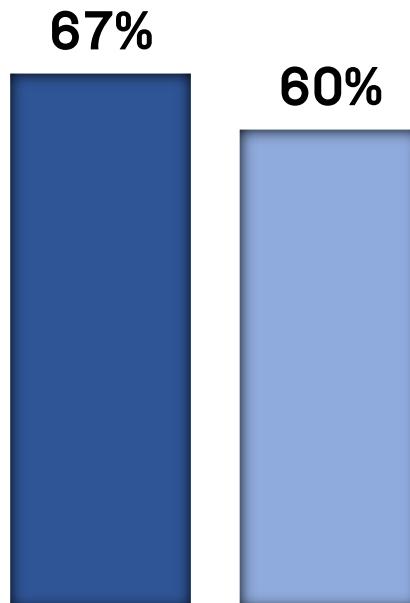
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**“I am able to find an appropriate balance between academics, athletics and other aspects of college life”**  
(Percentage of Participants Who Endorsed “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”)

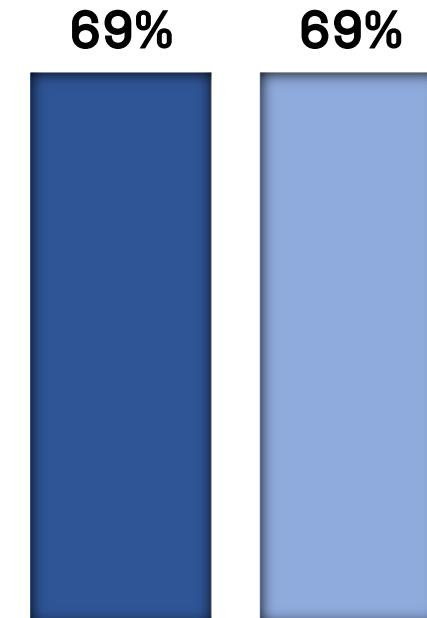
Division I



Division II



Division III

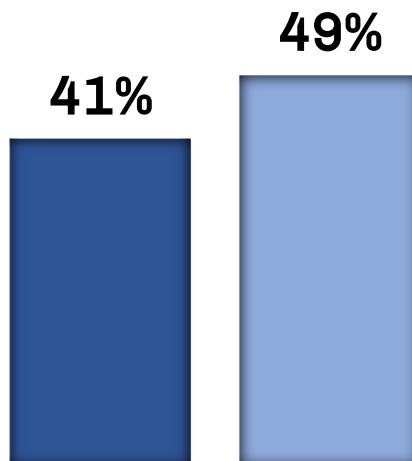


■ Men's Sports   ■ Women's Sports

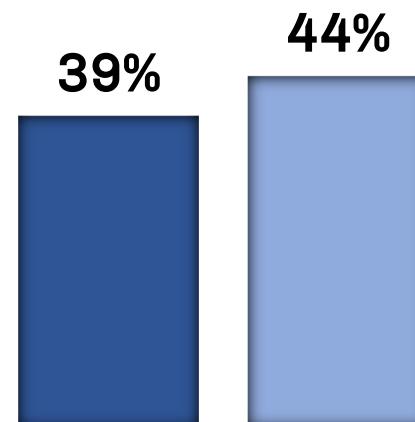
# **“I would like to be more involved on campus outside of athletics”**

**(Percentage of Participants Who Endorsed “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”)**

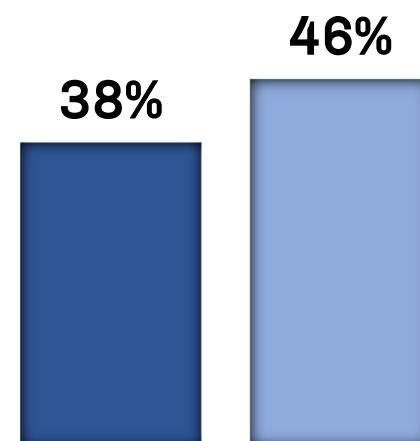
**Division I**



**Division II**



**Division III**



■ Men's Sports   ■ Women's Sports

Note: Top 2 points on a 6-point scale. Source: NCAA GOALS Study (2025).



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## Division II student-athletes report they want more time for...

	Men's Sports	Women's Sports
Sleeping	62%	76%
Visiting home / family	63%	73%
Relaxing alone	57%	76%
Socializing	57%	72%
Extracurricular activities	45%	58%
Academics	44%	55%
Working at a job or NIL	43%	41%
Athletics	50%	30%

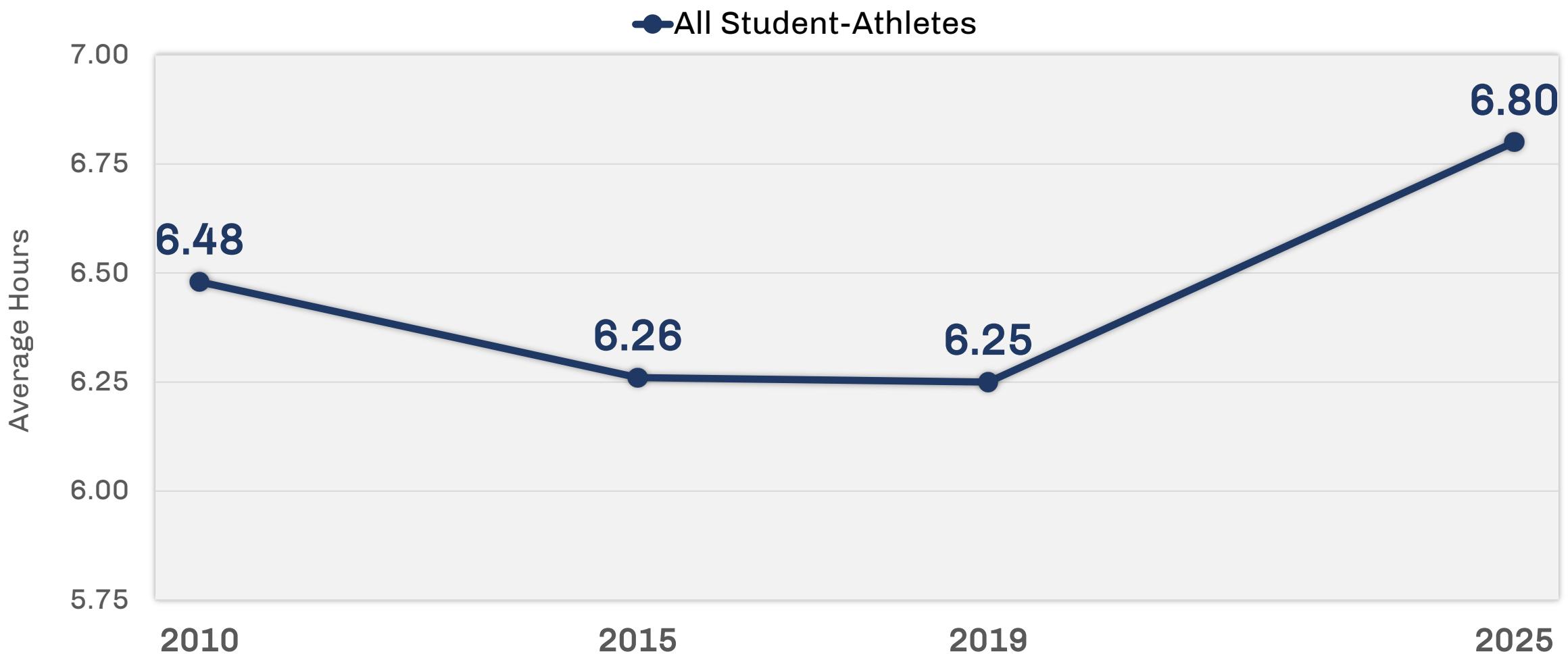
Note: Table sorted by overall DII endorsement percentages. Source: NCAA GOALS Study (2025).

**Good news! Student-athletes are getting more sleep.**



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# Trends in Average Weekday Hours of Sleep In-Season, 2010-2025



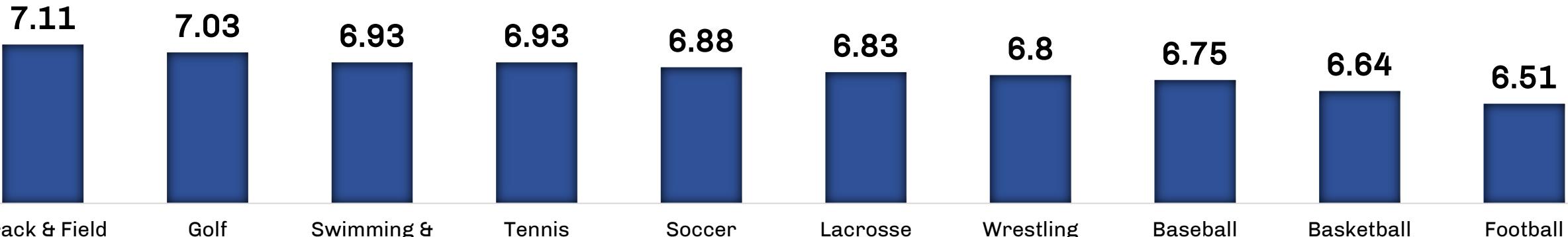
Note: Self-reported survey data. Sources: NCAA GOALS Studies (2010, 2015, 2019, 2025).



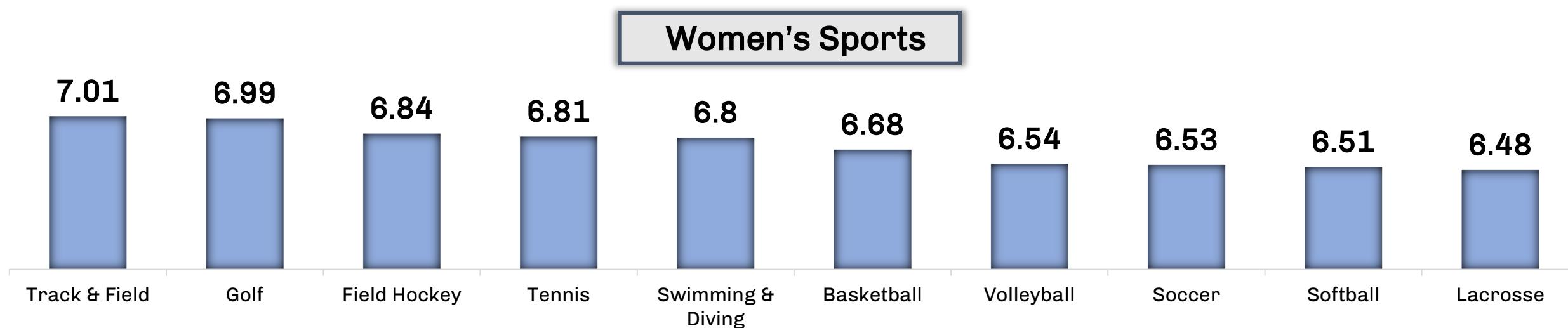
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## Division II – Average Weekday Hours of Sleep In-Season

### Men's Sports



### Women's Sports



Note: Self-reported survey data. Source: NCAA GOALS Study (2025).



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## Division II – Change in Average Weekday Hours of Sleep In-Season, 2019 to 2025

Men's Sports	+/- Minutes
Soccer	+47
Football	+46
Swimming and Diving	+46
Track and Field	+39
Lacrosse	+38
Wrestling	+35
Baseball	+27
Basketball	+22
Golf	+17
Tennis	+14

Women's Sports	+/- Minutes
Track and Field	+41
Basketball	+37
Field Hockey	+37
Golf	+34
Softball	+29
Volleyball	+26
Swimming and Diving	+20
Soccer	+18
Lacrosse	+16
Tennis	+14

**Community service engagement  
remains at high levels, but  
frequency has dipped from prior  
years.**

# Community Service Engagement

		A few hours <i>PER MONTH</i> or more		A few hours <i>PER YEAR</i> or more	
		2019	2025	2019	2025
Division I	Men's Sports	48%	43%	87%	85%
	Women's Sports	49%	39%	90%	87%
Division II	Men's Sports	50%	46%	88%	85%
	Women's Sports	57%	42%	93%	87%
Division III	Men's Sports	46%	41%	85%	83%
	Women's Sports	49%	37%	88%	84%

Yellow indicates a decrease of 5 percentage points or more from 2019.

## Highest monthly engagement:

- By demographic subgroup: men's sports athletes identifying as LGBTQ+ (52%) or Black (49%).
- By sport: women's gymnastics (62%), DII men's basketball (55%), DII men's soccer (53%), DIII men's track and field (53%).

Note: Participants were asked, "On average over the past year, how much time have you spent taking part in service projects or volunteer activities of any type?" Sources: NCAA GOALS Studies (2019, 2025).



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# Required by Athletics to Engage in Community Service

		2019	2025
Division I	Men's Sports	60%	59%
	Women's Sports	65%	60%
Division II	Men's Sports	68%	62%
	Women's Sports	75%	66%
Division III	Men's Sports	51%	49%
	Women's Sports	51%	45%

Yellow indicates a decrease of 5 percentage points or more from 2019.

- ▶ Highest coach requirement by sport (>80%): DI/DII women's basketball, DII women's lacrosse, DI field hockey, DI women's volleyball.
- ▶ Lowest coach requirement by sport (<33%): women's rowing, DIII women's tennis, DIII softball

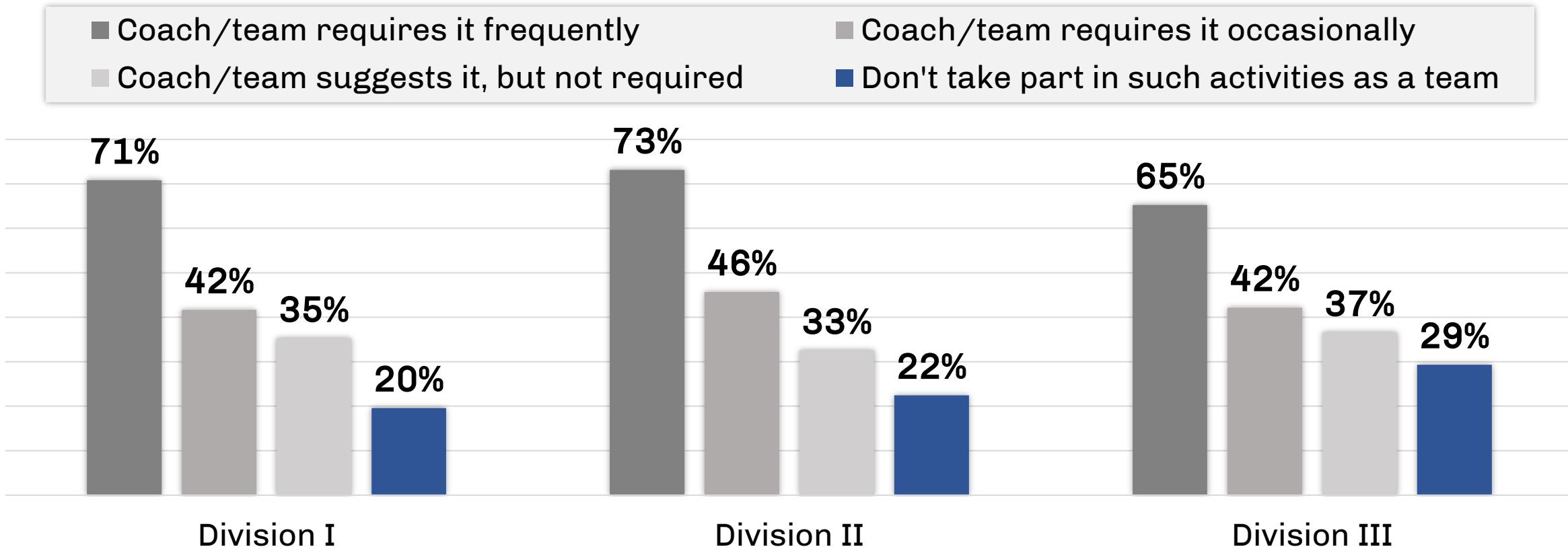
Note: Participants were asked, "Are you required to take part in service projects or volunteer activities as part of your athletics participation?" Table includes participants who responded "Yes, my coach/team requires it frequently" and "Yes, my coach/team requires it occasionally." Sources: NCAA GOALS Studies (2019, 2025).



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# Monthly Community Service Engagement and Athletics Requirement

(Percentage of Participants Who Engaged a Few Hours Per Month or More)



► *25% of student-athletes engage in community service activities at least a few hours per month outside of team activities.*

Note: Participants were asked, "On average over the past year, how much time have you spent taking part in service projects or volunteer activities of any type?" Source: NCAA GOALS Study (2025).



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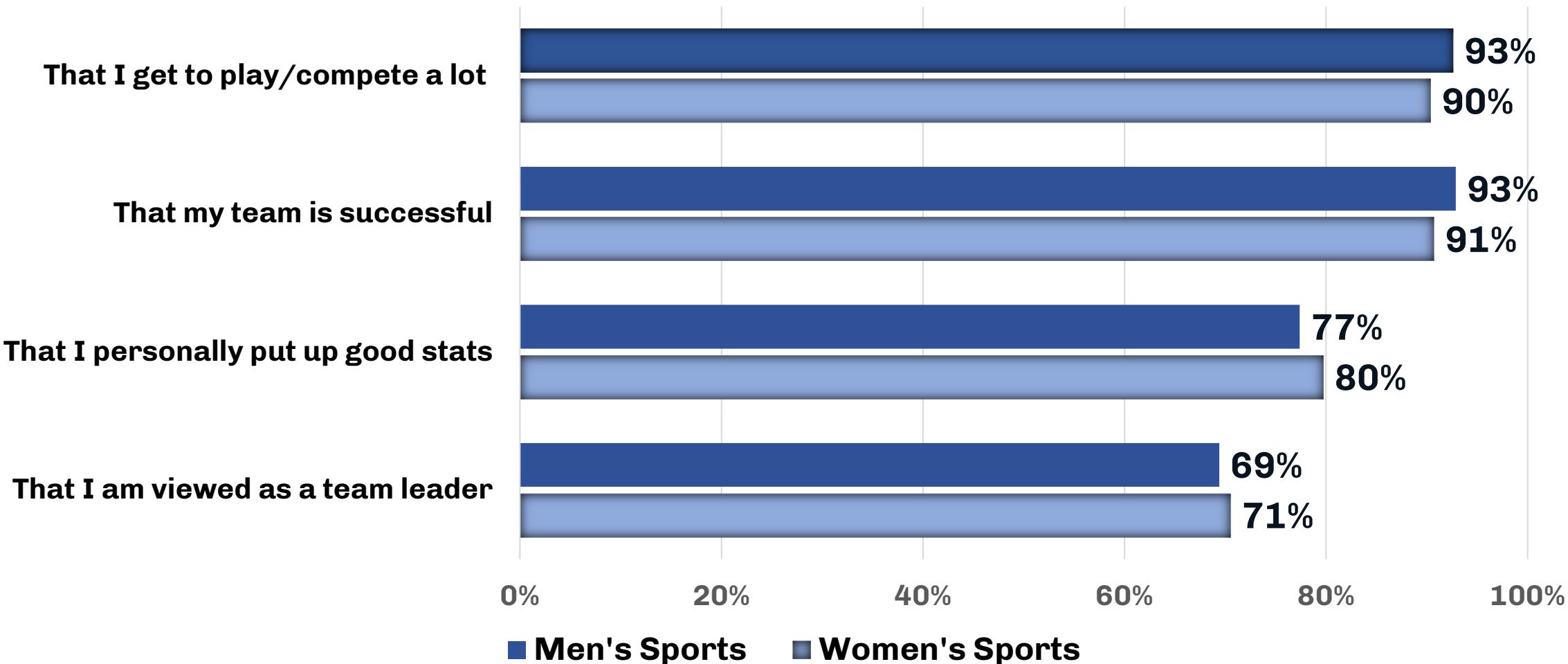
**Athletics opportunities play a significant role in college choice and transfer decisions.**



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# How important are these aspects of your college athletics experience?

(Percentage of Division II Athletes Who Endorsed “Important” or “Very important”)



Note: Top 2 points on a 4-point scale. Source: NCAA GOALS Study (2025).



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# Factors Contributing to Decision to Attend Current College

(Responses Among Division II Nontransfers)

>50%

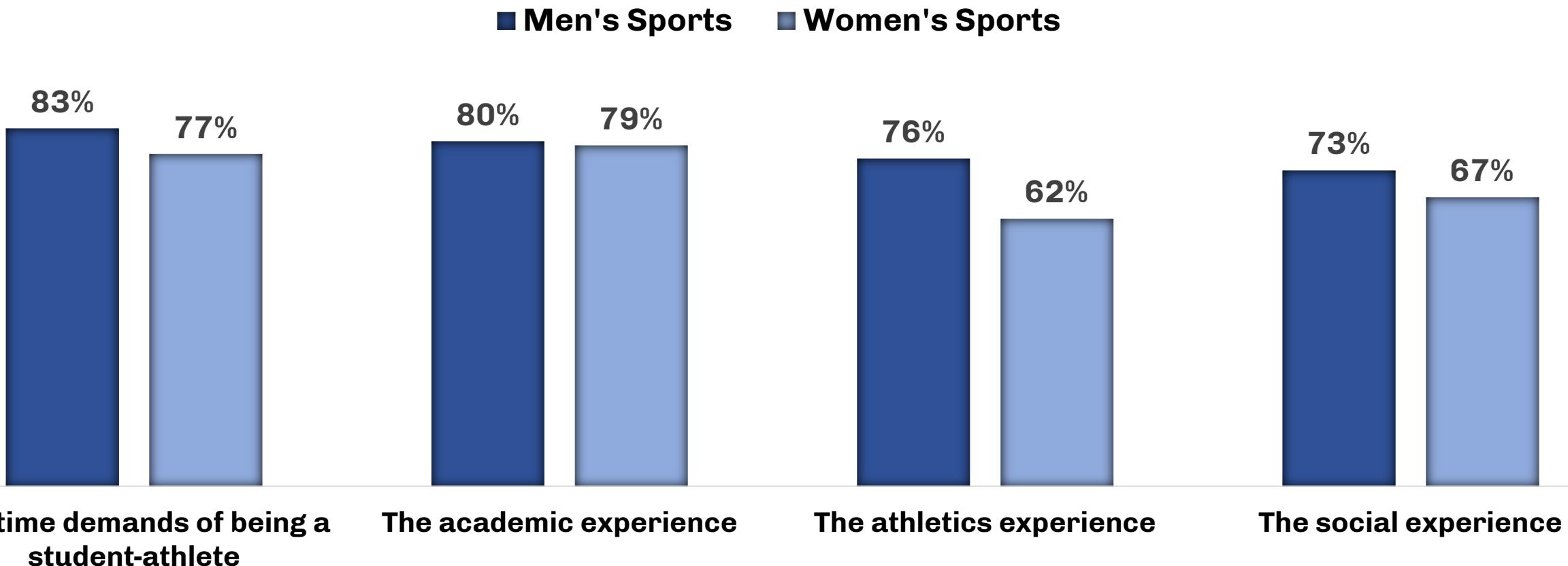
	Men's Sports (N=2,821)	Women's Sports (N=1,761)
Chance to play my sport at the NCAA level	88%	86%
Academics	71%	73%
Cost of college	62%	63%
Liked the people on this team	61%	58%
Proximity to home	56%	57%
Quality of the athletics facilities	49%	41%
Presence of a particular coach	49%	41%
Expectations of others	43%	39%
Friends at this school	41%	31%
Exposure I would get on this team	41%	36%
Coach promised a certain role / playing time	37%	35%
Reputation for developing pro or Olympic athletes	26%	8%
NIL opportunities	18%	11%

6-18 percentage points lower for M/W transfers

49% and 48% among M/W 4-year transfers, respectively

# How accurate were your initial expectations of \_\_\_\_\_ at this college?

(Percentage of Division II athletes endorsing “Mostly accurate” or “Very accurate”)



- *Similar rates across division, except for accurate expectations of the athletics experience among women's sports athletes—highest in DIII (72%), 67% in DI and lowest in DII (62%).*

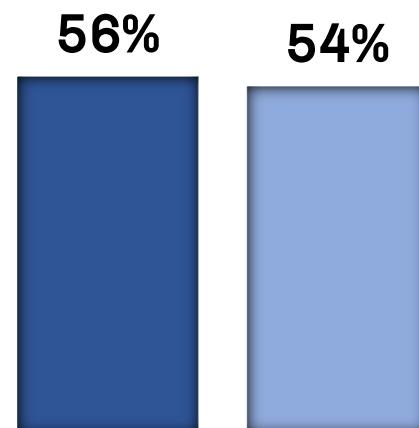
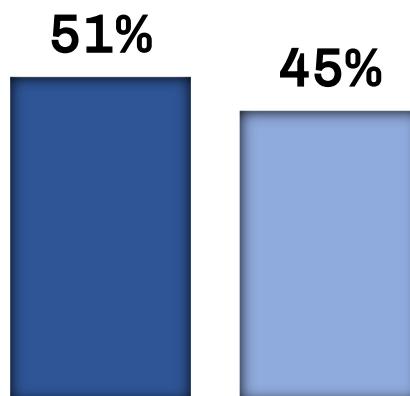
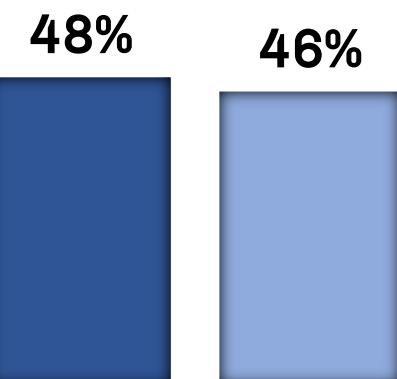
# I would have attended this college even if a different coach was here

(Percentage Who Endorsed “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”)

Division I

Division II

Division III



■ Men's Sports   ■ Women's Sports

Note: Top 2 points on a 6-point scale. Source: NCAA GOALS Study (2025).

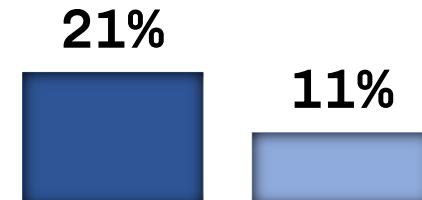
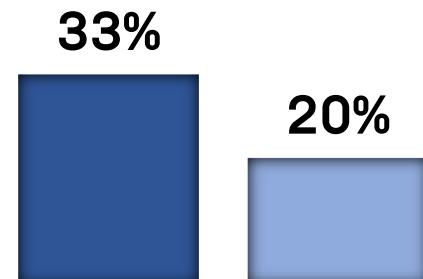
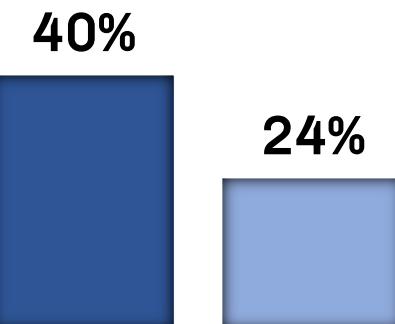
# **“If my current coach left this school, I would consider transferring”**

**(Percentage of Participants Who Endorsed “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”)**

**Division I**

**Division II**

**Division III**



■ Men's Sports   ■ Women's Sports

Note: Top 2 points on a 6-point scale. Source: NCAA GOALS Study (2025).



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## Top 5 Reasons for Transfer

(Percentage of Division II transfers endorsing each item)

Men's Sports	
Wanted to compete at a higher level	47%
Needed change from previous coach / teammates	27%
More playing time	26%
Better academic opportunity or preferred degree / major	25%
Coaching change at my previous college	18%

Women's Sports	
Needed change from previous coach / teammates	41%
To improve my mental health or well-being	34%
Wanted to compete at a higher level	32%
Better academic opportunity or preferred degree / major	31%
More playing time	28%

- *While four of the top five reasons for transfer were commonly endorsed by men's and women's sports athletes, the one item in each table that was not shared across sports gender is highlighted.*

Note: Number of transfers in responses: 1,080 DII men's sports participants and 464 DII women's sports participants. Participants encouraged to select all that apply. Source: NCAA GOALS Study (2025).



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**Student-athletes are feeling  
optimistic about their ability to  
reach future career goals.**



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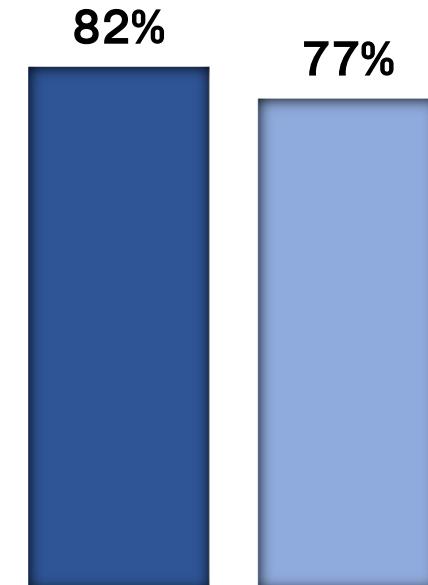
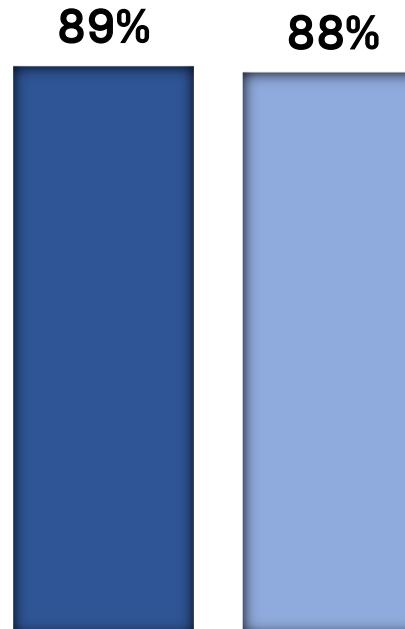
# “How do you feel about your...?”

(Percentage of Division II Participants Who Endorsed “Positive” or “Very Positive”)

Likelihood of  
graduating college

Ability to reach  
career goals

Ability to transition from  
college to career



■ Men's Sports ■ Women's Sports

Note: Top 2 points on a 6-point scale. Participants who completed their bachelor's degree are excluded from the first item on graduating college. Source: NCAA GOALS Study (2025).



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# Skills and Personal Qualities Honed Through the College Athletics Experience

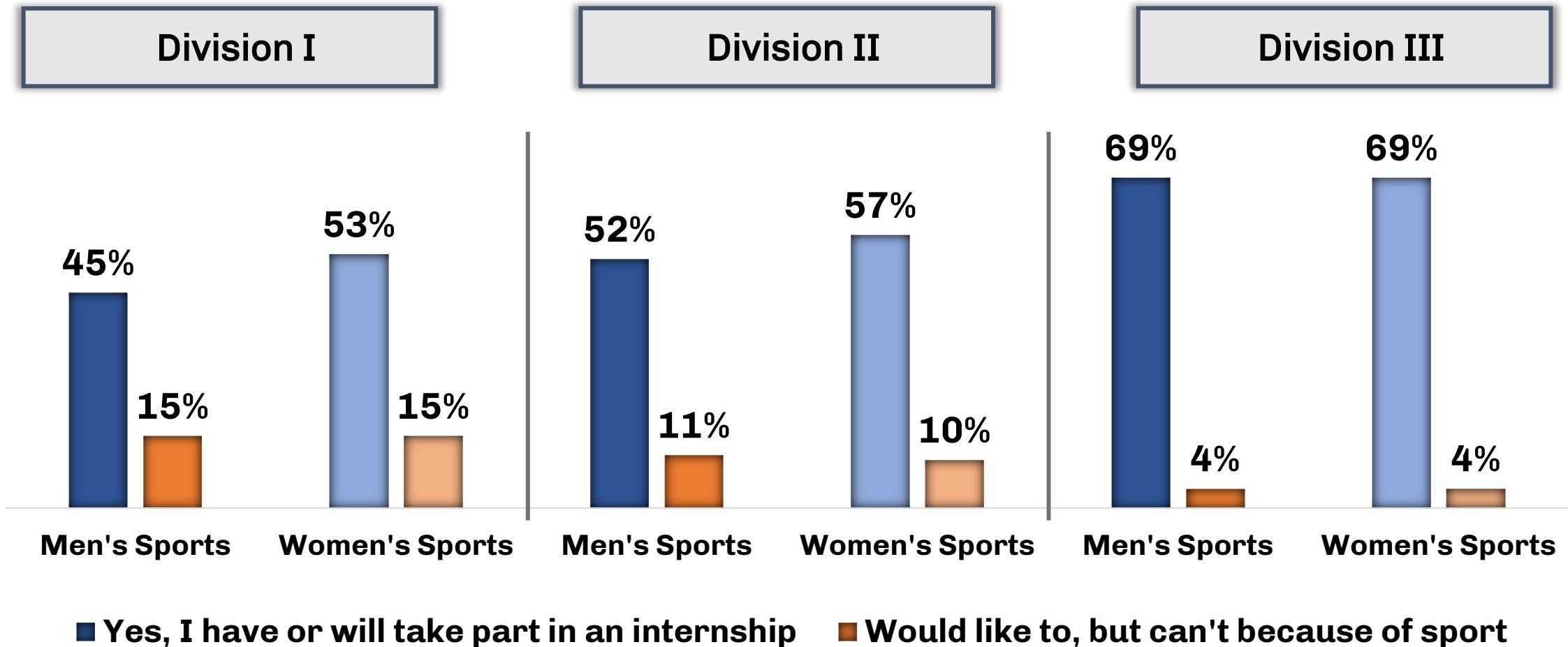
(Percentage Division II athletes endorsing that their college athletics experience has had a “positive” or “very positive” effect on the following)

<b>Work ethic</b>	<b>94%</b>
<b>Ability to take responsibility for yourself</b>	<b>93%</b>
<b>Teamwork</b>	<b>92%</b>
<b>Goal setting</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>Leadership skills</b>	<b>85%</b>
<b>Attention to detail</b>	<b>85%</b>
<b>Understanding of people of other races, identities &amp; backgrounds</b>	<b>83%</b>

<b>Time management</b>	<b>82%</b>
<b>Dealing with change</b>	<b>81%</b>
<b>Coping in high-pressure environments</b>	<b>80%</b>
<b>Self-confidence</b>	<b>69%</b>
<b>Commitment to community service</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>Ability to establish a desired image or personal brand</b>	<b>62%</b>
<b>Understanding when you're pushing yourself too hard</b>	<b>60%</b>

# Internship Opportunities

(Those in their junior year and above)



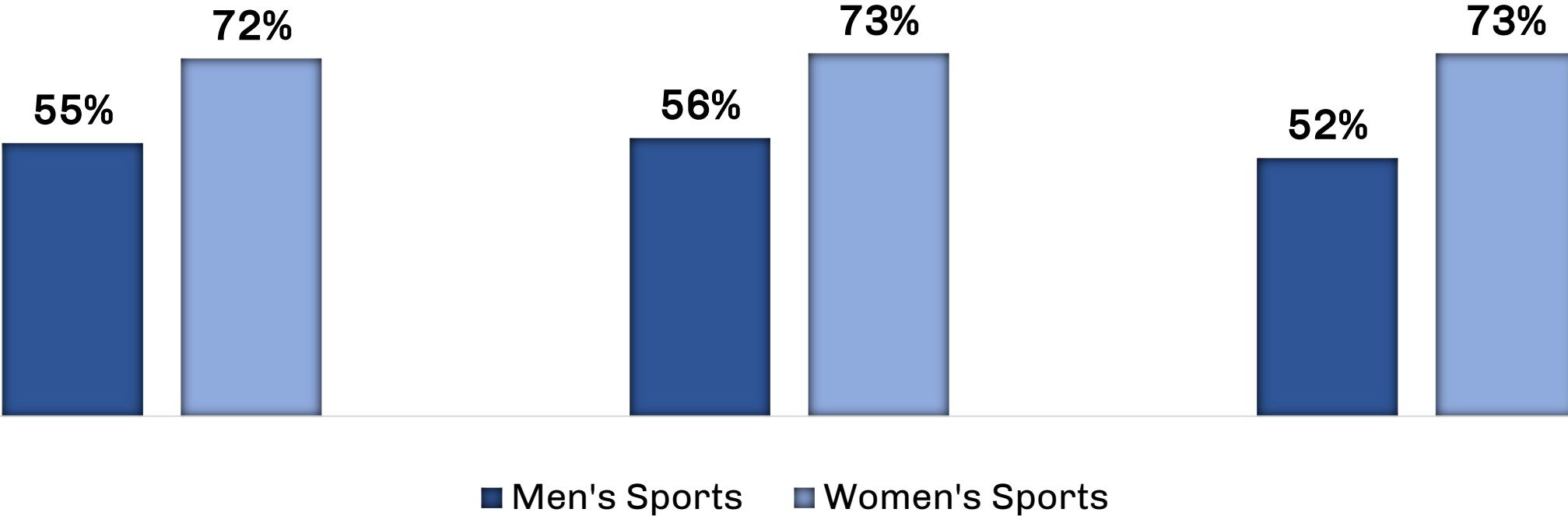
# Likelihood of Attending Graduate School or Obtaining Advanced Professional Degree at Some Point after College

(Percentage Who Endorsed “Somewhat Likely” or “Very Likely”)

Division I

Division II

Division III



Note: Top 2 points on a 5-point scale. Participants who completed their bachelor's degree are excluded. Examples of advanced professional degree include law degree, medical degree, master's degree, doctorate, etc. Source: NCAA GOALS Study (2025).



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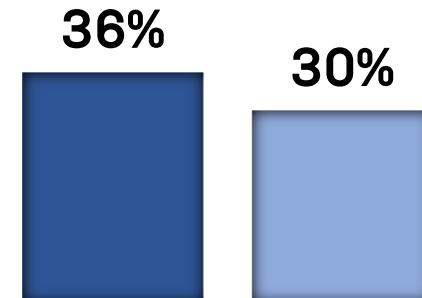
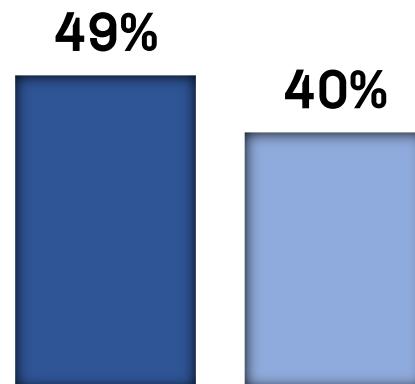
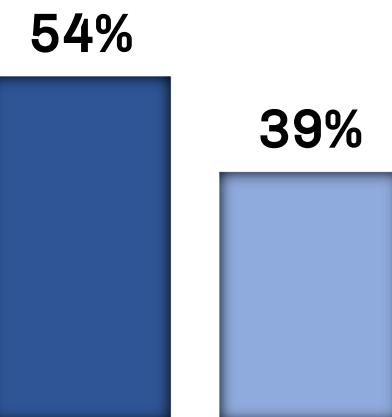
# Likelihood That Job After College Will Involve Sports

(Percentage Who Endorsed “Somewhat Likely” or “Very Likely”)

Division I

Division II

Division III



■ Men's Sports ■ Women's Sports

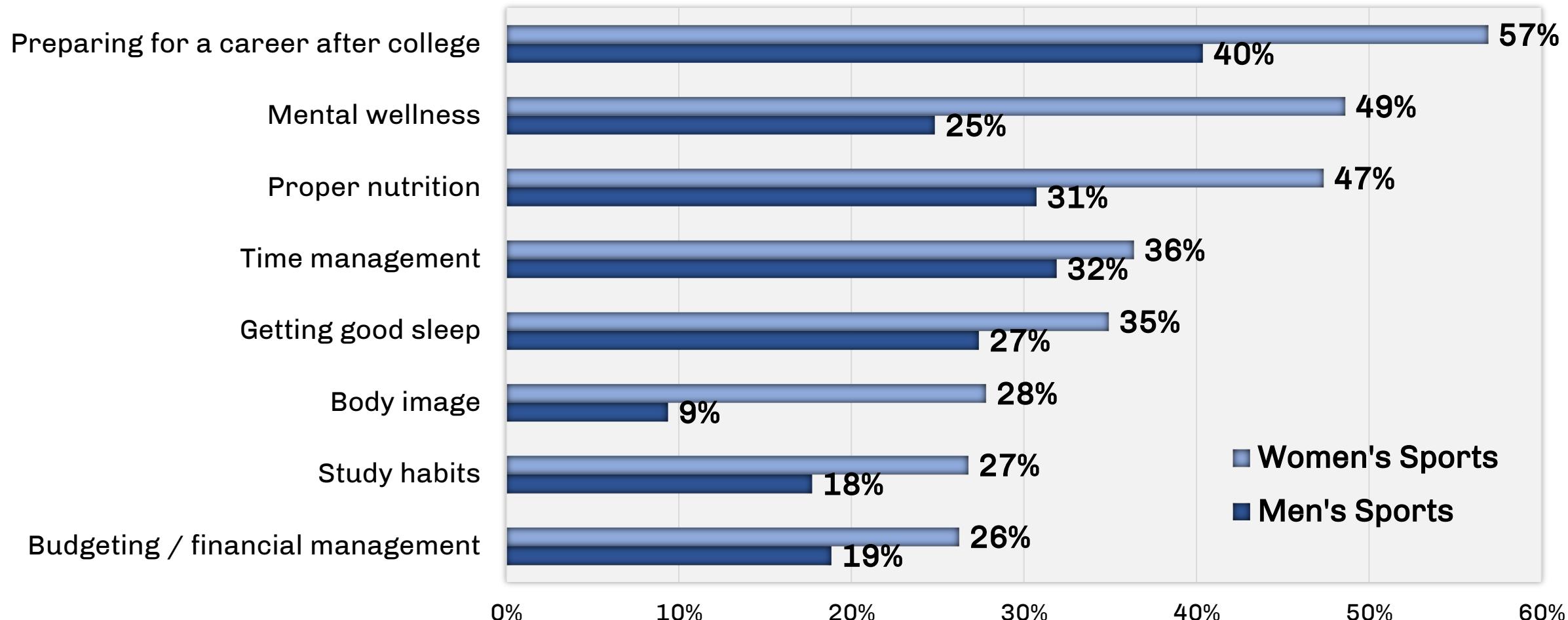
Note: Top 2 points on a 5-point scale. Source: NCAA GOALS Study (2025).



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# **“I wish the coaches or athletics administrators at our school talked more with student-athletes about...”**

**(Division II)**



Note: Only topics endorsed by at least 25% of one sport gender in Division II are shown. Other topics included: navigating NIL opportunities (24% M, 24% W), academic resources (15% M, 23% W), living away from home (15% M, 21% W), finding professional opportunities in sport after college (20% M, 19% W), conducting ourselves appropriately on campus/in the community (10% M, 10% W), drinking/substance misuse (8% M/W), sexual violence prevention (3% M, 7% W) and concussion awareness (4% M, 6% W) . Source: NCAA GOALS Study (2025).



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