



DIVISION I

CONVENTION

2026

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

Division I Findings

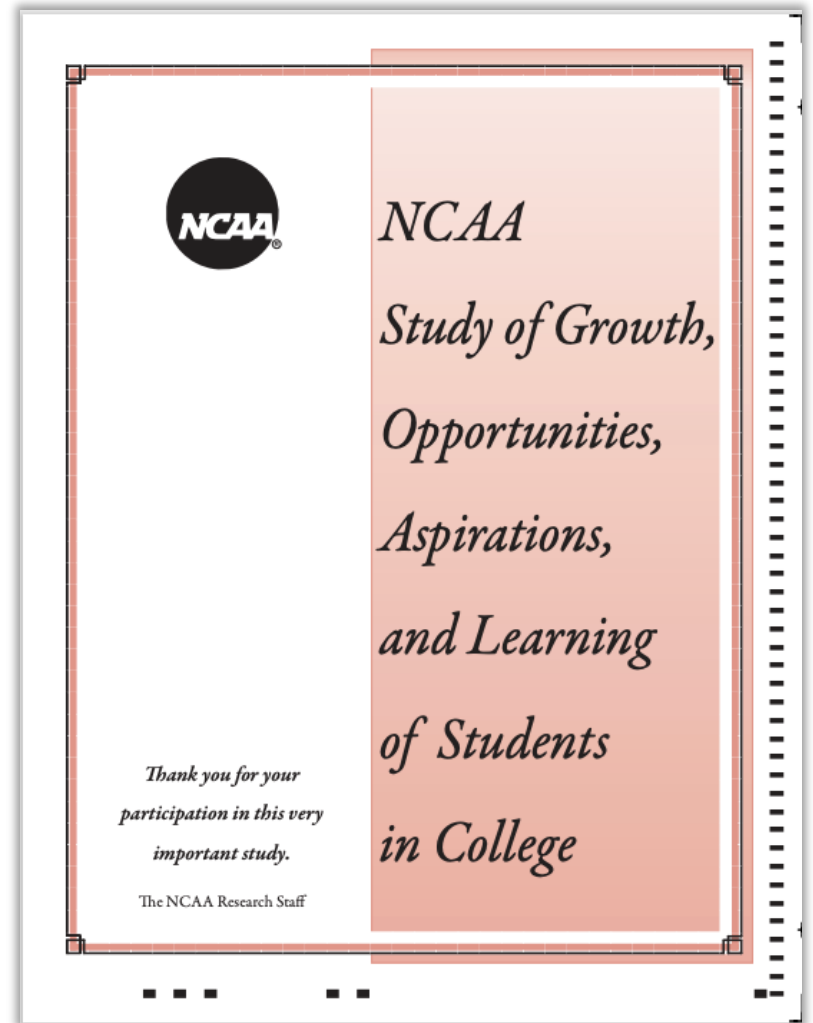


CONVENTION

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. ***(7,308 Division I Student-Athletes)***
- Final data was weighted based on 2024-25 NCAA participation rates to ensure the representativeness of findings.



NCAA GOALS Study Topics



Athletics experiences



Academic experiences



Social and team experiences



Recruitment process



Time commitments



On-campus support



Finances



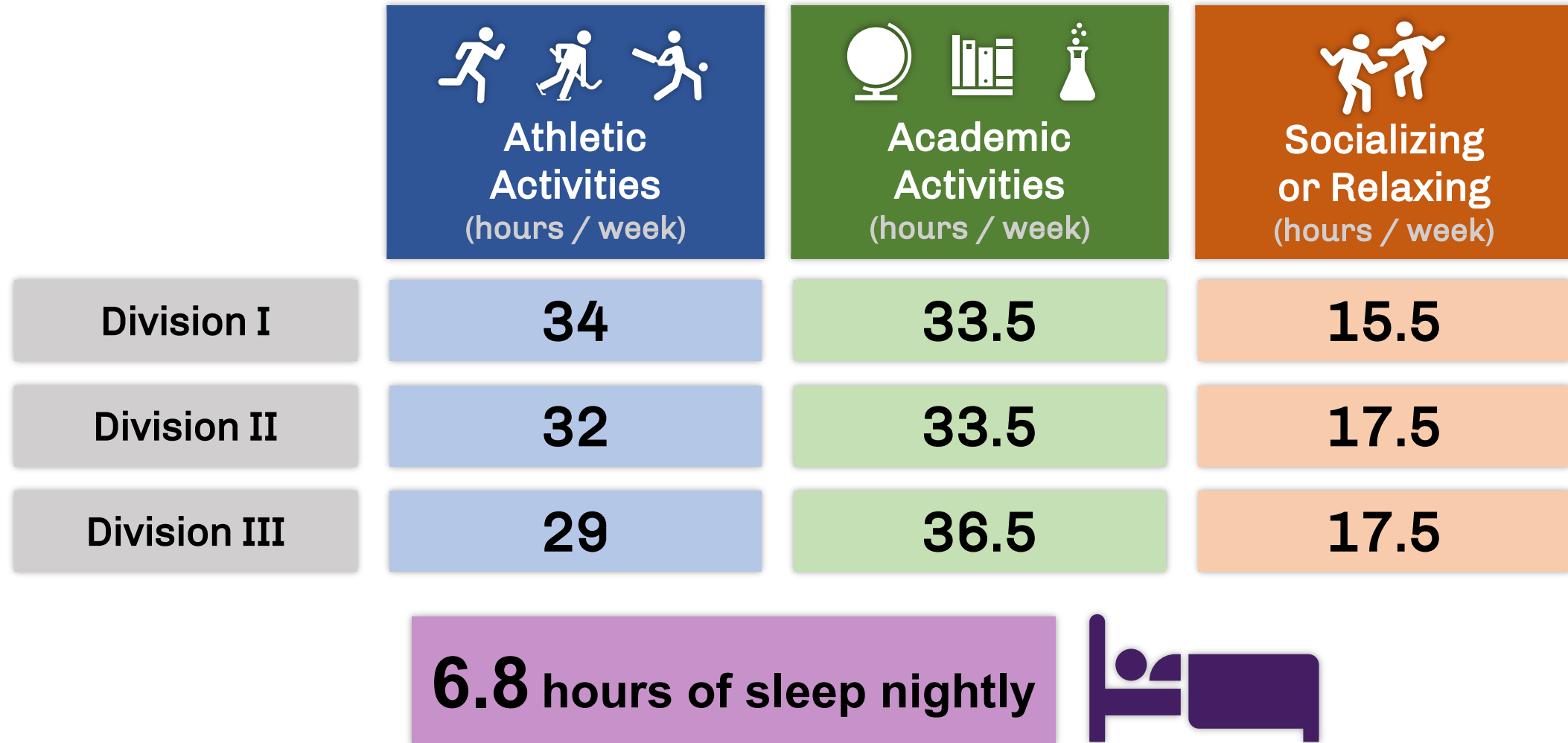
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**While schedules remain full,
student-athletes have shifted the
ways they spend their time.**



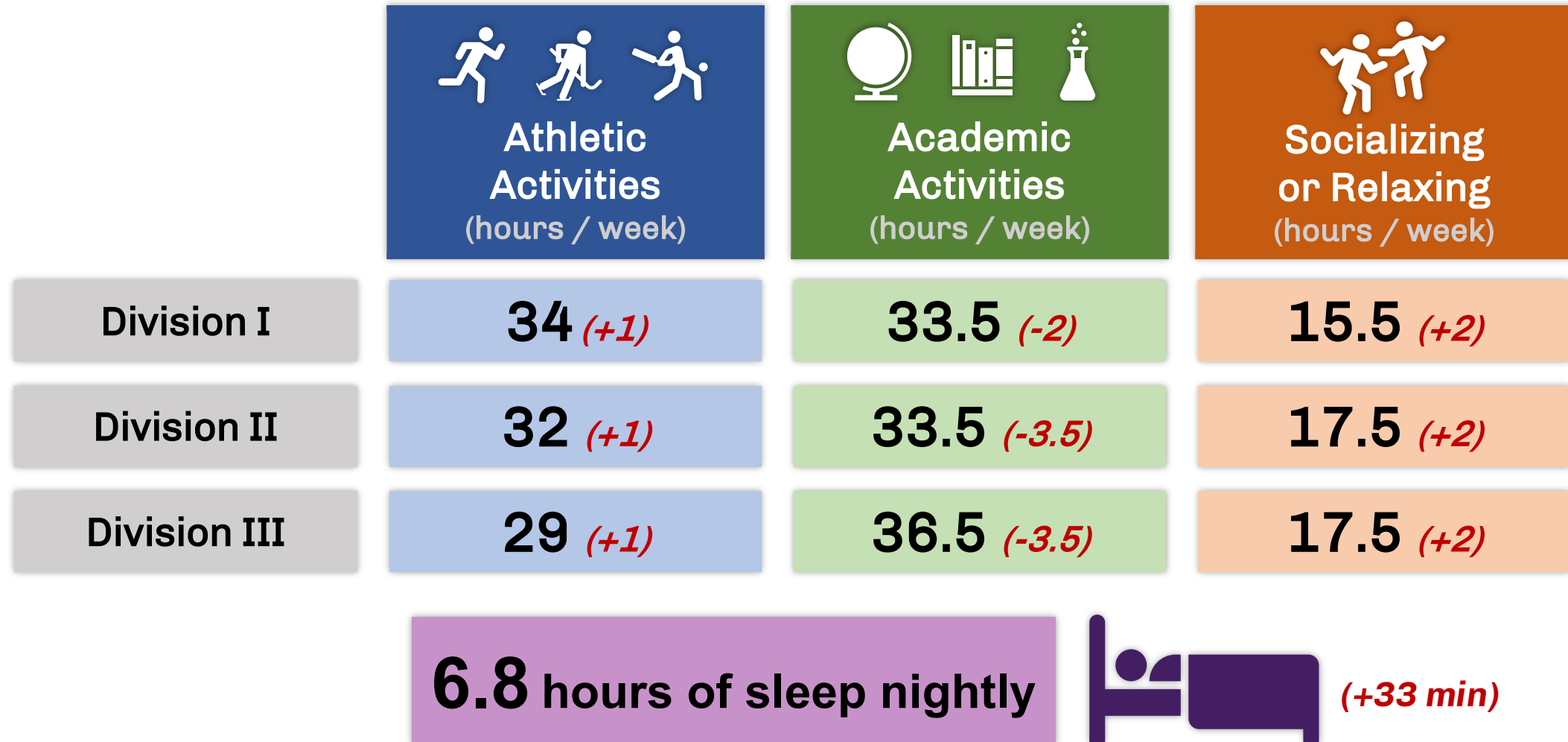
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Student-Athlete Time Commitments



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).

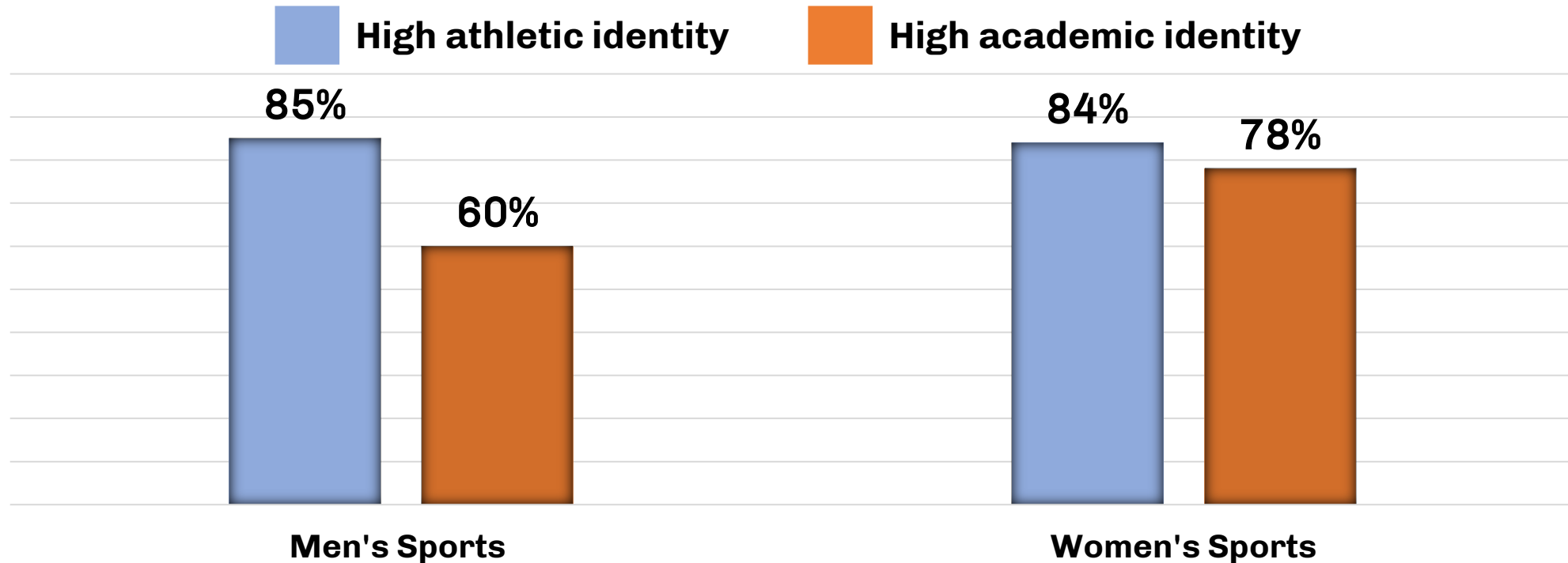
Student-Athlete Time Commitments



+/- 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).

Athletic and Academic Identity (Division I)



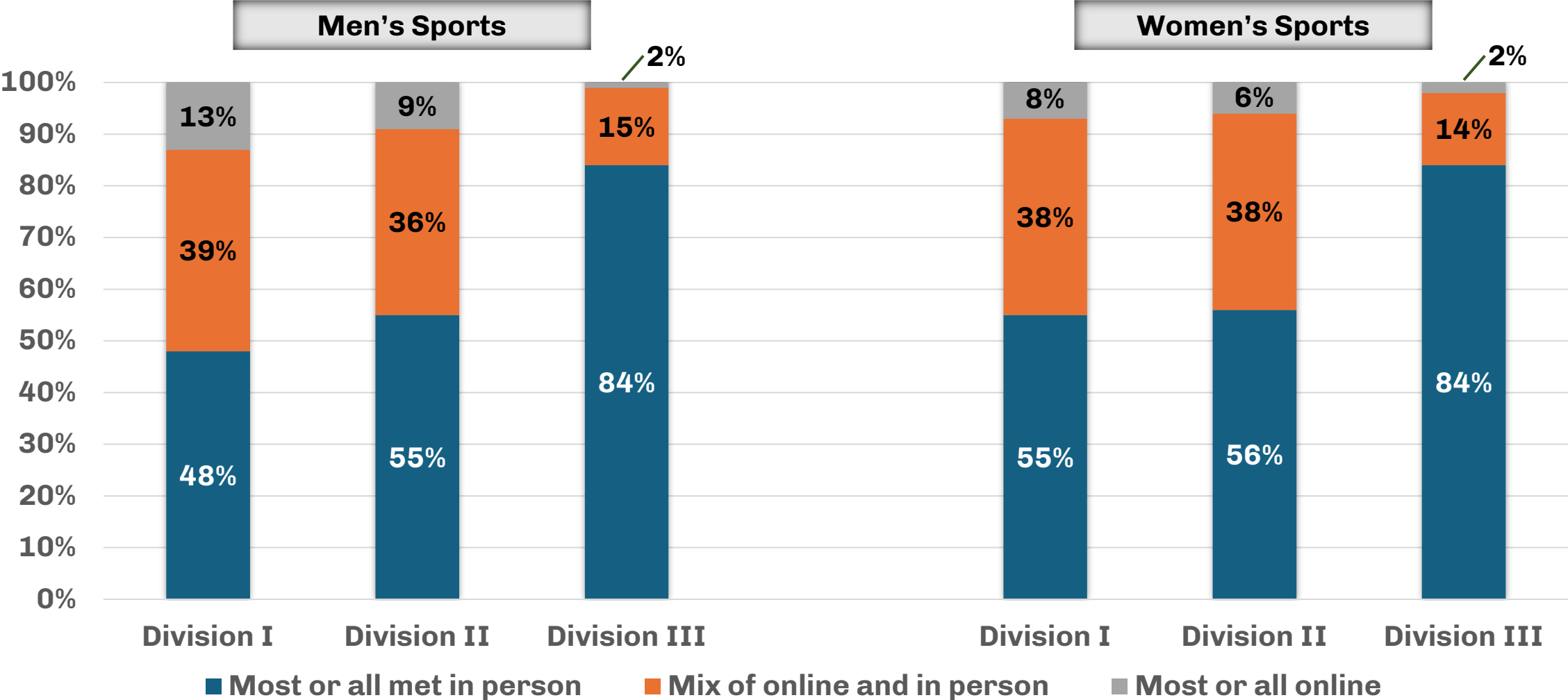
- *In Division I, 56% of men's sports SAs and 69% of women's sports SAs had both high athletic and high academic identity.*
- *Men's sports SAs spend similar or slightly more amounts of time on athletics whereas women's sports SAs have consistently reported spending several more hours per week on academic pursuits than men (DI M 30 vs. DI W 35.5).*

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?



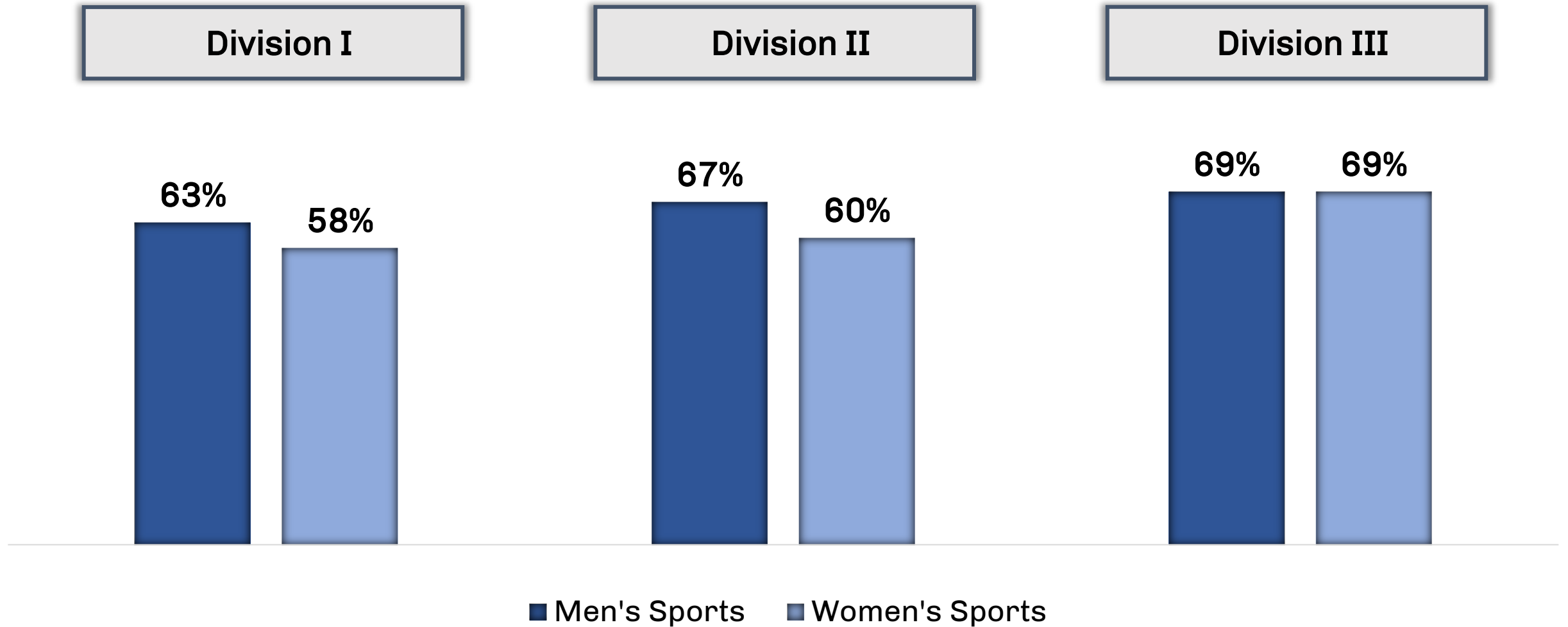
Student-Athlete Time Commitments by Course Taking Patterns

		 Athletic Activities (hours / week)	 Academic Activities (hours / week)	 Socializing or Relaxing (hours / week)
	Mostly online	38	26.5	18.5
	Mixed in-person and online	34	31.5	17.5
	Mostly in-person	30	36.5	16.5

- *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).

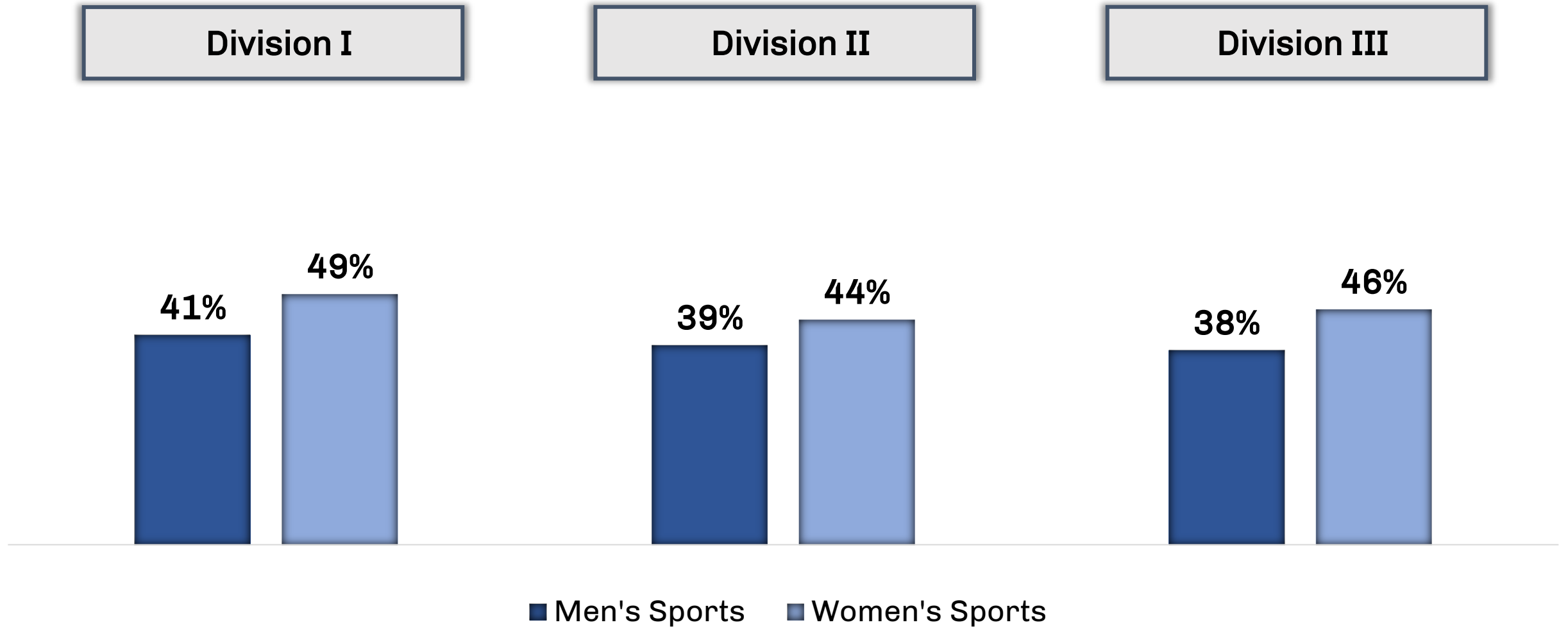
“I am able to find an appropriate balance between academics, athletics and other aspects of college life”
(Percentage of Participants Who Endorsed “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”)



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

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

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



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

Division I student-athletes report they want more time for...

	Men's Sports	Women's Sports
Sleeping	64%	78%
Visiting home / family	66%	73%
Relaxing alone	59%	75%
Socializing	58%	72%
Extracurricular activities	49%	61%
Academics	42%	56%
Working at a job or NIL	43%	43%
Athletics	45%	27%

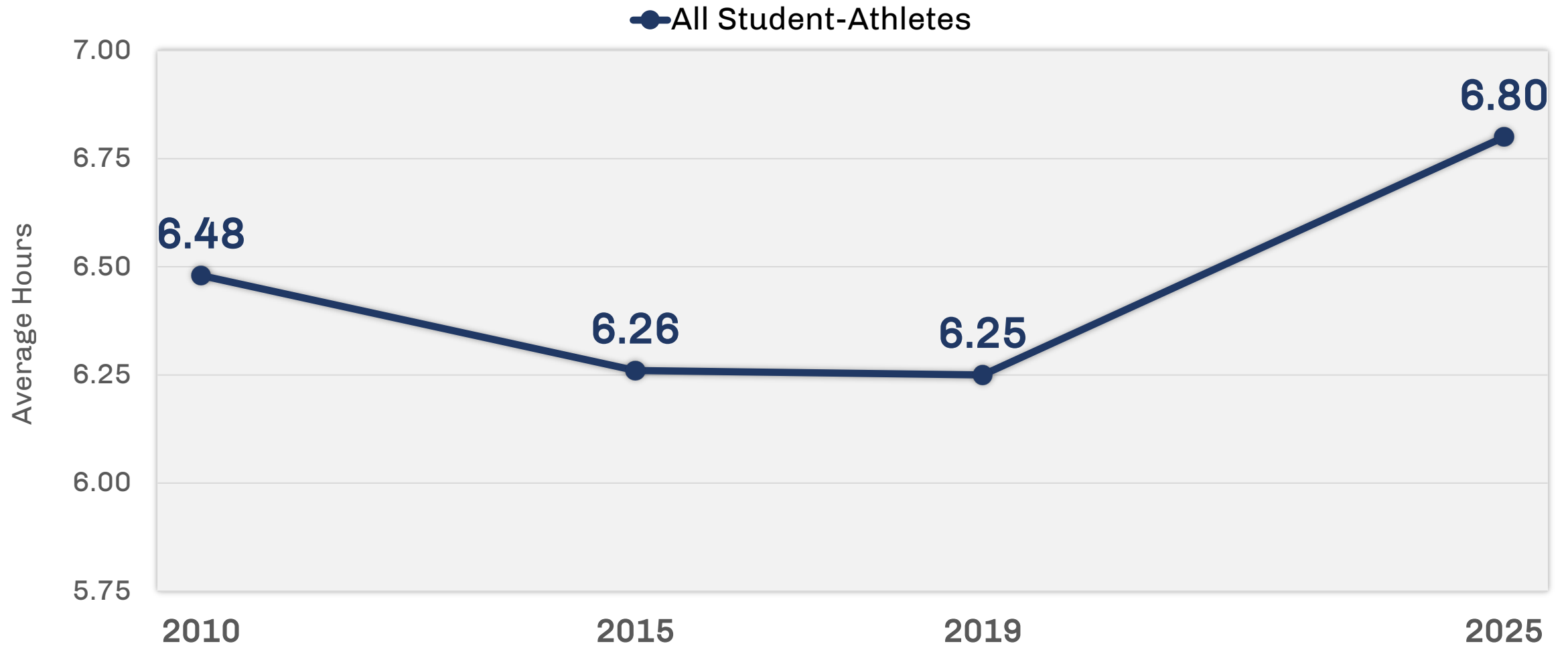
Note: Table sorted by overall DI endorsement percentages. Source: NCAA GOALS Study (2025).

Good news! Student-athletes are getting more sleep.

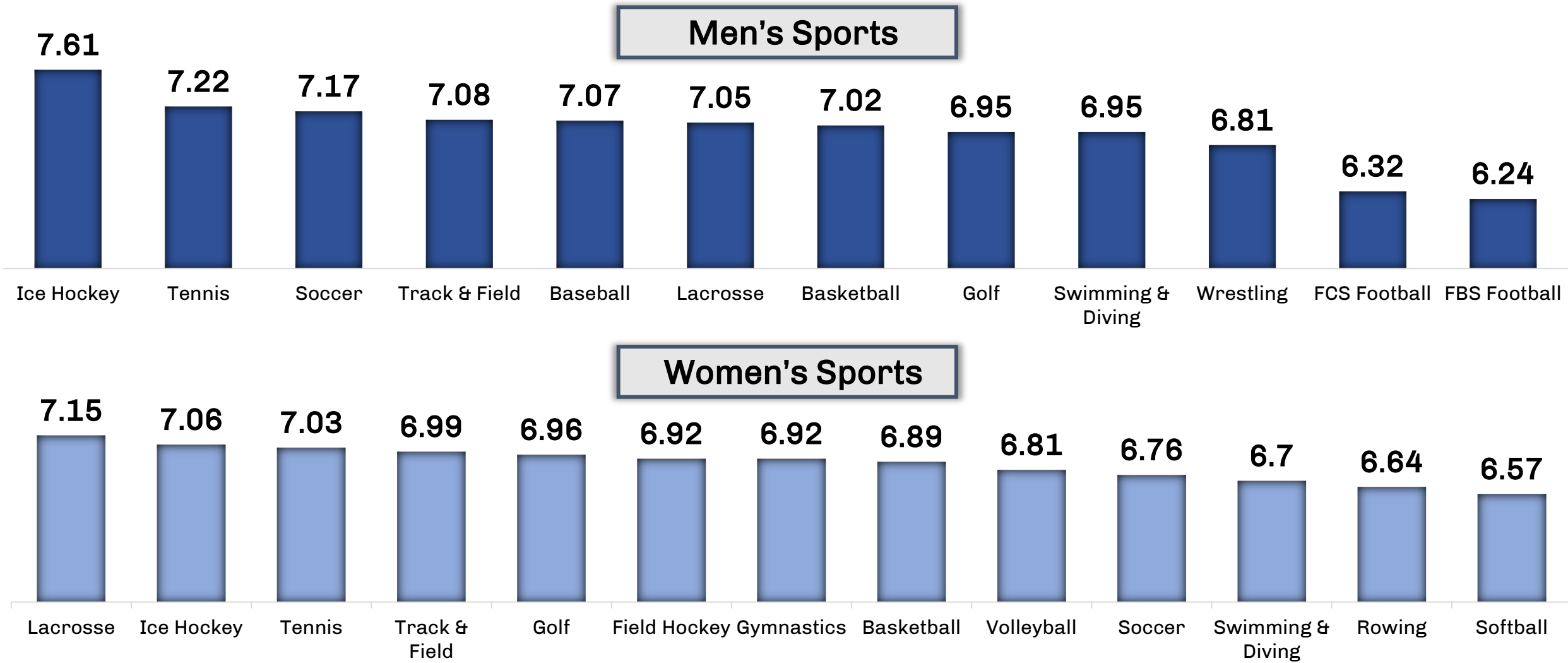


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Trends in Average Weekday Hours of Sleep In-Season, 2010-2025



Division I – Average Weekday Hours of Sleep In-Season



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

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

Men's Sports	+/- Minutes
Tennis	+58
Swimming and Diving	+49
Soccer	+43
FBS Football	+41
Lacrosse	+41
Basketball	+35
Baseball	+33
FCS Football	+29
Golf	+23
Ice Hockey	+23
Track and Field	+22
Wrestling	-1

Women's Sports	+/- Minutes
Volleyball	+50
Basketball	+38
Lacrosse	+37
Golf	+35
Softball	+34
Rowing	+34
Soccer	+29
Track and Field	+28
Gymnastics	+27
Tennis	+23
Field Hockey	+21
Swimming and Diving	+20
Ice Hockey	+15

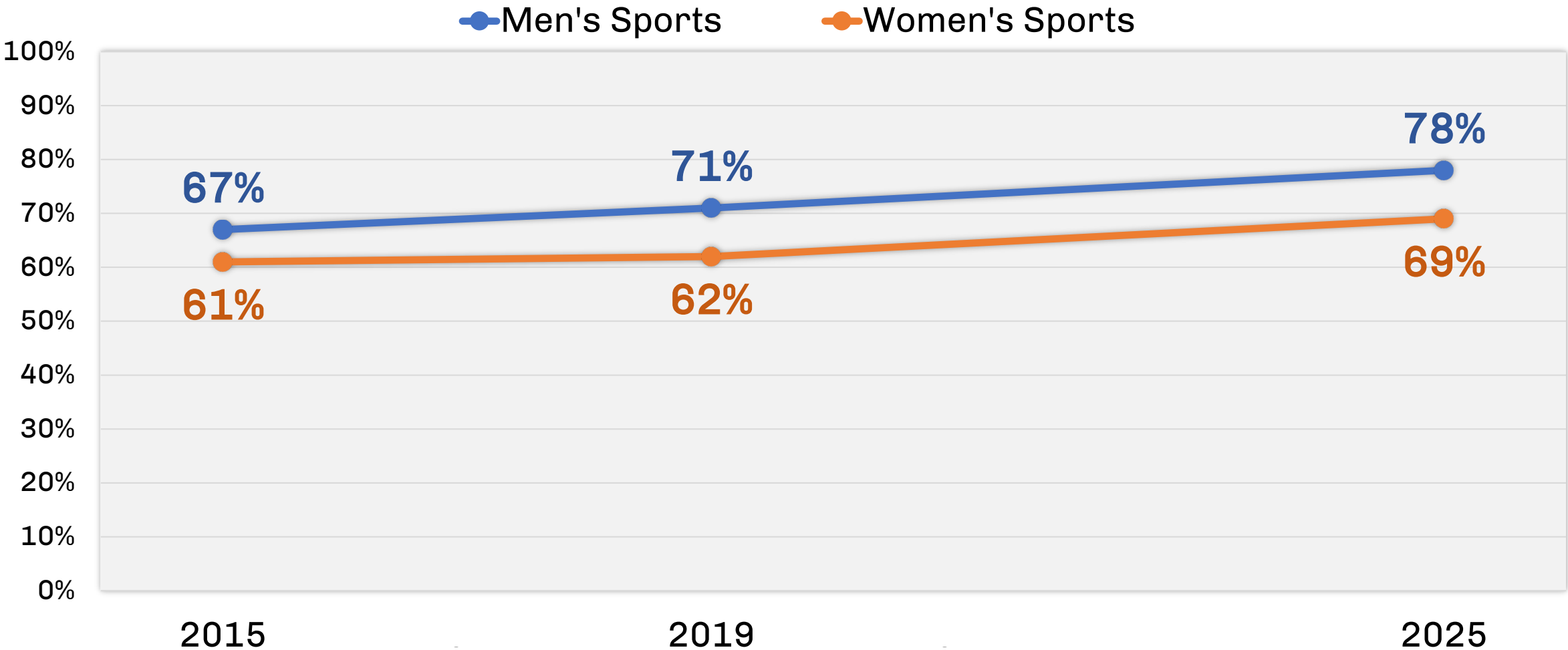
Note: Self-reported survey data. Source: NCAA GOALS Studies (2019, 2025).

**Division I student-athletes are
feeling more comfortable
discussing well-being issues with
their coaches.**



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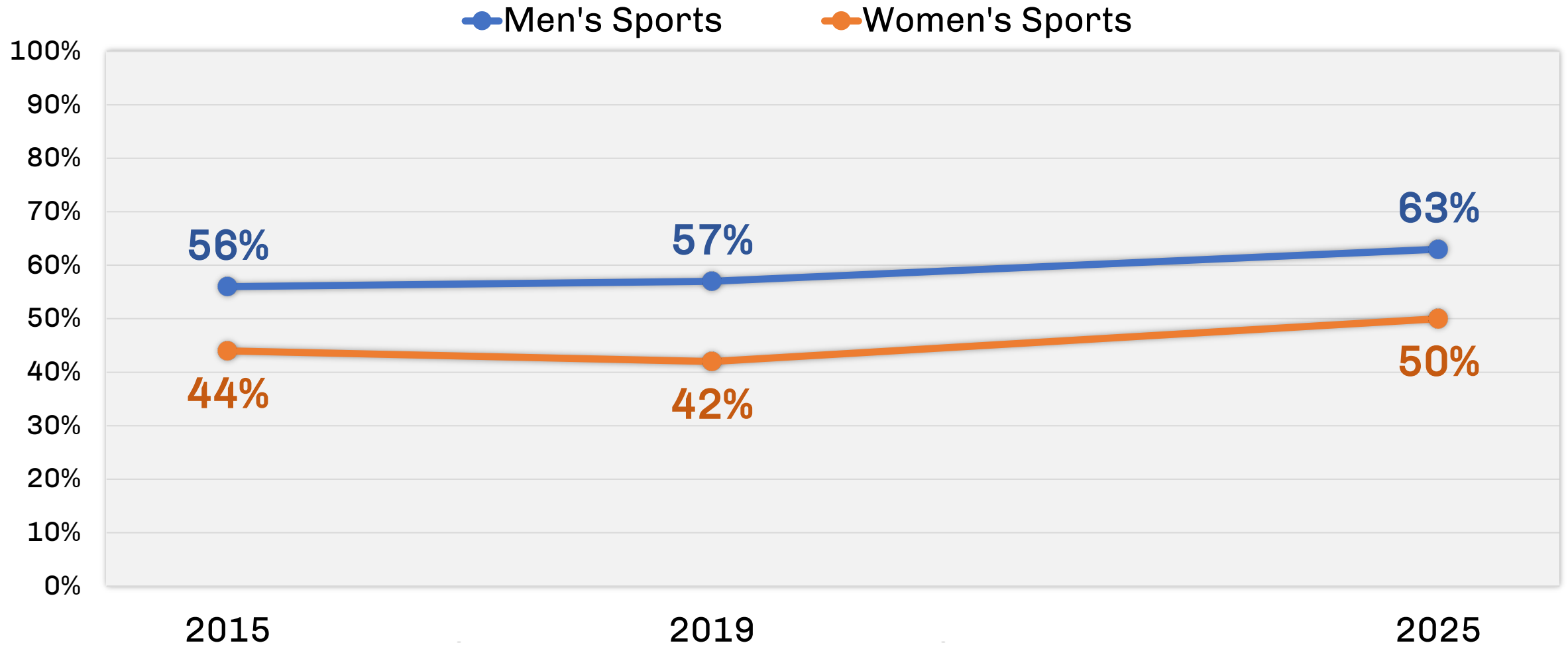
“I would feel comfortable talking to my coaches about physical health issues.”
(Percentage of Division I Participations Who Endorsed “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”)



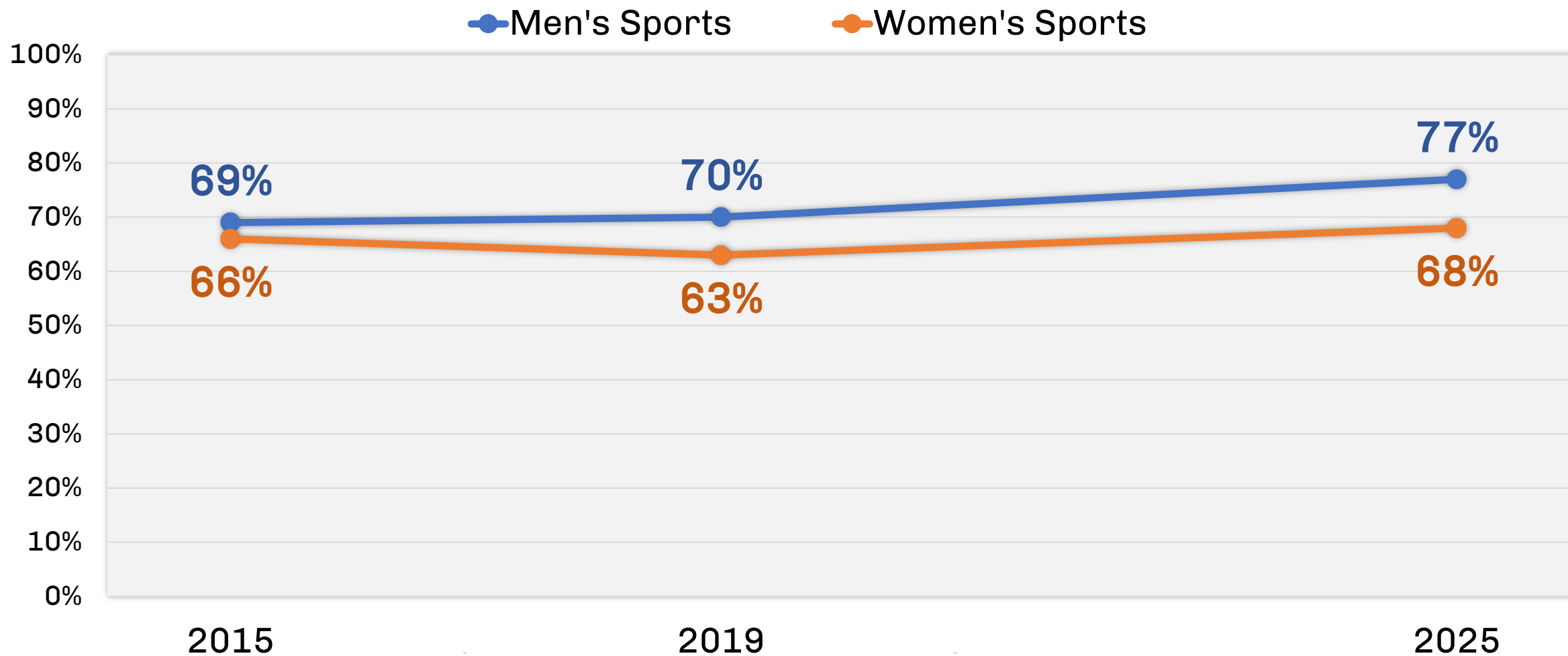
Note: Top 2 points on a 6-point scale. Sources: NCAA GOALS Studies (2015, 2019, 2025).

“I would feel comfortable talking to my coaches about mental health issues.”

(Percentage of Division I Participations Who Endorsed “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”)



“My coaches care about my mental well-being.”
(Percentage of Division I Participations Who Endorsed “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”)



Relationship with Coaches

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

My head coach can be trusted

80%

67%

I would feel comfortable talking with my coaches about my role on the team

78%

68%

I often ask my coaches how things are going in their lives

53%

46%

■ Men's Sports

■ Women's Sports



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

“My coaches...”

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

	Men's Sports	Women's Sports
Are always respectful of persons from other racial/ethnic groups	89%	88%
Are always respectful of persons who identify as LGBTQ+	82%	89%
Are accepting of differing viewpoints and cultures	83%	77%
Have created an inclusive environment for all members of the team	80%	70%

- ▶ ***LGBTQ+ SAs** were less likely to agree that their coaches are always respectful of LGBTQ+ identities, particularly those participating in men's sports (74%). LGBTQ+ women's sports SAs were lowest of any subgroup to agree that their coaches have created an inclusive environment for all (64%).*
- ▶ ***BIPOC SAs** generally were a few percentage points lower than their white peers (91%) to agree that their coaches are always respectful of other racial/ethnic groups (Asian 88%, Black 86%, Latinx 88%, Other 87%).*



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

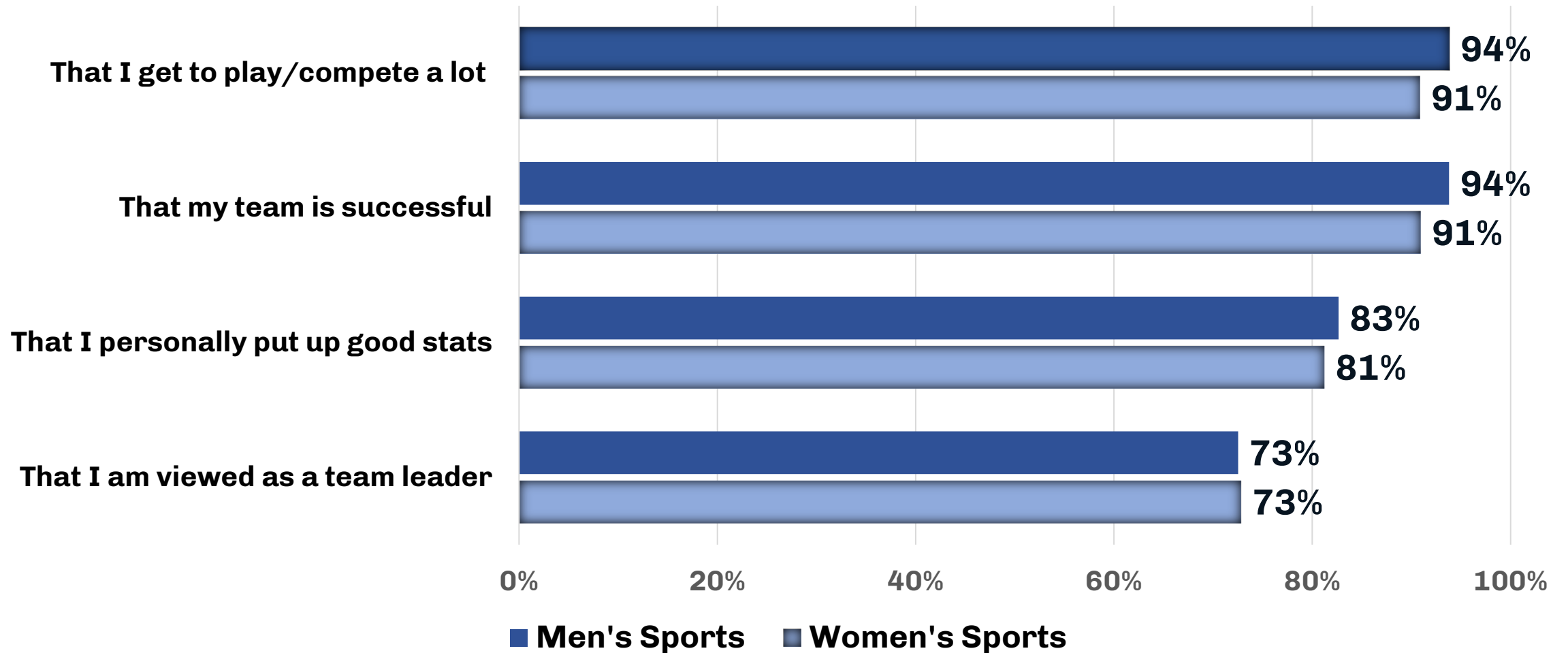
Athletics opportunities play a significant role in college choice and transfer decisions.



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How important are these aspects of your college athletics experience?

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



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

Factors Contributing to Decision to Attend Current College

(Responses Among Division I Nontransfers)

>50%

	Men's Sports (N=2,990)	Women's Sports (N=2,455)
Chance to play my sport at the NCAA level	90%	88%
Academics	72%	76%
Liked the people on this team	63%	61%
Cost of college	59%	58%
Quality of the athletics facilities	56%	44%
Proximity to home	55%	50%
Presence of a particular coach	55%	41%
Exposure I would get on this team	50%	37%
Expectations of others	43%	38%
Reputation for developing pro or Olympic athletes	40%	15%
Friends at this school	40%	26%
Coach promised a certain role / playing time	37%	33%
NIL opportunities	23%	12%

7-8 percentage points lower for M/W 4-yr transfers

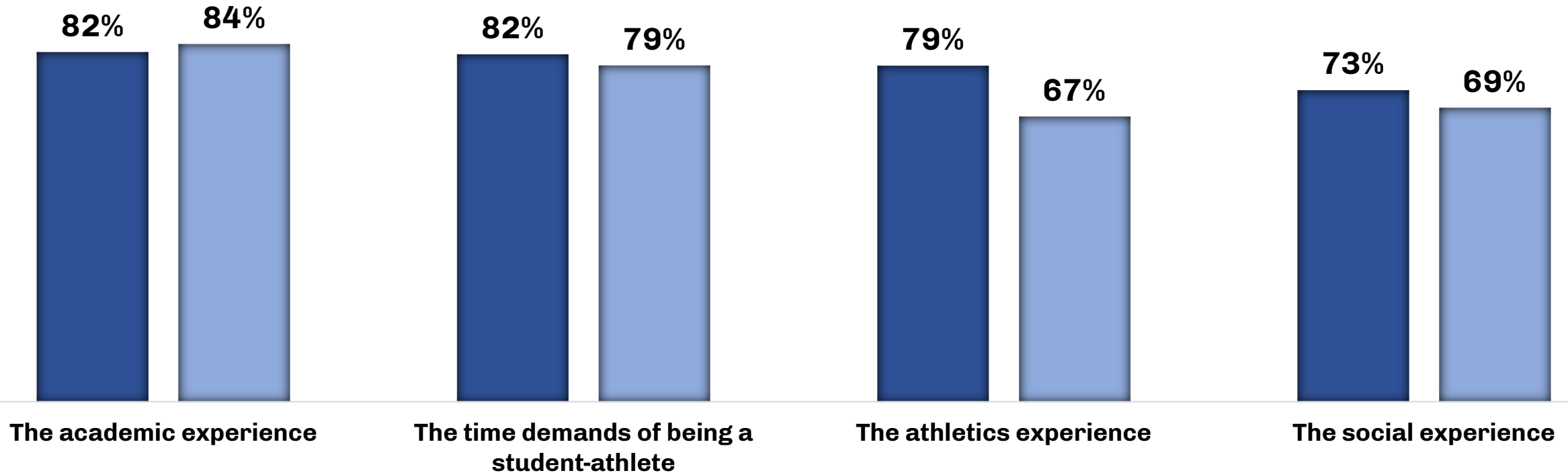
8-11 percentage points higher for M/W transfers

8-18 percentage points higher for M/W transfers

How accurate were your initial expectations of _____ at this college?

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

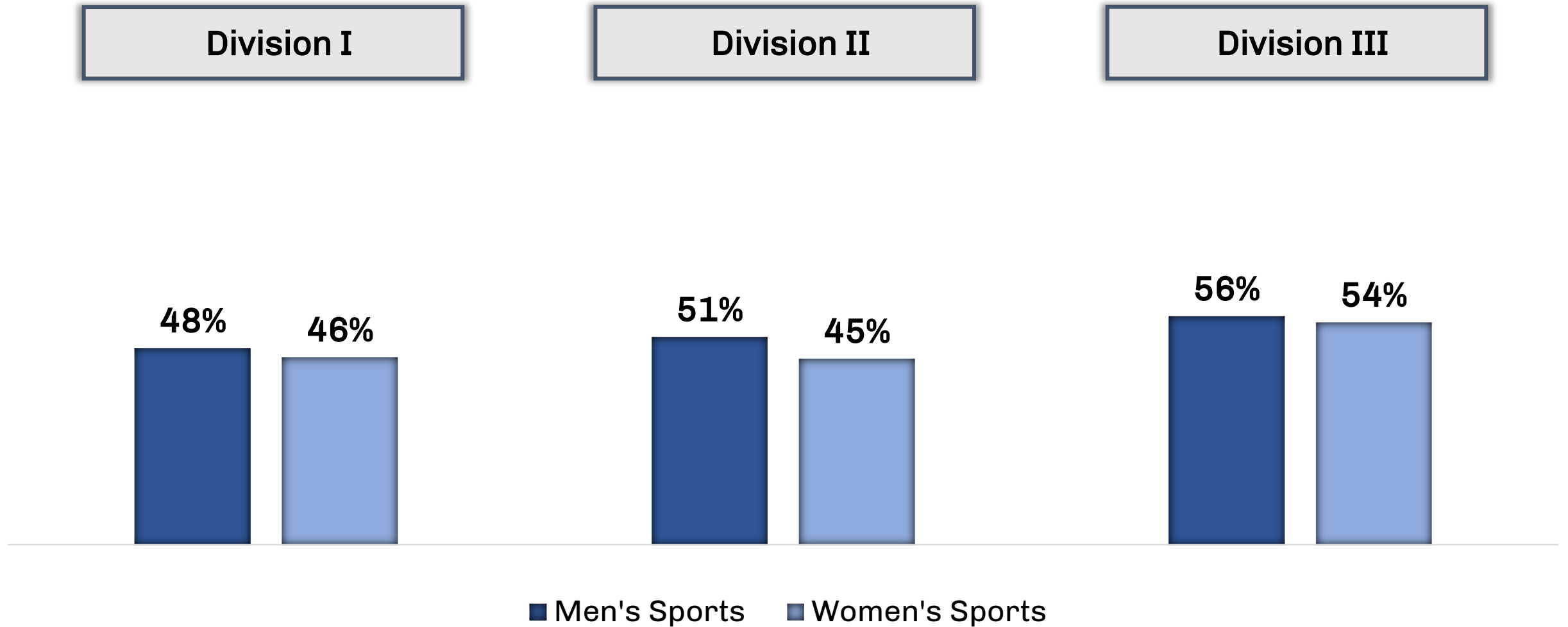
■ Men's Sports ■ Women's Sports



- *Notable increase in accurate expectations of the time demands among women's sport athletes in DI from the 2019 study (74% to 79%).*

“I would have attended this college even if a different coach was here.”

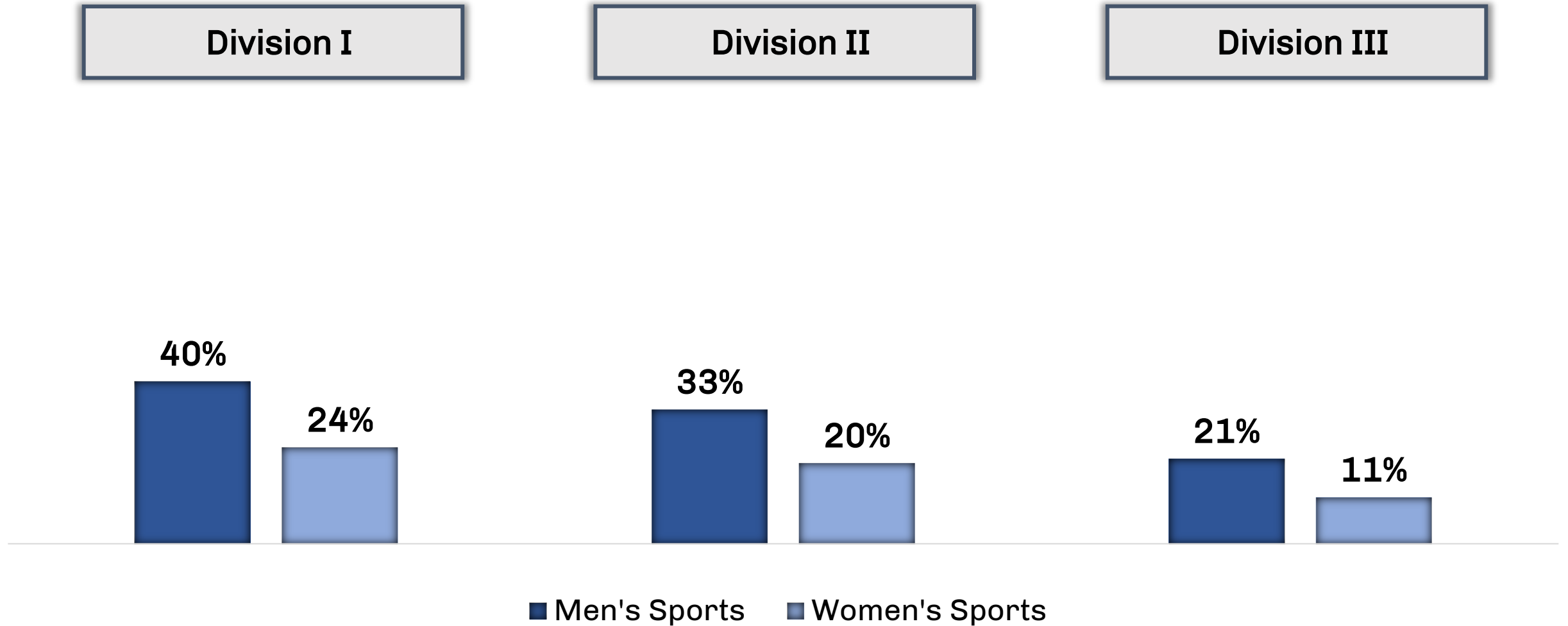
(Percentage Who Endorsed “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”)



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”)



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

Top 5 Reasons for Transfer

(Percentage of Division I transfers endorsing each item)

Men's Sports	
Wanted to compete at a higher level	46%
More playing time	28%
Needed change from previous coach / teammates	27%
Coaching change at my previous college	24%
Better academic opportunity or preferred degree / major	19%

Women's Sports	
Needed change from previous coach / teammates	55%
Wanted to compete at a higher level	40%
To improve my mental health or well-being	39%
More playing time	30%
Better academic opportunity or preferred degree / major	26%

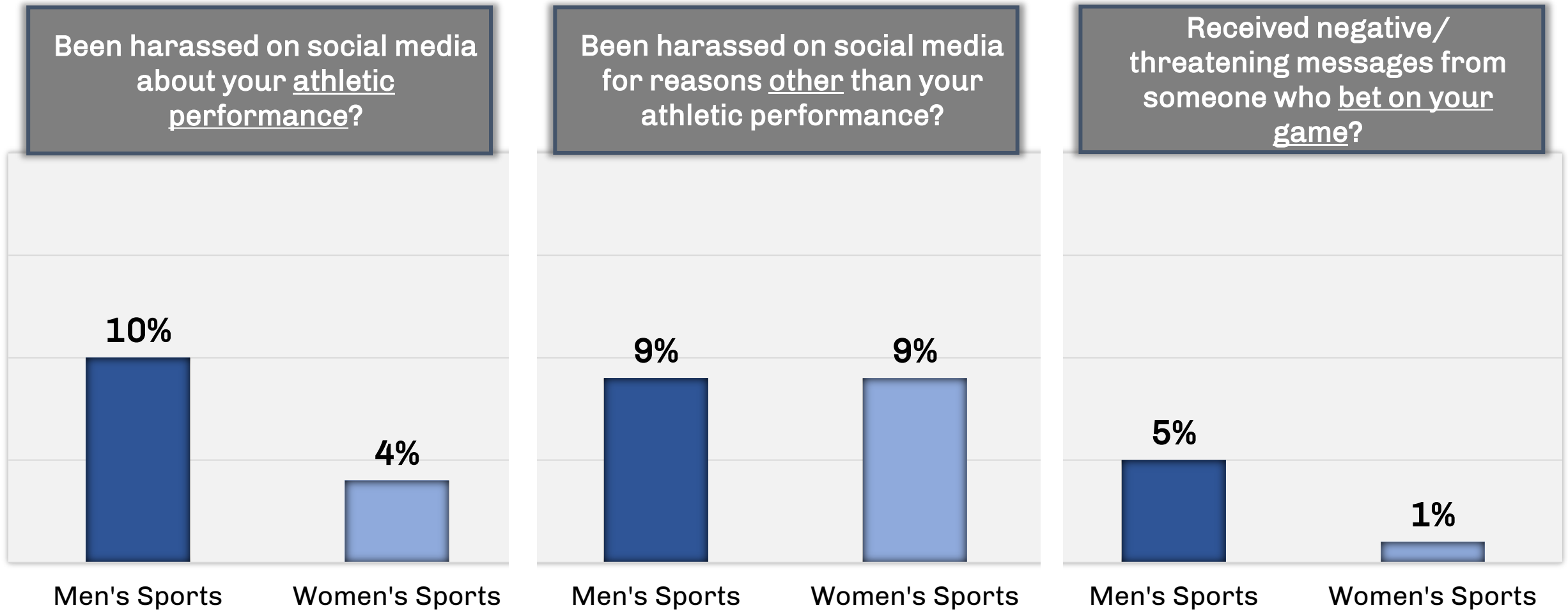
- *While four of the top five reasons for transfer were commonly endorsed by men's and women's sports athletes, the one item in each table that was not shared across sports gender is highlighted.*

Over half of Division I men's basketball players reported social media harassment tied to their play.



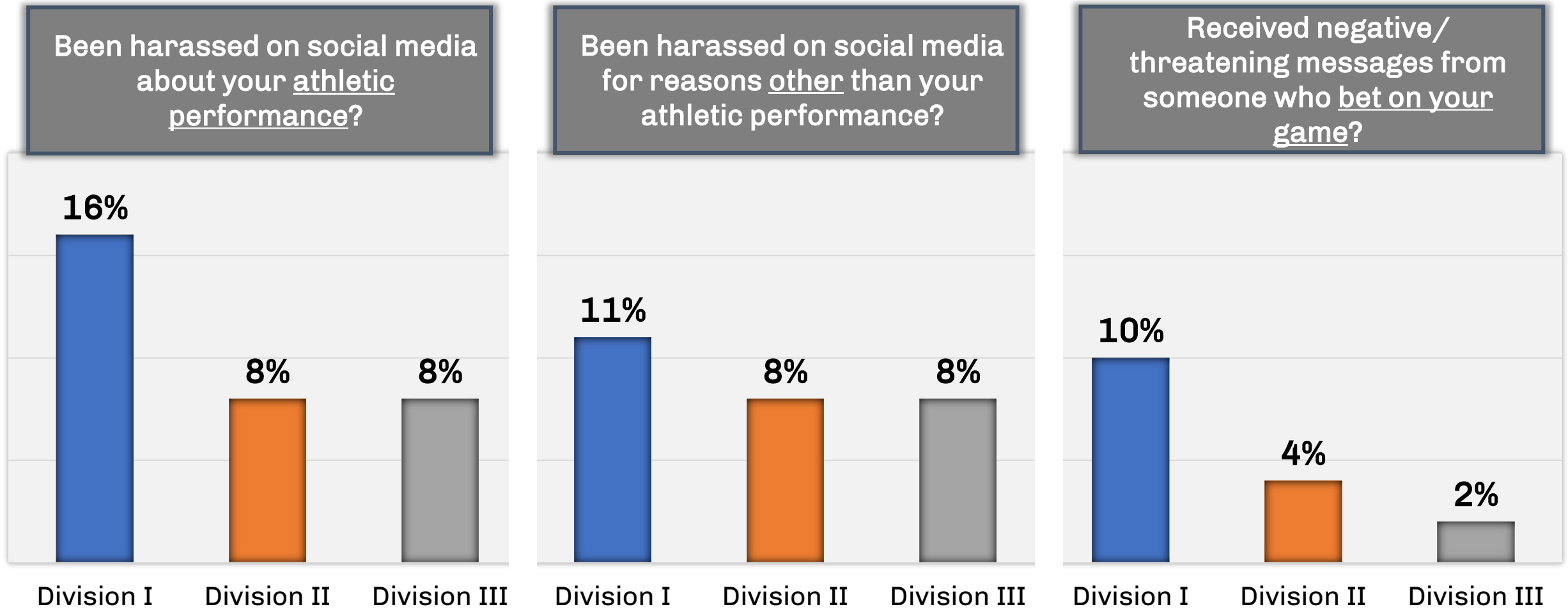
Social Media Harassment: “Have you ever ...”

(Percentage of Participants Who Responded “Yes”)



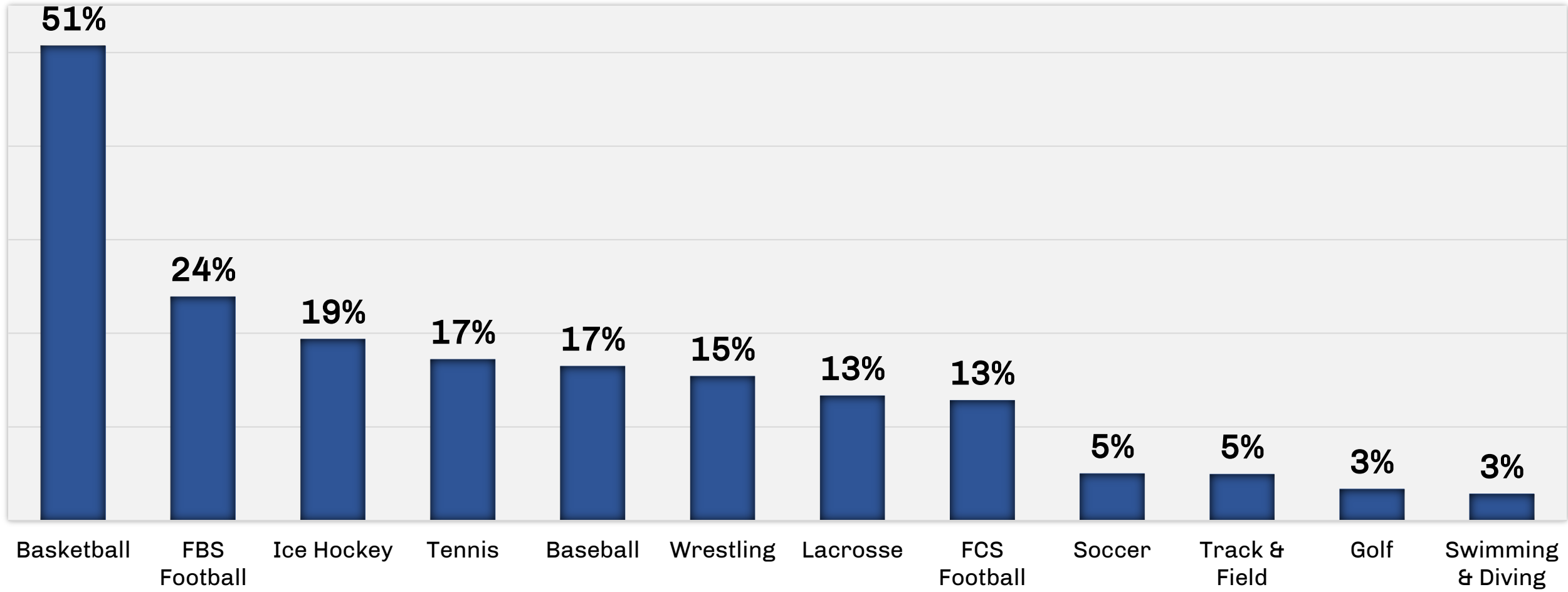
Social Media Harassment: “Have you ever ...”

(Percentage of Men’s Sports Participants Who Responded “Yes”)



Have you ever been harassed on social media about your athletic performance?

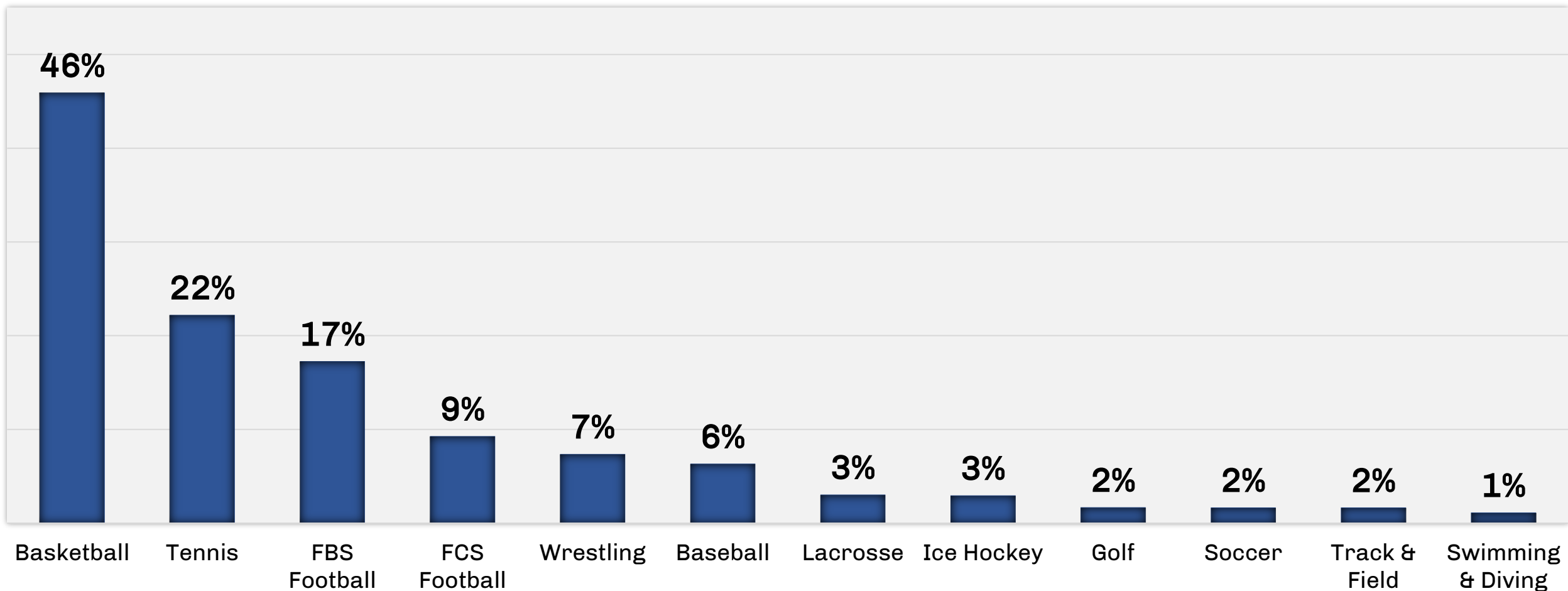
(Percentage of Division I Men's Sports Participants Who Responded "Yes")



Source: NCAA GOALS Study (2025).

Have you ever received negative or threatening messages from someone who bet on your game (e.g., via social media)?

(Percentage of Division I Men's Sports Participants Who Responded "Yes")



Source: NCAA GOALS Study (2025).

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 I Participants Who Endorsed “Positive” or “Very Positive”)

Likelihood of
graduating college

95%

98%

Ability to reach
career goals

88%

87%

Ability to transition from
college to career

81%

76%

■ 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

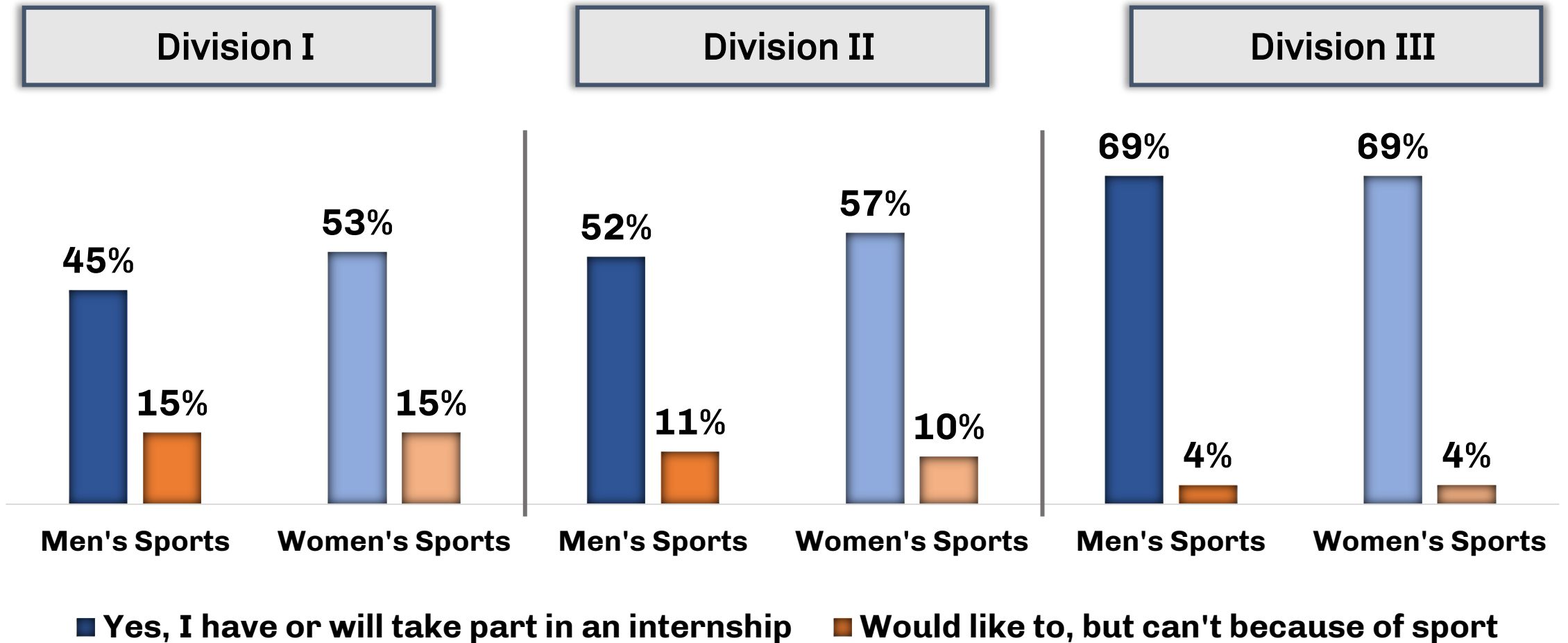
(Percentage Division I athletes endorsing that their college athletics experience has had a “positive” or “very positive” effect on the following)

Work ethic	95%
Ability to take responsibility for yourself	95%
Teamwork	93%
Goal setting	91%
Attention to detail	88%
Leadership skills	88%
Time management	86%

Dealing with change	84%
Understanding of people of other races, identities & backgrounds	84%
Coping in high-pressure environments	83%
Self-confidence	72%
Commitment to community service	65%
Ability to establish a desired image or personal brand	64%
Understanding when you're pushing yourself too hard	63%

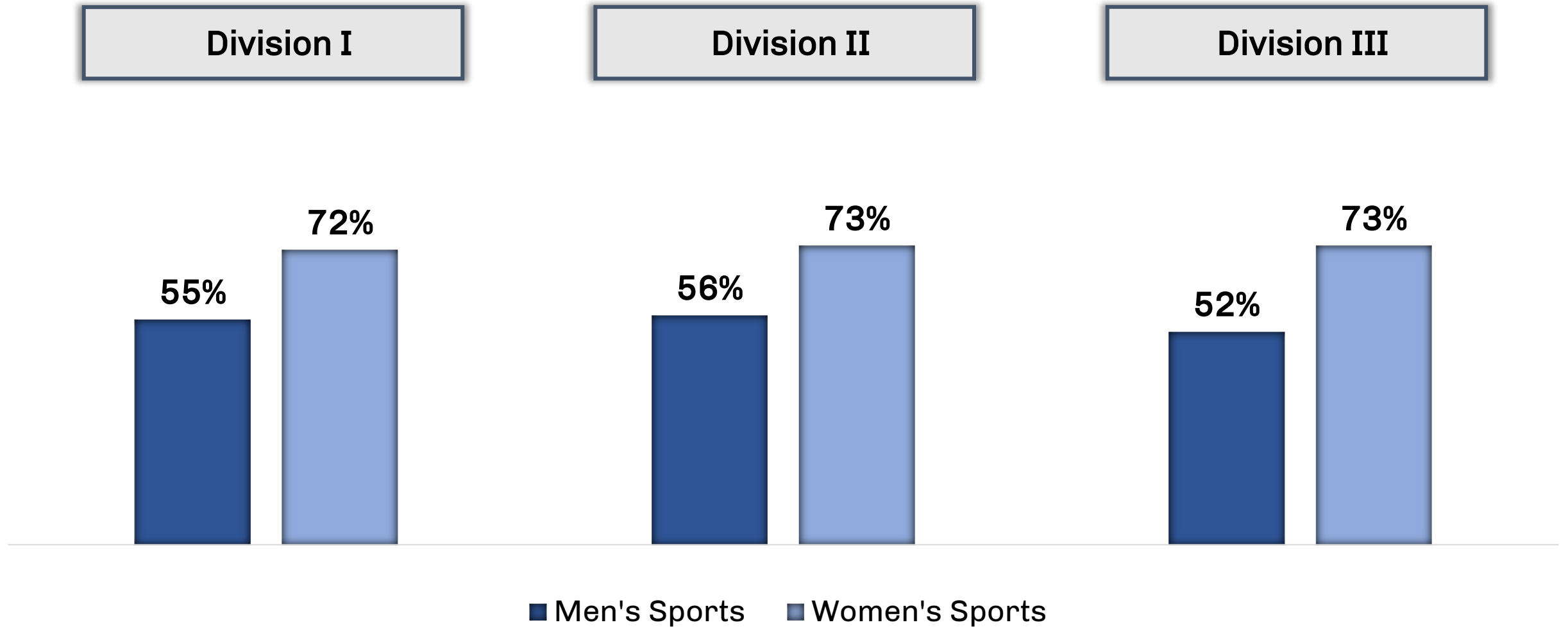
Internship Opportunities

(Those in their junior year and above)



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

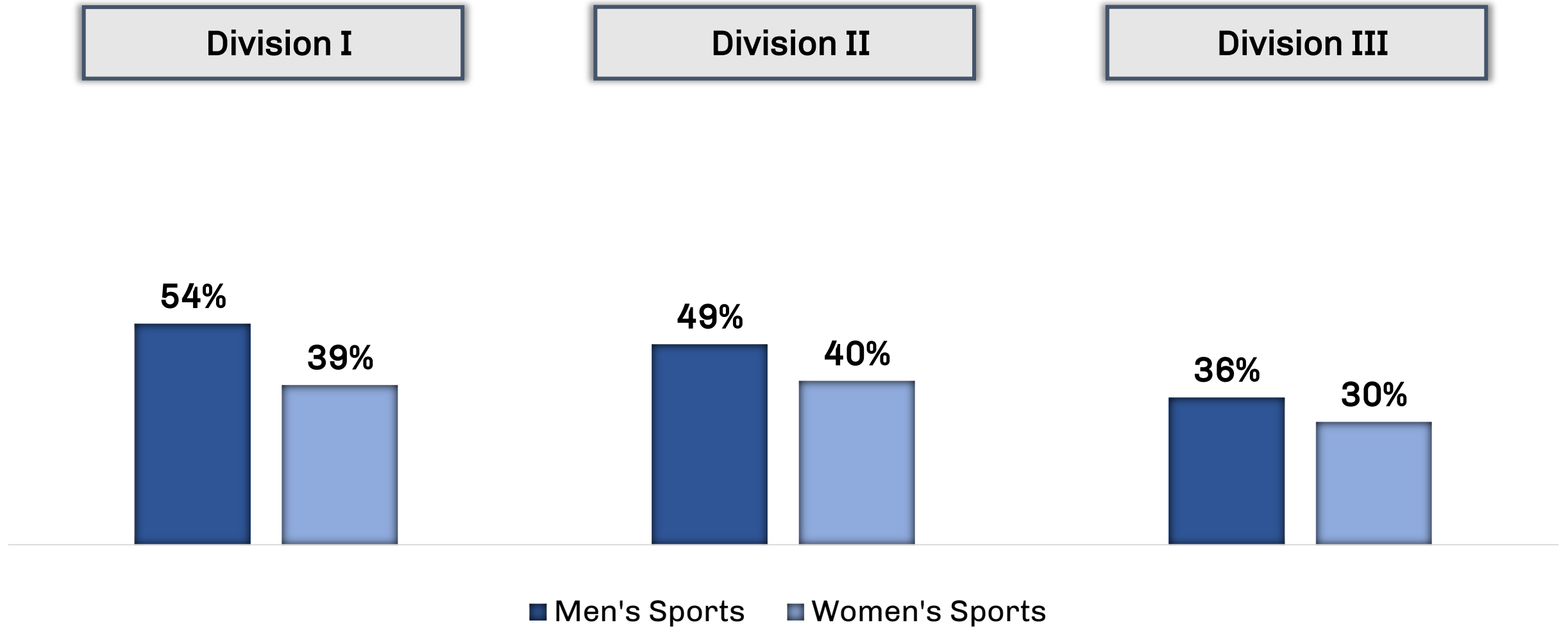
(Percentage Who Endorsed “Somewhat Likely” or “Very Likely”)



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).

Likelihood That Job After College Will Involve Sports

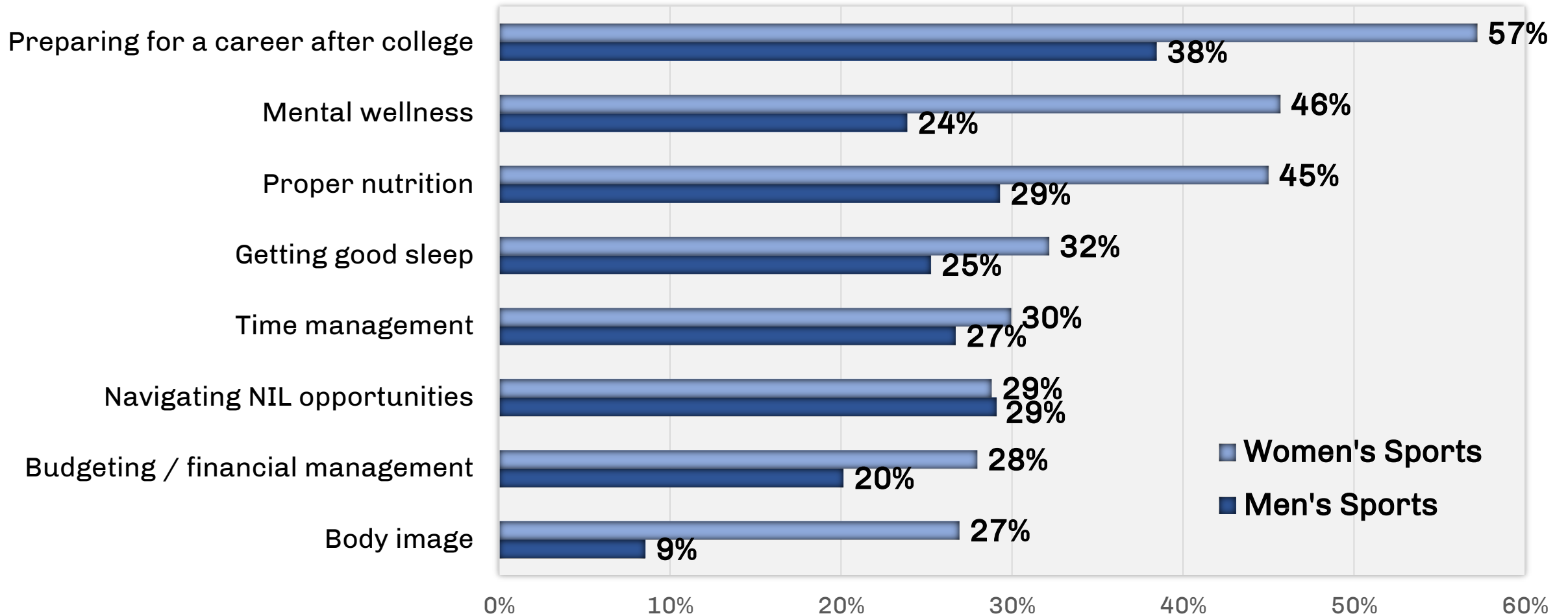
(Percentage Who Endorsed “Somewhat Likely” or “Very Likely”)



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

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

(Division I)



Note: Only topics endorsed by at least 25% of one sport gender in Division I are shown. Other topics included: study habits (15% M, 21% W), finding professional opportunities in sport after college (22% M, 21% W), living away from home (15% M, 19% W), academic resources (12% M, 19% W), conducting ourselves appropriately on campus/in the community (10% M, 8% W), drinking/substance misuse (7% M/W), concussion awareness (4% M, 5% W) and sexual violence prevention (3% M, 5% W). Source: NCAA GOALS Study (2025).



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