



Sports Policies and Procedures

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Sports Policies and Procedures

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The following policies and procedures pertain to all NCCAA member institutions, unless otherwise indicated as pertaining specifically to NCCAA-only member institutions or dually affiliated institutions.
- B. NCCAA-only institutions sponsoring sports not sanctioned by the NCCAA must also follow these policies and procedures for those sports in addition to eligibility rules. For any sport specific guidelines not listed, such as maximum number of contests, number of exhibition and scrimmage contests/dates, start dates, financial aid limits, etc., the current NAIA sport specific guidelines shall be followed and enforced. Verification of the NAIA sport specific guidelines with the NCCAA Director of Membership is recommended.

II. FREQUENCY OF CONTESTS

A. General Information

The following guidelines for frequency of play and scheduling pertain only to NCCAA member institutions. NCCAA institutions who are dually affiliated with NCAA, NAIA, or CCAA shall abide by the dual affiliation guidelines for frequency of play and scheduling. All other NCCAA institutions, whether or not dually affiliated with any other national organization, shall abide by the guidelines listed below.

B. Frequency of Play and Scheduling

1. The maximum number of varsity games, contests, or playing dates an institution may schedule is listed below. The number of junior varsity or freshman games, contests, or playing dates scheduled during the academic year cannot exceed the number of varsity games, contests, or playing dates scheduled during that academic year. Further, no student-athlete may compete in a sport in an academic year in more than the number of games, contests, or playing dates listed below (this includes varsity, junior varsity, freshman, etc.), excluding NCCAA, NAIA, NCAA, and CCAA approved postseason participation.

<u>Sport</u>	<u>Number of Games/Contests/Playing Dates</u>
Baseball	50 contests (See Sports Policies and Procedures section II.B.2.b. for information on scrimmages during the non-championship season.)
Basketball (M & W)	28 games (A student who participates in a varsity contest and a junior varsity contest, on the same day, and at the same location, is considered to have participated only in one game. A student may invoke this exception a maximum of 10 times during an academic year. It is the responsibility of each coaching staff to ensure that each student-athlete does not exceed the maximum of 10 exceptions in an academic year.)
Cross Country (M & W)	7 meets
Football	11 games, with a student limited to participating in no more than 15 contests (This includes varsity, junior varsity, freshman games, and scrimmages.)
Golf	12 matches/tournaments
Soccer (M & W)	18 games played at any time during the sport season. (See Sports Policies and Procedures section II.B.2.b. for information on scrimmages during the non-championship season.)
Softball	50 games (See Sports Policies and Procedures section II.B.2.b. for information on scrimmages during the non-championship season.)
Indoor Track (M & W)	10 meets
Outdoor Track (M & W)	10 meets or 12 meets if indoor track is not sponsored
Volleyball (M)	26 dates (See Sports Policies and Procedures section II.B.2.b. for information on scrimmages during the non-championship season.)
Volleyball (W)	26 dates (See Sports Policies and Procedures section II.B.2.b. for information on scrimmages during the non-championship season.)

For a contest of any kind (i.e., scrimmage, exhibition, game/meet, etc.), once the contest has commenced, the designation of the type of contest shall be officially recorded as such, and the designation cannot be changed retroactively.

CASEBOOK EXAMPLES

Scheduling

Approved ruling: The scheduling limitation is established per season. Any game, match or contest that must be cancelled may be re-scheduled with the same or another opponent so long as the total number of games played does not exceed the allowable limit for either institution or athlete. Contests that are forfeited in accordance with approved NCCAA policy shall count against the frequency of play limits.

Split Squads

Approved ruling: When a squad (e.g., golf, indoor and outdoor track and field) is split into two or more teams to compete in different matches or meets in a single day and no individual athlete competes in more than one meet or match on that day, this competition will be counted as only one varsity contest as it applies to the frequency of play limits.

Tournaments – Preseason and Postseason

Approved ruling: Conference qualifying tournaments held at the end of the season are considered postseason and will be approved by the NCCAA per the approval policy. Such tournaments do not count in the maximum number of scheduled contests/dates allowed. Conference or other tournaments held prior to the end of the season shall count against frequency of play limits.

2. Exhibitions and Scrimmages

- a. Exhibition: A competition against competitors not identified with the institution when:
 - 1) The competition does not meet the definition of a scrimmage pursuant to Section B, Item 18 of the NCCAA Eligibility and Casebook section.
 - 2) The competition is noted as an exhibition on the institutional schedule.
 - 3) For NCCAA-only Division I institutions, the competition is against a non-NCCAA only Division I opponent (e.g., exhibition can be vs. NAIA, NCAA, and other countable opponents but not another NCCAA-only Division I).
 - 4) For NCCAA-only Division II institutions, the competition is against a non-NCCAA only Division II opponent (e.g., exhibition can be vs. NAIA, NCAA, and other countable opponents, but not another NCCAA-only Division II opponent).

If the competition meets this definition, then it shall not be included in individual and team statistics, win/loss records, and coaching records. The competition shall count against NCCAA game limitations. An NCCAA institution shall be limited to one exhibition per season. The exhibition game shall count toward the 20% threshold for charging a season of competition.

In all sports except basketball an institution is allowed one exhibition competition per season. The competition must meet the definition of an exhibition listed above. The exhibition competition shall count as one varsity game, contest, or playing date within the limits stated above.

For the sport of basketball, an institution is allowed up to six exhibition competitions per season so long as the total number of games, exhibitions and scrimmages do not exceed 32. For the sport of basketball, an exhibition competition shall not count as a varsity game.

- b. Scrimmage: A competition against competitors not identified with the institution when:
 - 1) The competition is not listed or is noted as a scrimmage on the institutional schedule; and
 - 2) No scores or statistics are reported by NCCAA institutions.

For a contest to be considered a scrimmage, scores and statistics cannot be reported. This includes scores or statistics listed or appearing in an article on statistical reporting sites, athletic or institutional website, social media post (e.g., Facebook, X, Instagram), or community newspapers or websites.

Scrimmages shall not be allowed in the following intercollegiate sports: cross country, golf, and indoor and outdoor track and field. Students must be certified as eligible prior to participating in a scrimmage. Transfer students shall be governed by the association under which they competed.

A student participating in a contest that fits the definition of a scrimmage (Eligibility and Casebook section B, Item 18) shall not be charged a season of competition.

Students who have competed in only non-intercollegiate scrimmages shall not be charged a season of competition if the scrimmage(s) meet the definition of an NCCAA scrimmage, and if the student participates in no more than the number of scrimmages allowed for the sport.

The following number of scrimmages per sport shall be allowed in addition to the maximum number of varsity games, contests, or playing dates that an institution may schedule or in which a student may compete:

<u>Sport</u>	<u>Number of Scrimmage Dates</u>
Baseball	2 (Plus 3 additional scrimmage dates to be conducted before the end of the fall term. Student-athletes are not permitted to miss class for any reason related to these three additional dates.)
Basketball (M & W)	4
Cross Country (M & W)	0
Golf (M & W)	0
Soccer (M & W)	2 (Plus 3 additional scrimmage dates to be conducted after the fall term has concluded. Student-athletes are not permitted to miss class for any reason related to these three additional dates.)
Softball	2 (Plus 3 additional scrimmage dates to be conducted before the end of the fall term. Student-athletes are not permitted to miss class for any reason related to these three additional dates.)
Track & Field (M & W)	0
Volleyball (M)	2 (Plus 3 additional scrimmage dates to be conducted before the end of the fall term. Student-athletes are not permitted to miss class for any reason related to these three additional dates.)
Volleyball (W)	2 (Plus 3 additional scrimmage dates to be conducted after the fall term has concluded. Student-athletes are not permitted to miss class for any reason related to these three additional dates.)

3. In those sports where scrimmages are allowed, an institution that does not schedule or participate in the maximum number of allowable varsity games, meets, or playing dates may conduct additional scrimmages, of up to the NCCAA's limits. In no case can the combined number of scheduled contests and scrimmages exceed the maximum number listed.

4. Countable Games

For games to be considered countable (e.g., included in statistics, won-loss records, and coaching records), all the following must be true:

- a. The institution must be a four-year degree-granting institution.
- b. The team must be a varsity program.
- c. The institution must meet one of the following:
 - 1) Member of the NCCAA, NCAA, NAIA, CCAA, or Canadian U Sports. For Division II, NJCAA is also accepted.
 - 2) The institution must be accredited by one of the six recognized accrediting bodies in the U.S.: Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE), Higher Learning Commission (HLC), Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), or WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC); or accreditation with The Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE), Transnational Association of Christian College and Schools (TRACS), or Universities Canada.

NOTE: Additional institutions may be submitted for review for exceptions and added to the countable game list.

5. Minimum Number of Contests

Institutions must play the following minimum number of contests against accredited, upper-level, degree-granting institutions in the United States and/or Canada to be eligible for NCCAA postseason competition and regional/national postseason awards. (If an institution does not meet the minimum requirement, it can only be nominated for Scholar-Athlete and Scholar Team). To be included in NCCAA power ratings reports, the minimum game requirements for that sport must be met.

Men's Soccer	10 games	Men's Basketball	18 games
Women's Soccer	10 games	Women's Basketball	18 games
Women's Volleyball	15 matches	Softball	16 games
Men's Volleyball	9 matches	Baseball	16 games

NOTE: For dually affiliated institutions with CCAA, exhibitions against NCCAA opponents shall be included in power ratings due to CCAA's exhibition requirements.

6. Foreign Contests

A maximum of two contests against teams from foreign countries (excluding Canada and Mexico) played in the United States and/or Canada/Mexico shall be permitted without counting against the maximum allowable number. Contests held in a country (except Canada/Mexico) shall not apply to the limitation.

7. 24-Week Season

Each sport shall have a maximum 24-week practice and competition season established by each member institution. Frequency of play, practice, and scheduling policies shall be applied only during the period of August 1 to May 15, pursuant to the following instructions. The start date specified is the earliest possible date on which any activity meeting the definition of a practice or competition may occur, though teams are free to choose a later date. Scrimmages and exhibitions are excluded and not subject to the start date for competitions.

SPORT	START DATE FOR PRACTICES, SCRIMMAGES, EXHIBITIONS	START DATE FOR COMPETITIONS
Baseball	September 1 or the start of the institution's fall term, whichever is earlier	Thursday of last full weekend in January for games occurring after winter break; fall games are permissible anytime beginning September 1
Basketball (men's and women's)	38 days prior to first allowable game	4 th Thursday in October
Cross country (men's and women's)	17 days prior to first allowable meet	4 th Thursday in August
Golf (men's and women's)	2 nd Monday in August	4 th Thursday in August
Soccer (men's and women's)	17 days prior to first allowable game, not to precede August 1	3 rd Thursday in August
Softball	September 1 or the start of the institution's fall term, whichever is earlier	Thursday of last full weekend in January for games occurring after winter break; fall games are permissible anytime beginning September 1
Indoor track and field (men's and women's)	September 1	September 1
Outdoor track and field (men's and women's)	September 1	September 1
Volleyball (men's)	September 1	14 Thursdays prior to the sport's regional completion deadline; fall dates are permissible anytime beginning September 1
Volleyball (women's)	17 days prior to first allowable competition date, not to precede August 1	Division I: 14 weeks prior to the sport's regional completion deadline; if on a Saturday, the immediately preceding Friday is included. Division II: 12 weeks prior to the sport's regional completion deadline; if on a Saturday, the immediately preceding Friday is included.

Frequency of play, practice, and scheduling outside of this period is governed by each member institution and will not be regulated by the NCCAA.

There shall be no more than 3 break periods during the 24 weeks. NCCAA approved postseason participation shall not be counted as part of the 24-week period. A week is defined as Monday (12:00 a.m.) through Sunday (11:59 p.m.). Any practice or competition during this period shall constitute one of the 24 weeks permitted.

As an exception, a team participating in NCCAA approved postseason competition shall not count practice activities towards the team's 24-week season, as described below:

EXCEPTION 1: When a conference postseason competition occurs, any practice activities occurring during the week(s) of the competition shall be exempt. Once teams are selected for NCCAA National Championship competition, institutions not selected must cease practice activities or comply thereafter with the restrictions of the 24-week rule.

Any regular season or non-qualifying events occurring during this time must be counted towards the team's frequency of play limits, even if the week is exempt from the 24-week season due to this exception.

EXCEPTION 2: Practice activities for teams selected to participate in the NCCAA National Championship competition shall continue to be exempt. The team may continue to utilize the exception through its final contest in National Championship competition.

EXCEPTION 3: For all other forms of NCCAA approved postseason, practice activities occurring between the deadline for the sport's completion of conference/independent/unaffiliated competition and the team's participation in its final contest in NCCAA approved postseason shall not count towards the team's 24-week season. Once teams are selected for NCCAA approved postseason, institutions not selected for the NCCAA approved postseason must cease practice activities or comply thereafter within the restrictions of the 24-week rule. Teams selected to participate in NCCAA approved postseason must count all activities at the conclusion of its postseason participation.

CASEBOOK EXAMPLE

Break Periods

Approved Ruling: A break is any week Monday (12:00 a.m.) through Sunday (11:59 p.m.) or series of consecutive weeks in which no practice or competition occurs. Scheduled breaks for the institution that meet the definition (such as Christmas vacation) must be counted as one of the three allowable breaks if no practice or competition occurs.

8. Definition of Practice

Practice shall be defined as follows: An activity organized and/or directed by an identified member of the coaching staff of that sport in which appropriate equipment is used or instruction and/or evaluation of the athlete takes place.

CASEBOOK EXAMPLE

Conditioning

Approved Ruling: Conditioning and weight-training activities that do not utilize equipment associated with a sport will not be considered practice in that sport.

Activity Classes

Approved Ruling: A college activities class involving the teaching of sports skills that is open to all students will not be considered practice. A college activities class involving the teaching of sport skills only to invited students shall apply to the practice/competition season of that sport.

Alumni Game – Season of Competition

Approved Ruling: An alumni contest is considered an "in-house" event and shall be treated the same as an internal practice.

9. Institutional Day Off Policy

Each institution must establish a written policy providing every team and student-athlete with one day off per week from athletic participation. Institutions have the autonomy to determine how such policies are defined, implemented, and enforced. Each institution's policy must be published in its student-athlete handbook and on its athletics webpage and shall also be provided to the region. Each institution's policy must include an identified process or point of contact at the institution or region for student-athletes or other individuals who believe their institutional policy is being violated.

10. All-Star Competitions:

- a. A student-athlete may represent his/her NCCAA institution in an all-star competition under the following conditions:
 - 1) The student-athlete is eligible for NCCAA participation during the term in which the all-star contest occurs, or
 - 2) The all-star contest occurs during the academic year, or subsequent summer, in which the student-athlete completes his/her fourth season of competition and/or 10th semester/15th quarter term of attendance.
- b. A student-athlete is limited to participating in all-star competition for a particular sport on no more than two dates between August 1st and May 15th. There is no limit on the number of all-star contests in which a student may participate between May 16th and July 31st.

- c. Any or all expenses related to travel, meals, and lodging for the competition may be paid by the student-athlete, his/her NCCAA institution, approved conference, or the host of the all-star competition.
 - d. All-star contests in the sports of baseball, basketball, soccer, softball, and volleyball shall not count toward team or individual contest limits in the NCCAA Frequency of Contests. Practice activities in these sports directly related to the all-star competition, and consisting only of all-star competition participants, shall not count toward any team's 24-week season provided such activities occur no more than five days prior to the start of the competition.
 - e. All-star contests in all other sports shall count against frequency of play and scheduling limits.
 - f. NCCAA coaches may administer, direct, and/or conduct all-star related practice and game activities that involve student-athletes identified with other institutions. Such actions by a coach shall not be considered violations of NCCAA recruiting or tryout regulations and shall not trigger the notification requirement in the NCCAA Handbook.
 - g. All-Star competitions may not use the NCCAA logo, Game Plan 4 LIFE logo, or any other NCCAA logo or trademark without the prior approval of the National Office.
11. At no time can a contest (scrimmage or game/meet) be added to the schedule to allow for the serving of any suspension by a student-athlete or coach. Should a contracted opponent drop a program during the season, thus necessitating a replacement contest, then the replacement game would not be impacted by the above restriction.
12. The NCCAA recommends that all schools implement the use of game contracts for all contests. These contracts should include the dates played (home and away), what penalties should occur if failure to meet the conditions of the contract, signatures by both schools Athletics Directors, etc. Samples can be provided by contacting the Director of Membership.
13. Forfeits
- a. Each member institution in a forfeited game shall enter the results of the contest in its records in the same manner as the NCCAA to prevent confusion in national ranking of team and coaching records.
 - b. If a forfeit is declared while a game is in progress, all statistics are voided unless the game has reached a "reasonable point of conclusion" **per NCAA Sport rules** (e.g., 30 minutes in basketball, 5 innings in baseball, 5 innings in softball, 70 minutes in soccer), in which case all statistics shall count and be reflected in the records. The team's won-loss record and coach's record shall include the forfeit, but if the statistics are voided, all averages in future ranking shall be computed without inclusion of the forfeited game.
 - c. If a game is interrupted and the officials do not declare a winner or loser in such a contest, the status shall be "no contest." Statistics shall not be counted, nor shall either team's won-loss record or coaches record be changed.
 - d. If institutions have agreed to and signed a written contract for a game(s) (or have an approved conference **or NCCAA regional** schedule) and one institution fails to abide by that contract, a forfeit shall be awarded to the offended institution provided the following conditions are met. (The Declaration of Intent to Participate serves as a contract for all **NCCAA** postseason competition.):
 - 1) The Athletics Director or Faculty Athletics Representative of the offended institution must submit a written request for the forfeit to the NCCAA **Director of Communications**. The request must be submitted **via email** within 10 days of the forfeit in question or prior to the start of postseason competition, whichever is earlier, **to the NCCAA Director of Communications**.
 - 2) A copy of the contract signed and dated at least seven days prior to the originally scheduled date of competition or bracket assignments for postseason play must accompany the written request for the forfeit.
- EXCEPTION:** Weather conditions and/or other acts of God which threaten the safety of an institution's representatives may be evaluated for their impact. Such conditions may or may not be grounds to deny a request for a forfeit.
- e. The NCCAA National Office must be notified **immediately** in writing should an institution officially **discontinue** a sport during a season. Contracted contests that are dropped after August 10 for fall sports, October 10 for winter sports, and January 10 for spring sports are subject to the awarding of forfeits. Once an institution announces discontinuance of a sport, it must **also** notify all institutions remaining on the schedule **immediately**.
 - f. **Dually affiliated institutions must immediately notify the NCCAA National Office of forfeits their conference and/or national governing body has awarded.**
 - g. **If an NCCAA-only institution is notified by a non-NCCAA-only institution of a violation that resulted in a forfeit after a completed contest, the NCCAA institution must notify the National Office immediately and include the official correspondence from the offending institution, its conference, and/or its national governing body.**
 - h. **Forfeits awarded for completed contests shall count toward power ratings (with the results points multiplier being calculated as 1-0 result for all sports regardless of the official forfeit scoreline for the sport) and the**

minimum number of games requirement for inclusion in power ratings (e.g., ineligible player, conduct issues, etc.). Forfeits awarded for games not played shall not count toward power ratings and the minimum number of games requirements for inclusion in power ratings (e.g., teams not showing up, not honoring contracts, etc.).

III. CONDUCT, BEHAVIOR, AND ETHICS

The following is expected of participating institutions:

1. It shall be the responsibility of a participating institution to enforce the highest principles of Christian conduct, ethical practices, and character.
2. The Athletics Director is primarily responsible for both the principles and practices of his/her athletic program being consistent with the values of the NCCAA as stated in the Game Plan for LIFE: Love, Integrity, Faith, and Excellence. Each institution is to review the NCCAA #KingChasing Code of Ethics with its coaches and the #KingChasing Commitment with its student-athletes, then return a signed copy to the National Office by September 30. Expectations of Behavior at an NCCAA Event are found in [Appendix A](#).
3. Student-Athletes, coaches, and institutional personnel who represent the NCCAA member institution are subject to all NCCAA rules as stated in the handbook. Inappropriate behavior is not acceptable before, during, or after contests, at the hotel, or in public while representing the institution.
4. Conflict Resolution Procedures
The following steps are to be followed if a conduct incident occurs in a contest or at your facility:
 - a. Coach, official, and/or athletic administration shall address the incident or issue immediately and take corrective measures.
 - b. If ejected, the student-athlete(s) and/or coach(es) is/are removed to the locker room, bus, or other designated area.
 - c. Within 24 hours, report the incident to the Athletics Director of each institution and to the Regional Coordinator.
 - d. Within 48 hours, complete the Incident and/or Ejection Reporting Form. (See Forms & Procedures or Infractions & Penalties sections.)
 - e. The Coach and/or Athletics Director from each institution shall talk through the issues to resolve any concerns.
 - f. If issues or concerns are unable to be resolved, those involved shall work through the Regional Coordinator and then the National Office, specifically with the Director of Membership.

IV. GAME/EVENT MANAGEMENT EXPECTATIONS

Management expectations of NCCAA games or events are as follows:

1. Every institution must assign a person who is solely responsible for crowd control at contests. The assigned crowd control manager is responsible for monitoring and stopping inappropriate behavior.
2. After every contest, teams and coaches shall shake hands with opponents.
3. Before every contest, team captains and coaches shall shake hands with officials.
4. Support groups must be placed as far away from the opponent's bench as possible.
5. Making personal attacks is unacceptable and must be addressed by the crowd control manager.
6. No player, coach, or bench personnel may leave the playing area and enter the spectator area of the facility.
7. Inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to, fighting, taunting, profane or vulgar language, [hand gestures](#), disrespectful attitude toward hotel personnel, physical abuse or damage to institution property or host hotel property, and disrespectful attitude toward contest participants.

V. EQUITABLE PROGRAM OFFERINGS REQUIREMENT

New Members failing to provide equitable sport offerings for both genders shall be placed on Provisional Status. Regarding sport sponsorship, continuing members must comply with Title IX offerings by the academic year assigned by the Administration Committee. All NCCAA institutions should be in compliance with federal Title IX expectations regarding sport offerings and proportionality.

VI. ADDING A SPONSORED SPORT

Institutions desiring to add a varsity sport (sanctioned by NCCAA) must include the sport on the membership renewal form to receive NCCAA member services (e.g., statistics, awards, rankings/ratings, postseason eligibility, etc.). [Institutions should also provide advance notice to its region](#). Any sport added after the membership dues deadline shall be ineligible for NCCAA member services. Considerations for adding a sport are:

1. The new sport fits within the institution's Title IX compliance.
2. The sport has adequate facilities that meet NCCAA requirements.
3. The sport has financial support.
4. Coaching staff understands recruiting, eligibility, and financial aid requirements.

VII. DECLARATION OF DIVISION CHANGE

If an institution desires to change the division in which it competes, it must follow these guidelines:

1. Make a three-year commitment to compete in the new division.
2. Meet eligibility guidelines in ALL sanctioned sports.
3. Meet financial aid guidelines in ALL sanctioned sports.
4. Submit a written proposal to the NCCAA Director of Membership who shall then submit it to the Administration Committee of the NCCAA Board of Directors for final approval. The request is due by March 1.

VIII. DECLARATION OF DUAL DIVISION STATUS

If an institution desires to compete in different NCCAA divisions (both Divisions I and II) with its intercollegiate athletic program, it must follow these guidelines:

1. Meet Division I eligibility guidelines in Division I sanctioned sports and meet Division II eligibility guidelines in Division II sanctioned sports.
2. Indicate which sport(s) is requesting to change divisions.
3. Make a three-year commitment to compete in the different division for the requested sport(s).
4. If athletic financial aid is awarded to the student-athlete for ANY sport, then the student-athlete may not participate in any sport that is Division II status (for that particular year).
5. To compete at the Division II level, both the institution and the student-athlete must meet the Division II stipulations (no athletic scholarships or aid).
6. Submit a written proposal to the NCCAA Director of Membership who shall then submit it to the Administration Committee of the NCCAA Board of Directors for final approval. A request from a prospective institution shall be treated as an exceptional case to the present Constitution and Bylaws. The request is due by March 1.
7. Division II institutions competing in a uni-division sport(s) with a desire to provide athletic scholarship or aid in the uni-division sport(s) must submit a written proposal as stated above.
8. If the institution desires to continue with dual division status after the three-year commitment, the institution shall submit a request for a new three-year commitment by the March 1 deadline of the third year.

IX. REGION CHANGE REQUEST

If an institution desires to change the region in which it competes, it must submit a written proposal to the NCCAA Director of Membership. It shall then be presented to the Administration Committee of the NCCAA Board of Directors for final approval. The request is due by March 1.

X. CLUB SPORTS

Institutions must clearly delineate a club sport as such internally and externally. Club teams are not a varsity or junior varsity team. The institution can have a club team in the same sport that competes at the varsity level.

1. Eligibility: The NCCAA does not govern club sport eligibility. However, institutions and/or club leagues may impose their own participation eligibility rules.
2. Participation:
 - a. Club Team Student: A club team student may not practice or compete with the equivalent varsity or junior varsity team in the same academic year. If a club team student joins the equivalent varsity or junior varsity team in the same academic year, all eligibility and compliance rules shall be enforced, and the student-athlete may not return to club team participation that academic year.
 - b. Varsity or Junior Varsity Student-Athlete: A student-athlete on a varsity or junior varsity team cannot participate on the equivalent club team during the same academic year.
3. Season of Competition: Participation on a club team does not charge a season of competition. However, penalties for varsity or junior varsity student-athletes competing on a club team in the same academic year could include being charged a season of competition.
4. Varsity Coach Involvement: An identified member of the institution's coaching staff may not organize and/or direct an activity (per the NCCAA definition of practice) or coach during competitions with an institutional club team in the same sport he/she coaches during the period of August 1 to May 15.

5. **Unattached Athletes:** Please reference Exception 2 under Season of Competition in the Eligibility handbook.

XI. CANADIAN DUALY AFFILIATED MEMBER DECLARATION

CCAA allows for five years of eligibility (seasons of competition). However, NCCAA members dually affiliated with the CCAA must follow NCCAA's four seasons of competition rule (using CCAA's definition of charging years of eligibility/seasons of competition). After completing four years of eligibility/seasons of competition, student-athletes shall not be eligible to participate.

NCCAA members dually affiliated with the CCAA must declare which sports shall participate in the NCCAA and follow the four seasons of competition rule. This declaration requires a three-year commitment for sports that are declared and also for those that are not. Every three years a new three-year commitment is required to be submitted by March 1, during the final year of the commitment. For sport(s) that are not declared, the student-athletes are not required to follow the NCCAA's four seasons of competition rule, in addition to the team(s) not being eligible for member services such as individual/team awards, NCCAA rankings/ratings, NCCAA regional/national postseason, voting items presented to the sport coaching body, etc. during the three-year duration.

XII. REQUIRED ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT STAFFING

Institutions must provide adequate staffing including, but not limited to, athletics director, faculty athletics representative and/or compliance officer, athletics trainer, senior woman leader, and sports information director.

A. Senior Woman Leadership

All NCCAA institutions shall name a senior woman leader to promote meaningful representation of women in the leadership and management of intercollegiate sports on NCCAA campuses. This role provides an identifiable female presence at each member institution with whom staff and student-athletes can communicate. The role of senior woman leader may be held by a female administrator (including the Athletics Director) or coach who shall serve as a key participant in senior-level management decisions regarding intercollegiate athletics on campus.

The athletics director may designate the role to any female within the athletic department as he/she deems appropriate. A senior woman leader's functions shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Communicate regularly with the athletics director, not only for leadership development, but also to consult on major departmental and university initiatives;
2. Participate in providing leadership and guidance in the area of Title IX and gender equity planning for the overall department, to include both men's and women's sports;
3. Assist the athletics director and senior management with strategic planning processes and decision making for the athletics department;
4. Participate in budget development and major financial decisions for the athletics department operations and initiatives; and
5. Advocate for student-athlete well-being while also serving as a mentor and resource for direct reports and other athletics staff members.

As assigned by the athletics director, a senior woman leader's functions could also include the following:

1. Fully engage in the hiring, onboarding, and evaluation processes for coaches and staff;
2. Meet regularly with institutional senior leaders (e.g., president/chancellor, vice presidents, etc.); and
3. Assist in providing leadership oversight for both men's and women's sports.

B. Faculty Athletics Representative

A faculty athletics representative shall:

1. Be appointed by the president or president's delegate of the institution to represent the institution in the development of sound educational policies for athletics;
2. Be a regular member of the faculty, but not assigned as a coach or athletics administrator;
3. Be charged with the responsibility of ensuring that all participants in intercollegiate competition are eligible in accordance with the rules and regulations of the association prior to representing the institution in any manner;
4. Meet with the institution's president or president's delegate to review NCCAA issues regarding academics and athletics;
5. Work with the athletics director to provide a rules education program that shall include educating the institution's:

- a. Administrators who participate in eligibility certification (e.g., registrar, newly appointed faculty athletics representative, or athletics director);
- b. Sports coaches;
- c. Student-athletes; and
- d. Appropriate faculty (including advising centers).

C. Athletics Compliance Officer

When appointed, an athletics compliance officer shall work in cooperation with the faculty athletics representative and athletics director to foster an environment of education and adherence to all institutional, regional, and NCCAA regulations.

An athletics compliance officer may:

1. Assist the athletics director, faculty athletics representative, athletic staff, students, and fans in understanding and abiding by institutional, regional, and NCCAA regulations.
2. Perform duties that may include researching students' athletic experience and/or amateurism and tracking participation dates, practice seasons, and/or team financial aid limits.
3. Perform duties as requested by the faculty athletics representative that may include preparation of eligibility in accordance with institutional, regional, and NCCAA rules.
4. Assist the faculty athletics representative in providing a rules education program for students, coaches, and administrators regarding institutional, regional, and NCCAA rules.
5. Be a member of the athletics office (e.g., coach or athletics department staff) or an institutional staff member (e.g., academic advisor, etc.) but not assigned as a faculty athletics representative or athletics director.
6. Work with the athletics director, faculty athletics representative, and registrar to develop policies and procedures to monitor and ensure compliance with all NCCAA and regional rules and regulations.

XIII. NCCAA CERTIFIED ATHLETIC TRAINER (ATC) POLICY

The NCCAA has approved that the following provisions be in place for all intercollegiate games, contests, matches, and meets hosted by member schools in providing care to all participating athletes. The following information is considered standard operating procedure by all NCCAA institutions. The NCCAA does not assume any responsibility for medical care and athletic training services provided to student-athletes.

- A. Medical Coverage: It is the responsibility of each member institution hosting an event to protect the health of, and provide a safe environment for, all participating student-athletes. Therefore, it is the responsibility of each member institution to establish guidelines that are reasonable, attainable, and appropriate for their student-athletes and the sport offerings of their athletic department at each venue.
 1. NCCAA member schools are required to have an on-site licensed and certified athletic trainer physically available at all intercollegiate home games, contests, matches, and meets, regardless if the sport is sanctioned by the NCCAA. These games should take priority over host institutions' practices elsewhere on campus. In-season sports should also take priority over out-of-season sports.
 2. It is strongly recommended that all institutionally employed head coaches and any member of the coaching staff in position to independently supervise student-athletes engaged in athletic activity maintain current and valid certification in adult CPR/AED, in addition to training in first aid and prevention of disease transmission.
 3. Physician coverage: some institutions have physicians on a limited-call basis in addition to the ATC.
 4. An NCCAA member institution athletic trainer shall be on-site when hosting an NCCAA Regional or National Championship.
 5. If the member institution does not have an ATC on staff, they shall be required to outsource and contract ATC services for their intercollegiate games, contests, matches, and meets. The ATC must be certified by the National Athletic Trainers' Association Board of Certification (NATABOC), or an equivalent affiliation, and maintain a current license in the state of practice.
 6. The host ATC shall be available a minimum of 90 minutes prior to game time and 30 minutes post-game time to provide for pre-game and post-game needs of student-athletes.
 7. In extenuating circumstances that would prevent an ATC from being available, the host institution shall notify the visiting team no later than 24-48 hours prior to the contest.
- B. Emergency Communication and Planning: Each institution must have an emergency action plan in place in case of serious injury and provide training for staff.
 1. Specific training to be included in planning is for head and neck injuries, cardiac arrest, heat injury, sickle cell collapse, and mental health.

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2. Emergency communication, such as telephone, cellular phone, or radio should be available at all sites in case of an emergency (including 911 response time of less than 10 minutes from time of call).
 3. Emergency numbers for local hospital(s) should be provided to each participating institution.
- C. Medical Supplies: Visiting institutions not traveling with an ATC shall bring all relative medical supplies (tape, pre-wrap, pain reliever, etc.) to provide the host ATC for pre-game, in-game, and post-game prevention and treatment.
1. The host institution shall provide a universal precaution (biohazard) kit at both benches for all contests.
 2. The kit should include: latex gloves, bleach or similar product, gauze or towelette, and biohazard bags or waste bucket.
 3. Other than the above-mentioned supplies, each team shall provide their own medical necessities. (e.g., tape, bandages, etc.). Typical medical kits should include basic first aid supplies, tape supplies, etc.
 4. For specifics on each institution's training room resources, please contact institutions you will visit at least 48 hours in advance.
- D. Special Considerations
1. Because of limited space at some institutions, please call ahead to determine when the training room is available for visitors' use.
 2. If modalities are needed, please provide the host athletic trainer with an athletic trainer's prescription for the specific modality.
 3. For other special requests, please call the host head athletic trainer in advance of your visit.
- E. **Annual** Pre-Participation Physicals: All athletes who compete for an NCCAA institution are required to have either a physical examination on file with the school's athletic training staff or a **signed** waiver of a physical examination.
1. All new or transferring student-athletes shall be required to have a physical or waiver by the school's designated health care professional, or other approved health care professional as listed below, and submitted to the athletic training staff before the student-athlete is allowed to participate in any team activities (e.g., weightlifting, conditioning, and on the court/field activities).
 2. It is up to the institution to determine if they require students who are going through the try-out process or who have practice players to obtain a physical or sign a release of liability waiver before try-outs begin.
 3. To protect the student-athletes as well as each institution, the NCCAA requires that physicals are performed by an approved healthcare provider. Any physical that is completed by a professional other than these shall be void and not accepted as clearance to participate: Medical Doctor (MD & DO), Physician's Assistant, Nurse Practitioner.
- F. Concussion Guidelines: The following information is a guideline for the care of student-athletes for the NCCAA regarding concussions.
1. The NCCAA recommends that all schools follow the protocols set forth by the physicians who cover their athletic teams. The host certified athletic trainer shall be responsible for making the call on whether a student-athlete has a concussion unless the visiting school has traveled with a certified athletic trainer.
 2. The student-athlete should be removed from play as soon as a concussion is suspected and evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional, such as a certified athletic trainer, team physician, or a health care professional experienced in concussion evaluation and management. Student-athletes with a concussion are not allowed to return to the game that day. They should not return to playing until all symptoms have been resolved during rest and exertion. A health care professional with experience in evaluating concussions should clear the student-athlete before returning to play is considered.
 3. If the student-athlete is determined not to have a concussion by the certified athletic trainer, the student-athlete may be allowed to return to competition.
- G. Education And Structure
1. The education of coaching staff and game management personnel should be conducted annually.
 2. Topics to review are cardiac arrest, head and neck injury, concussion, heat stroke and illness, sickle cell trait, and mental health, etc.
 3. Programs, policies, and procedures should be reviewed annually.
 4. Institutions must create an administrative system where athletics healthcare professionals are able to make decisions with only the best interests of student-athletes at the forefront.

XIV. ANNUAL RULES EDUCATION

All staff members involved in the administration of athletics shall complete an annual online rules education training program. For NCCAA-only members, this includes the faculty athletics representative, registrar, and all identified athletic department administrators and coaches, including but not limited to all paid and voluntary head, associate, assistant, and graduate assistant coaches. For dually affiliated members, this includes all identified athletic department administrators and head coaches. For each individual required to participate in the training program, comprehensive rules education is required upon initial appointment to his/her role.

New coaches must complete the required training within the first 60 days of hire or prior to the coach's first competition, whichever is earlier. New staff members must complete the required training within the first 60 days of hire or prior to the institution's next certification, whichever is earlier. Returning coaches and staff members must complete the required training prior to the earliest starting date for competition for any sport sponsored by the institution. Each institution shall verify that its staff members complete the requisite training every year. Institutions failing to have all staff complete the training as required shall be subject to disciplinary penalties.

Each individual required to participate in the training program must achieve an 80% grade in each required training within his/her track. Individuals can retake any quiz as many times as needed until the 80% grade is achieved. Athletic Directors shall manage this requirement internally and annually sign a form that the institution is in compliance. (See [Appendix E](#) and Forms and Procedures section.)

XV. CATASTROPHIC (CAT) INSURANCE POLICY

Institutions that are affiliated with the NCCAA only must participate in the Catastrophic Insurance Policy of the NCCAA. The insurance program is overseen by Bob McCloskey Insurance, and billing and payment shall be included with the NCCAA membership dues process. Coverage is provided for participation in scheduled games, supervised practices sessions, and authorized group or team travel that is paid for or reimbursed by the sponsoring organization in connection with such games or practice sessions. Failure to participate in the catastrophic insurance policy may result in penalties and sanctions, including teams being ineligible for postseason competition.

XVI. ANNUAL CONVENTION ATTENDANCE

- A. The Annual Business Meeting of participating institutions shall be held once a year in conjunction with the Annual Convention. Each institution shall be required to have a voting delegate at the Annual Convention including the entirety of the State of the Association, Hall of Fame Event, Regional Meetings, and the Annual Business Meeting. Failure to have a delegate in attendance shall result in all sports for the upcoming academic year being placed on restrictive probation. A member institution may utilize the Proxy Ballot once every three years when attendance is not possible by any institutional representative. When a proxy ballot is used, attendance becomes required for the next two years.
- B. The Full Member Proxy Ballot Authorization Form (see Forms & Procedures) may be used once every three years by member institutions unable to attend the Annual Business Meeting. The member institution wishing to utilize a proxy shall contact another member institution to discuss its voting stance prior to submitting the proxy form.
- C. New members must send either the Athletics Director or Vice-President over Athletics to the NCCAA Annual Convention the first two years of membership.

XVII. RECRUITING GUIDELINES

- A. Campus Visitation
The NCCAA's perspective toward campus visitation of prospective students is formulated from the following three major principles:
 - 1. The protection of the student in maintaining normal academic progress in high school and junior college.
 - 2. The coordination of this rule with the overall policies of the institution affecting procurement of students with special talents.
 - 3. The control of tryouts consistent with making the intercollegiate program an integral part of the total program without legislating against the student.

B. Tryouts

Individual or group tryouts may be conducted, on the member institution's campus only, for the purpose of assisting in the assessment of athletics promise if tryouts are a part of the general institutional policy in the evaluation and admission of students with special talents. Tryouts, where permitted, shall be limited to no more than two days for a specific student at a member institution.

1. Campus Location

- a. An institution's "campus" shall be defined as institutional property or the practice/playing area where an institution conducts its regular season practices and/or contests. Tryouts of prospective students, in accordance with NCCAA Bylaws, shall not constitute practice, although institutional team members may be involved.
- b. Tryouts must be institutional policy and must apply to all students with special talents. The policy cannot apply solely to athletes.

2. Coach Observation

NCCAA coaches may attend high school and junior college competitions and/or practices to observe potential student-athletes. During these observation periods, the NCCAA coach cannot ask the student to exhibit a particular skill or direct or ask the coach to organize the workout in a particular manner. Further contact or discussion with the student must fall under the parameters of the recruiting bylaws.

3. Sport Clinics/Summer Camps

Clinics and summer camps conducted by coaches and or sport programs shall not be considered tryouts if the coach conducting the clinic or camp does not:

- a. Give prospective student-athletes special instruction not offered to others in attendance.
- b. Give prospective student-athletes repeated use in drills or as the "example player."
- c. Give prospective student-athletes special treatment that the rest of the attendees do not receive (e.g., participate in the clinic without paying a fee which all other attendees must pay, free transportation from the coaches, etc.). These types of benefits shall constitute a violation of the Financial Aid Bylaw.

4. Summer Participation

Prospective students (entering freshman and transfers) are allowed to engage in informal conditioning activities with continuing student-athletes. Prospective students are not permitted to practice or compete with an institution's team prior to the beginning of the 24-week season unless the student is enrolled full-time in summer coursework at the NCCAA institution or enrolled in 12 institutional credit hours for the fall term at the NCCAA institution.

5. Expenses

- a. No part of the travel expense, meals, and lodging of prospective students making visitations to an institution shall be paid by the institution unless such practice is a part of the general institutional policy in procurement of other students with special talents and not only for the express purpose of securing athletes.
- b. Expenses Paid by Institution
It is permissible for an athletic department to provide meals and/or general expenses for prospective student-athletes only if it is part of the institution's general practice to do so for students with special talents who are participating in a campus visit or tryout. While there is no monetary limit, the athletic department should provide similarly priced meals and or reimbursement for travel, lodging, etc., to those provided for non-athletes in line with institutional policy.

6. Recruitment of an Enrolled Student-Athlete

a. Contact by Student-Athlete

- 1) If, during the school year or summer vacation period, the Athletics Director, Faculty Athletics Representative, Senior Woman Leader, Compliance Officer, or coach of a member institution is contacted or becomes aware of contact by an athlete who enrolled at another NCCAA-only institution, it shall be the responsibility of the contacted institution (Athletics Director, Faculty Athletics Representative, Senior Woman Leader, or Compliance Officer) to notify, in writing, the institution (Athletics Director, Faculty Athletics Representative, Senior Woman Leader, or Compliance Officer) where the athlete is presently enrolled within 10 days following the first contact.

EXCEPTION: If an NCCAA student-athlete has a signed release or other documentation from their current Athletics Director permitting the student-athlete to participate in recruiting conversations with other NCCAA institutions, written notification is not required to be provided to the student's current NCCAA institution.

A coach or another representative of a member institution may respond to a contact by an athlete only after the enrolled athlete's institution (Athletics Director, Faculty Athletics Representative, Senior Woman Leader, or Compliance Officer) has been notified as prescribed above.

- 2) A coach or another representative of a member institution shall not initiate contact with an athlete who has enrolled at another NCCAA-only institution. It is permissible to contact a student who is currently enrolled at a two-year institution or four-year institution (not NCCAA-only), but it is still recommended to notify the institution since that is the most ethical process.

EXCEPTION: If a member institution has formally announced its closure, a coach or another representative of a member institution may initiate contact with student-athletes at the closing institution. Notification of contact to the student's current NCCAA institution shall not be required. An official announcement is defined as a formal, publicly released statement by the institution, approved by its governing authority, that confirms the closure, includes an effective date, and has been communicated to affected student-athletes and the NCCAA.

CASEBOOK EXAMPLE

Responding to Contact from a Student

Case: An NCCAA coach attempted to recruit a graduating high school senior this summer. The student decided to stay close to home and enrolled at a local NCCAA-only institution. The student called the coach the following fall expressing a desire to transfer. Because the coach had been in contact with this student since high school, does the coach have an obligation to inform the student's current institution of the renewed contact with the enrolled student?

Approved Ruling: Yes. The student in question is enrolled in an NCCAA-only institution. The coach, therefore, cannot discuss the possibility of transferring (e.g., requirements, possible financial aid, team openings, etc.) until the Athletics Director, Faculty Athletics Representative, Senior Women Leader, or Compliance Officer at the other institution has been notified in writing of the student's declared interest in the NCCAA coach's institution. This notification to the other institution must be made within 10 days of contact.

- b. Responding to a Representative of a Student
Contact made by another individual (e.g., parent, high school coach, roommate) on behalf of the student, should be treated in the same manner as contact from the student. Contact regarding transferring with any of these individuals must be reported in the manner outlined in the recruiting bylaws.
- c. Responding to a Potential Student-Athlete Not Currently Identified
If a potential student-athlete has identified at an institution of higher education but is not currently identified with another higher education institution, an NCCAA coach shall not be required to provide notice to the previous institution provided the registration period of the previous institution for the current academic term has passed. The NCCAA coach and institution shall bear the responsibility to ensure the student is not currently identified with any higher education institution. Identification of a student in a given term extends through to the registration period of the following term, e.g., identification in the spring term extends through the summer.
- d. Notification Not Required
Initial emails, voicemails, and texts left by a prospective student-athlete for a member of the athletics department that are not responded to, addressed, or returned are not considered communications requiring notification. If at any point the prospective student-athlete does make contact with the Athletics Director, Faculty Athletics Representative, or coach which is not ignored in the same manner described above, notification must be made in writing to the prospective student's enrolled institution, if NCCAA-only, within 10 days of the contact.
7. Recruitment of a Graduate Student-Athlete
 - a. As soon as a student completes his/her undergraduate degree and graduates from a four-year institution, an NCCAA coach or institutional representative may initiate contact with the student. An NCCAA coach or institutional representative can initiate contact the day following a student's graduation date or completion of all academic requirements for his/her undergraduate degree, whichever is later.
 - b. If an Athletic Director, Faculty Athletics Representative, or coach of a member institution is contacted or initiates contact with such an athlete, written notification of the contact is not required to be provided to the student's undergraduate institution.
8. Violation of Recruitment Policy
Violation of any part of the recruitment policy shall cause an immediate investigation by the National Office for appropriate action.

XVIII. DECLARATION OF INTENT TO PARTICIPATE

Each institution must submit a Declaration of Intent to Participate in the championships and/or invitationals of the NCCAA. The following are the guidelines governing that declaration and form.

1. The institution declares its intent to participate in the indicated NCCAA Regional/National Championships. It is understood that by declaring to participate, the institution commits itself to represent its region should it win the Regional Championship, qualify as a region qualifier, or meet the national standard in sports without regionals. The only condition for waiving this declaration is the continued advancement in CCAA, NAIA, or NCAA postseason competition or one of the listed institutional limitations indicated.
2. Institutions may list limitations for their declaration to participate such as winning percentage, advancement in conference play, administrative approval, etc. Financial decisions should be made prior to submission of this document by the August 15 deadline.
3. Institutions may amend their Declaration of Intent to Participate as follows:
 - a. Baseball, Basketball, Soccer, Softball, Volleyball: by the Wednesday three weeks prior to the Regional Championship Completion Deadline.
 - b. Cross Country, Indoor Track & Field, Outdoor Track & Field: by the Wednesday three weeks prior to the National Championship.
 - c. Golf: may not amend past the original August 15 deadline.
4. Any condition requiring institutional approval (e.g., administration, Athletics Director, Vice-President, or other) requires said approval to be given/denied by the deadline stated above in No. 3.
5. Any exception of an institution's policy to postseason play stated on its declaration MUST be approved by the NCCAA National Office by the deadline stated above in No. 3.
6. Teams that advance to NCCAA National Championships/Invitational must arrive and participate in all required functions per the sport (e.g., Worship/Banquet Event, Christian Service Project, Coaches' Meeting, Contests, etc.). Arriving late or not participating shall be considered failure to comply with its Declaration of Intent to Participate.
7. Teams that advance to NCCAA National Championships/Invitationals must lodge in the hotel(s) designated by the host institution or city of the event. Lodging at an unapproved location shall be considered failure to comply with its Declaration of Intent to Participate and shall result in loss of eligibility for championship travel reimbursement in addition to a fine of \$1,000.
8. Sanctions for Failure to Comply
If an institution fails to comply with its Declaration of Intent to Participate in any sport, that sport shall be placed on Restrictive Probation for the following academic year, with the potential for additional penalties up to all sports at that institution being placed on Restrictive Probation (NCCAA Bylaws, Article VII, Section 7.10.a.2).

XIX. REGIONAL POSTSEASON COMPETITION

- A. Regions are required to accommodate institutions' conference postseason (within NAIA/NCAA) when scheduling NCCAA Regional Championships. If conference postseason dates leave no time for NCCAA Regional Championships, regional leadership shall work in conjunction with the National Office to determine a plan.

B. Seeding

Regions are permitted to utilize two methods to seed NCCAA Regional Championships. Regions may utilize the same method for all sports or utilize different methods on a sport-by-sport basis.

1. Power Ratings.
Placement in power ratings determines each team's seed. It is recommended to use the power rating from the week prior to the regional completion deadline. Teams within one placement and .250 rating points of each other shall switch places if they met during the regular season and the lower rated team won the contest or series. Teams move only one place at a time, and movement is applied from bottom to top. This shall be reapplied as many times as necessary until no further changes in position take place.
 - a. Tiebreakers if tied with the same power rating:
 - 1) Head-to-head
 - 2) Regular season record
 - 3) Coin toss
2. Region Standings.
This requires that teams play each other a standard number of times. If teams play each other more than the standard, the specific game(s) being included for standings purposes must be identified at the beginning of the season. The region must maintain a document with the season's regional schedule and share that document with

the National Office by the sport's schedule upload deadline.

NOTE: This option may only be utilized if every regional institution agrees to it by the Regional Meeting at the NCCAA Annual Convention.

a. Tiebreakers if tied in region standings:

- 1) Head-to-head from the designated regional game(s).
- 2) Power Ratings
- 3) Coin toss

NOTE: Regions may incorporate sport-specific tiebreakers (e.g., soccer may have Goal Differential).

b. Cancellations, Forfeits, and Discontinued Seasons

- 1) Cancellation of a "countable regional game" due to an act of God, weather event, etc.

If a regional game is unable to be played on the scheduled date, then the two teams are required to reschedule the game. If the two teams already have an additional game scheduled with one another, then at the mutual agreement of both schools and Athletic Directors, the additional game is allowed to become the "countable regional game." If the cancelled game is at the end of the season with no time to reschedule, the region must have a rule in place in the regional handbook on whether to move forward with region standings with an unbalanced number of games played, or if the region shall instead use power ratings to seed.

- 2) Forfeits

If a "countable regional game" is deemed a forfeit by NCCAA standards and the National Office, then the result shall be deemed a forfeit win/loss to the appropriate teams following the official forfeit scoreline. If a sport desires to have a different scoreline for regional standings purposes, that must be listed in the regional handbook (NOTE: the official scoreline shall remain what that sport's forfeit scoreline is).

- 3) Discontinued Seasons

If a team discontinues its season after having played one or more "countable regional games," then all regional results involving this team shall be removed and not count toward Regional Standings.

XX. CHAMPIONSHIP AND INVITATIONAL SPORTS

A. Conditions for Establishing a Sport

1. Attaining Invitational Sport Status

A sport shall attain invitational sport status after the following occurs:

- a. The sport must have 15% of the Division I NCCAA membership for uni-division sports, or 15% of divisional membership for separate Division I or II sports, to sponsor the varsity program in the sport. Only full members are used in these calculations; and
- b. A coaches' association is established with selection of sport leadership via a coaching body vote; and
- c. The coaches' association develops policies and procedures for the sport; and
- d. The coaches' association must submit a request to attain invitational status by May 1, with support from at least 66.7% of coaches; and
- e. The Administration Committee of the Board of Directors approves the request after reviewing the above criteria along with any relevant internal and external factors.

2. In the first full academic year following the point at which a sport attains invitational sport status, all institutions sponsoring an invitational sport are subject to the Constitution, Bylaws, and policies of the association. Student-athletes participating in an NCCAA invitational sport must be properly certified as eligible prior to any intercollegiate competition.

3. Beginning with the second full academic year following the point at which a sport attains invitational sport status, the following shall apply:

- a. The NCCAA shall sponsor national invitational competition for the sport. The Administration Committee must approve policies, procedures, and qualification plans for all invitational events.

- b. The sport shall be eligible for the following awards:

- 1) Scholar-Athlete
- 2) Scholar Team
- 3) Student-Athlete of the Week
- 4) Invitational Awards (All-Tournament and Most Outstanding Player)

- c. The Administration Committee shall evaluate the first invitational competition and recommend changes for a second invitational year.

4. Attaining Championship Sport Status

A sport shall attain championship sport status after the following occurs:

- a. At least three years as invitational sport status and two invitationals have occurred; and

- b. The number of institutions grows to 33% with clear stability; and
 - c. The coaches' association must submit a request to attain championship status by March 1, with support from at least 66.7% of coaches; and
 - d. The Administration Committee approves the request after reviewing the above criteria along with any relevant internal and external factors.
 - e. Immediate access to championship travel reimbursement may be delayed, pending availability of funds.
5. If a sport is not approved for championship sport status following the second invitational, the Administration Committee shall continue to provide feedback, and the sport shall retain its invitational status, if all requirements continue to be met, until approved.
6. An invitational sport shall remain in good standing provided a minimum of 15% of member institutions honor their Declaration of Intent to Participate. If fewer than 15% of member institutions honor their Declaration of Intent to Participate in a given year, the sport shall be considered at-risk the following academic year. If the sport does not return to good standing and remains at-risk for a second consecutive year, the sport shall automatically return to non-invitational sport status. The sport shall not be permitted to request invitational sport status for the remainder of the current academic year or the subsequent academic year.
- B. NCCAA Invitational Sport Requirements
- 1. The Invitational field shall be no more than 20% for Division I and 25% for Division II of the full members sponsoring a varsity program for that sport, per the varsity programs submitted at the time of dues. A three-year average over the past three years shall be used, if applicable.
 - 2. The coaches' association shall set criteria to select the participating teams. Host institutions shall be included in the field.
 - 3. To determine fields for Invitational sports that need standards for qualification (e.g., cross country and track and field), the coaches' association of the sport shall set national standards for teams and/or individuals to meet.
 - 4. Field size shall be set by the Administration Committee of the NCCAA Board of Directors, by the NCCAA Annual Convention.
- C. Conditions for Maintaining a National Championship Sport
- 1. In the first full academic year following the point at which a sport attains championship sport status, the NCCAA shall sponsor National Championship competition for the sport. The Administration Committee must approve policies, procedures, and qualification plans for all championship events.
 - 2. Institutions competing in championship sports are subject to the Constitution, Bylaws, and policies of the association. Student-athletes participating in an NCCAA championship sport must be properly certified as eligible prior to any intercollegiate competition.
 - 3. A championship sport shall remain in good standing provided a minimum of 33% of member institutions sponsor the sport. If fewer than 33% of member institutions sponsor the sport in a given year, the sport shall be considered at-risk the following academic year. If the sport does not return to good standing and remains at-risk for a second consecutive year, the sport shall automatically return to invitational sport status.
 - 4. Upon moving to invitational status, the sport must follow the above stated procedures to return to championship status.
- D. Sanctioned Championship Requirements
- 1. NCCAA sanctioned championships must have 33% of the Division I NCCAA membership for uni-division sports, or 33% of divisional membership for separate Division I or Division II sports, to sponsor a varsity program in the sport. Only full members are used in these calculations.
 - 2. For regional qualifying sports, the National Championship field shall be no more than 20% for Division I and 25% for Division II of the full members sponsoring a varsity program for that sport, per the varsity programs submitted at the time of dues.
 - 3. Field size shall be set and reviewed every three years by the Administration Committee of the NCCAA Board of Directors. A three-year average over the past three years shall be used. The most recent review was before the 2024-25 academic year, and the next review shall be before the 2027-28 academic year. If the percentage number is 50% (e.g., 7.50) or higher for a team, the number of teams shall be rounded up to the next full team. If the next full team is unusable for normal tournament development, the number shall be rounded to the next number (e.g., 4.5 would round to 5. Five is difficult to form a tournament so round up to 6).
 - 4. National Championship fields for non-regional qualifying sports (e.g., cross country and track and field) shall be determined by teams or individuals meeting the national standards set by the coaches' association of the sport.
 - 5. Exceptions to field limitations must be approved by the Administration Committee of the NCCAA Board of Directors after review by the National Administrative Council (NAC).

E. National Championship Selection and Seeding Policy

1. Sports must choose either Option A or Option B as their criteria for selecting at-large teams to the National Championship and seeding at the National Championship. If Option B is selected, sports may select items from the list to use as criteria and then identify the order of importance (power ratings must be included as the most important). Criteria selected and order of importance for Option B shall be the same for both at-large selection and seeding.
 - a. Power Rating Option A - Power Ratings Only
For at-large selection and seeding at the National Championship, teams within .250 rating points of each other shall switch places if they met during the regular season and the lower-rated team won the contest or series. Teams move only one place at a time, and movement is applied from bottom to top. This shall be reapplied as many times as necessary until no further changes in position take place. For at-large selections, only teams eligible for at-large selections shall be included in the list when determining teams within .250 rating points.
 - b. Power Rating Option B - Power Ratings A La Carte Options
 - 1) Head-to-head
Point of consideration: One team defeated another in a matchup or series of matchups.
 - 2) Common opponents
Point of consideration: Teams being considered had the same opponent to compare results.
 - 3) Rankings (NCCAA, NAIA, NCAA II and III, and CCAA)
Points of consideration: A team has been ranked higher than another all season; a team has been ranked this season and another has not; number of wins over ranked teams.
 - 4) Strength of region
Points of consideration: One region has more teams ranked or ranked higher in NCCAA, NAIA, NCAA II and III, CCAA rankings, and/or NCCAA Power Ratings; one region has had teams defeat teams from another region.
2. At-Large Selection: For a la carte items in Option B to be used, teams must be within .500 in power ratings. Committee shall examine and compare each bubble team under the threshold with each bubble team within the threshold from top to bottom. If a bubble team under the threshold and outside of .500 in power ratings of a bubble team within the threshold, that team (or teams) within the threshold are locked in for an at-large selection (see example at www.thenccaa.org/helpcenter).
3. Selection Process (see example at www.thenccaa.org/helpcenter)
Start with the highest bubble team and work down. Examine and compare, as necessary, with each bubble team using the criteria selected by the sport.
NOTE: The selection committee must keep in mind that a team cannot be eliminated from consideration if a team greater than .500 below them is selected.
4. Bubble Team Definition: A bubble team is a team that must be considered for an at-large selection within the .500 range of the threshold.
5. Seeding: For a la carte items in Option B to be used, teams must be within .500 in power ratings, and a team may only move up or down three places in power ratings (see example at www.thenccaa.org/helpcenter).
6. Items not permitted to use as criteria:
 - a. Strength of schedule
 - b. Region runner-up
7. Regional Seeding Conflict: The tournament committee, in conjunction with the National Office, can adjust seeding to avoid regional opponents from playing each other in the first round (if possible), following these guidelines:
 - a. Regional opponents must have played each other at least once during the regular season and/or postseason.
 - b. A team may only be moved up or down one seed.
 - c. Only one of the two regional teams shall be moved.
 - d. If a new regional opponent conflict arises after this move, the team that was originally moved may not be moved again unless it is returning to its original seed.
 - e. This process may also be followed for pool play in these scenarios:
 - 1) Two regional opponents together in a pool of three teams.
 - 2) Three regional opponents together in a pool of four or five teams.
8. Selection committees should ideally be comprised of unbiased individuals and not include individuals who have qualified for the National Championship or are seeking an at-large selection. If that is not possible, at a minimum, individuals who are seeking an at-large selection are not permitted to participate in the selection process.

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- F. Championship Calendars for the upcoming year (see [Appendix B](#)) and the four year planning calendar (see [Appendix C](#)) are reviewed and updated annually by the National Office and Administration Committee.
 - G. Championship Travel Reimbursement Policy
 - 1. Since 2014, National Championship travel reimbursement has been offered each academic year. In 2018, the Future Generations Endowment Fund was created to grow the amount of support and increase the number of sports eligible for reimbursement. The fund received its first one-million-dollar gift in 2019 with an initial goal of \$2.5 million and a \$10 million goal by 2030. As of 2024-25, all NCCAA sanctioned championship sports are eligible for reimbursement. The total amount of funds available per sport is in [Appendix D](#). As the fund grows and meets fund covenants, the Administration Committee shall determine how increases shall be applied. Reimbursement funds shall be sent to the qualified institutions directly from the NCCAA National Office within 45 days of the conclusion of the championship.
 - 2. Host institutions that have participating teams/individuals are eligible for reimbursement.
 - 3. If a team that qualifies for a championship is a local team to the site or venue and does not use the host hotel, then reimbursement shall be prorated to 30% of the allotted reimbursement. This does not apply to the host institution.

XXI. MEDIA & BROADCASTING POLICIES FOR NATIONAL EVENTS

- A. The NCCAA owns exclusive rights for all broadcasts (television, webcast, radio, etc.) and filming of its championship meets, tournaments, and games. When the NCCAA produces any form of a broadcast, the NCCAA reserves the right to deny any institution or entity from producing content in any form.
- B. All institutions or entities interested in producing a broadcast of any kind must first obtain written approval from the Director of Communications. Approval is not guaranteed.
- C. All necessary installation of lines, uplinking, satellite transmission, construction of any facilities, cost of talent, and any other production costs shall be the sole financial responsibility of the originating entity.
- D. All rights fees must be paid to the National Office in advance of the broadcast.
- E. The use of profane or abusive language, sexual immorality, tobacco, illegal or recreational drugs, and alcoholic beverages in advertising is prohibited.
- F. Rights Fees for NCCAA National Championships
 - 1. Radio
 - a. Baseball, Basketball, Soccer, Softball, Volleyball: \$125/game (non-exclusive)
 - b. Institutions covering only their games can choose the following non-exclusive packages:
Two games: \$225
Three games: \$325
Four games: \$400
Five games: \$525
Six games: \$650
 - c. Cross Country, Golf, Indoor/Outdoor Track & Field: \$100/sport (non-exclusive)
 - 2. Webcasting
 - a. When the NCCAA produces a webcast, no institution or entity is allowed to produce a webcast.
 - b. For events with no NCCAA production, contact the Director of Communications.
 - 3. Television
Contact the Director of Communications.
- G. Coaches Game Film Files
For National Championship tournaments, a game film file is provided at no cost to coaches for games in which they participate. Coaches may also purchase a game film file of an opposing team for scouting purposes for \$10/game. Game film shared with coaches is for coaching purposes only and is not to be shared with fans, players, student-athletes, etc.

H. Filming/Video Recording

1. Institutions interested in filming/video recording game or event action for short highlight purposes must first obtain written approval from the Director of Communications. If approved, institutional sports information staff shall be given credentials for this purpose only.
 - a. This filming/video recording is not permitted to be live streamed.
 - b. Full-game filming/video recording is not permitted.
 - c. Music may be added in accordance with the NCCAA music policy and copyright laws.
 - d. Play-by-play is not permitted to be overlayed on the short highlight clips.
2. Third party individuals or entities may not film/video record at NCCAA National Championships.

I. Photography

Institutions or entities interested in photographing game or event action must first obtain written approval from the Director of Communications. If approved, credentials will be provided for this purpose only.

J. Other Media Coverage

Institutions or entities interested in covering game or event action in any way or format not listed above must first obtain written approval from the Director of Communications. If approved, credentials shall be provided for this purpose only.

XXII. APPROVED POSTSEASON

A. Criteria for Approved Conference Postseason

1. Postseason contests of affiliated conferences within NCCAA, CCAA, NAIA, NCAA II, NCAA III, and U Sports are counted as postseason. An affiliated conference is defined as having official conference membership within the national association.
2. Conferences not affiliated with the national associations listed above must meet the following requirements:
 - a. The conference shall be organized under governing documents that include formal recognition of the responsibility to operate in a manner consistent with minimum standards established by the NCCAA.
 - b. Governing documents of the conference shall clearly list with whom final authority for operations of the conference resides.
 - c. Governing documents of the conference shall establish those matters fully within the direct control of said final authority, including, but no limited to:
 - 1) Amendments to the constitution, bylaws, and other governing documents;
 - 2) Budget approval and financial oversight;
 - 3) Employment and supervision of the conference commissioner;
 - 4) Conference membership; and
 - 5) Approval of the conference strategic plan.
 - d. Said final authority shall exercise authority in matters under their direct control by convening at least one meeting annually, in which votes may be exercised only by those in attendance.
 - e. The conference shall employ a commissioner to provide effective leadership and administrative support to the conference and may employ other professional staff determined by the conference necessary to ensure adherence to NCCAA standards.
 - f. The conference must have full members that are:
 - 1) Four-year degree granting institutions
 - 2) Accredited by one of the six recognized accrediting bodies in the U.S., or Universities Canada, or with ABHE or TRACS.
 - g. The conference must have a minimum of six institutions as full members.

B. Criteria for Approved National Postseason

1. Postseason contests in national tournaments in NCCAA, CCAA, NAIA, NCAA II, NCAA III, and U Sports are counted as postseason.
2. Requirements for future considerations for approved national postseason include:
 - a. A recognized national organization that has a broad geographical footprint with a reasonable number of full members.
 - b. The national organization has member institutions that are:
 - 1) Four-year degree granting institutions
 - 2) Accredited by one of the six recognized accrediting bodies in the U.S., or Universities Canada, or with ABHE or TRACS. (See section II.B.4.c.2 above.)

- c. The sport within the national organization has a qualification process and is not by invitation.

XXIII. RANKINGS AND STATISTICS

A. NCCAA National Rankings

1. **Team sports approved as championship sport status shall conduct National Rankings.** The National Rankings voting shall be conducted by the National Chair, in conjunction with regional representatives, and be reported to the NCCAA Director of Communications.
2. Each Regional Sport Chair shall be the regional rater and voter.
3. Regional raters are responsible for submitting region ratings to the National Chair, who shall then send out all regional ratings to voters. Raters should include explanation/summary as to why teams are rated where they are. Raters may work to get feedback from regional teams when developing the regional ratings.
4. Regional raters shall then select the National Rankings and send to the National Chair. The National Chair shall tally all votes and must send the final ranking along with each regional rating to the Director of Communications by 11:00 a.m. (ET) each Tuesday that has a ranking.
5. When casting votes for the National Rankings, voters must follow the order of the regional ratings.
6. Ties shall be broken by:
 - a. Number of ballot appearances;
 - b. Most votes in highest place; and
 - c. Winning percentage.
 - d. The team winning the tie-breaker shall receive one additional point.
7. There shall be bi-weekly rankings through the conclusion of the regular season, with a final postseason ranking the week following the National Championship.
8. The National Office serves as the oversight committee.
9. Sports that conduct NCCAA National Rankings shall be limited to the number of teams included in the rankings based on the following criteria:
 - a. Top 5 when there are 11-25 full NCCAA members who sponsor the sport.
 - b. Top 10 when there are 26-50 full NCCAA members who sponsor the sport.
 - c. Top 15 when there are 51-75 full NCCAA members who sponsor the sport.
 - d. Top 20 when there are 76-100 full NCCAA members who sponsor the sport.
 - e. Top 25 when there are 100+ full NCCAA members who sponsor the sport.
10. Number of full NCCAA members who sponsor the sport shall be determined at the beginning of the academic year.
11. When a sport reaches the number of members to increase or decrease the number of teams included in the rankings, the sport must stay in its current category for one additional year. If the sport still has enough teams to increase or decrease the following year, then the change in category shall proceed. In extreme circumstances, the Administration Committee may issue an immediate change in categories.

B. Statistics

Complete and accurate statistical information must be submitted to the NCCAA in the form of .XML game files, following the steps outlined at www.thenccaa.org/helpcenter, and using only one of the approved statistical programs (DakStats, Genius Sports, PrestoSports, StatCrew, or StatInput). Game files must be submitted to the NCCAA within 24 hours after the game, and visiting team appeals are required to be filed with the home team within 48 hours following the conclusion of the contest. However, the mandatory deadline for weekly game files to be uploaded to the NCCAA website is Tuesday at noon ET. Any amount of missing game files in a week shall count as a missed report. Any game files submitted from a non-approved statistical program shall count as a missed report. Once statistical reporting begins, missing or incomplete game schedules may result in multiple penalties being issued at the discretion of the National Office. **For golf and cross country reporting requirements, see the sport-specific handbooks.**

The penalties for not reporting statistics or for being late are:

1. First offense: email or letter of notice of the violation.
2. Second offense: email or letter of warning of the violation.
3. Third offense: \$100 fine paid within 30 days of the date of the invoice or before Regional Championships, whichever comes first.
4. Fourth offense: \$250 fine paid within 30 days of the date of the invoice or before Regional Championships, whichever comes first, a loss of postseason awards for the applicable athletes and/or team, the team shall become ineligible for statistical reports and ratings for the remainder of the season, and any further penalties at the discretion of the Administration Committee (e.g., ineligible for postseason play).

It is the responsibility of each institution to contact the National Office regarding any technical problems experienced in submitting weekly statistics. Proper communication can prevent team penalties.

Regular Season Neutral Site Tournament Statistics: The host institution of regular season tournaments (e.g., classic, tri-match, or any multi-team event of the like that an institution hosts, regardless of venue or if the host institution is competing), is responsible for recording official statistics for all participating teams for those sports in which a weekly national statistical report is conducted. Missing statistics from a regular season tournament shall be considered a missing statistical report for the host institution regardless if the host competed (other participants of the tournament shall not be considered to have missed a stats report the first week, but the following week shall be considered to have missed a stats report if still missing). Note: If the host sent files to opponents and opponents failed to upload the files in time, the host shall not be penalized.

Postseason Statistics: NCCAA members must upload files by the weekly deadline for all postseason play (conference tournament, regional championship, national championship, etc.). In NCCAA postseason play, it is the responsibility of the host to record official statistics and the responsibility of the higher seed to upload files. Failure to upload files by the weekly deadline is subject to penalty, including fines.

XXIV. ALL-REGIONAL AWARDS

A. All-Regional Awards Policies and Procedures

1. The number of athletes on an All-Regional Team shall be equal to the number of athletes on an All-American Team for that sport.
2. If the sport's All-American Team is broken down positionally, the All-Regional Team must follow the All-American positional model and voting process.
3. Regional Player of the Year must be included in the number of athletes on the All-Regional Team, not a plus one in addition to it (Example: Men's Basketball First Team has five including the Player of the Year).
4. Coaches may not vote for their own players, except when there are only one or two teams in the region.
5. The maximum number of All-Regional Teams a region is permitted to have is based on the number of full members in the region that sponsor the sport, regardless of Declaration of Intent, as listed below:

# of Teams in the Region	# of All-Regional Teams
1	1
2	1
3	2
4	2
5	2
6	2
7	2
8	3
9	3
10+	3

6. The maximum number of athletes any team can have on each All-Regional Team (e.g., First Team, Second Team, etc.) is:
 - a. Soccer 6
 - b. Volleyball 4
 - c. Basketball 3
 - d. Baseball 6
 - e. Softball 6
7. Regions cannot limit nominations based on regular season or postseason finish.
8. Regions are permitted to have Honorable Mention.
9. If a team does not participate in the nominating and/or voting process, that shall eliminate that team from the number of teams in the region when determining how many All-Regional teams there are. If a team nominates student-athletes but does not vote, that team's student-athletes shall not be included on All-Regional teams.
10. Regions must have tiebreaking procedure in place. Ties may not be submitted with the rank order for All-American purposes.

11. The sport of Golf determines All-Regional Awards by the top finishers in a Regional Championship. Only teams participating in the Golf Regional Championship are eligible. If a region does not have a Regional Championship, there shall be no All-Regional Team. Golf may honor one All-Regional team with the number of athletes recognized based on the number of teams competing in the Regional Championship as listed below:

# of Teams Competing	# of Athletes on All-Regional
1	N/A
2	5 Athletes
3	5 Athletes
4	8 Athletes
5	8 Athletes
6	8 Athletes
7	8 Athletes
8	10 Athletes
9	10 Athletes
10+	10 Athletes

B. All-Regional Team Submission Process

After the Regional Sport Chair has concluded the voting process and finalized the All-Regional Team(s), the chair shall submit the All-Regional Team(s) via Teamworks. The Regional Coordinator shall review and approve the submission prior to the National Office receiving it.

XXV. CRITERIA FOR ALL-AMERICAN AWARDS

NCCAA All-American Award Requirements:

1. The sport must be an NCCAA sanctioned championship.
2. The number of All-American Awards for team sports shall be based on the formula listed below. Each sport shall always receive at least two full All-American teams.
 - a. The approved number of athletes on each All-American team per sport is as follows:
 - 1) Baseball 12
 - 2) Basketball 5
 - 3) Soccer 11
 - 4) Softball 12
 - 5) Volleyball 7
 - b. FORMULA: (Approved Sport Number x Full Members Sponsoring Varsity Program*) x 0.05
*varsity program for that sport and division, per the varsity programs submitted at the time of dues
 - c. EXAMPLE: In basketball, the approved number is 5. If there are 50 basketball teams in Division I, that would equal 250. Therefore, 5% would be 12.5. This allows for 3 All-American teams.
3. For sports that award All-American Awards based on finish at the championship (e.g., cross country, golf, and track & field), the number of All-American Awards awarded is as follows:
 - a. Cross Country 10
 - b. Men's Golf 10
 - c. Women's Golf 8 (based on number of participating teams)
 - d. Track & Field Top 3 finishers in individual events and top 3 relay teams
4. The number of All-American Awards awarded shall be set and reviewed every three years by the Administration Committee of the NCCAA Board of Directors. A three-year average of full members sponsoring the varsity program over the past three years shall be used. The most recent review was before the 2025-26 academic year, and the next review shall be before the 2028-29 academic year. If the percentage is 50% or higher for a partial team, the number of awards shall round up to the next full team.

XXVI. UNIFORM RULES MODIFICATION

NCCAA institutions are permitted to have a sponsor logo or patch during competition in baseball, basketball, cross country, golf, soccer, softball, track & field, and volleyball with the following requirements:

1. Limit of one sponsor logo or patch on a uniform;
2. The logos may not exceed a standard size of 2.25 inches square;
3. Sponsor logos must be in the same location on each set of uniforms (e.g., if the home whites patch is on the neckline, all home whites must be the same; away jerseys could be in a different permissible location).

4. Sponsors of beer, wine, liquor, or other forms of alcoholic beverages, non-therapeutic drugs, tobacco, or gambling shall be prohibited.
5. Sponsor logos/marks shall not include political (politics, causes, movements, etc.) messaging, coloring, etc., nor shall they include QR codes.

XXVII. NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

The National Administrative Council (NAC) shall make recommendations to the Administration Committee of the Board of Directors. Each committee shall consist of six to eight members.

- A. NAC consists of the following committees and overview of responsibilities:
 1. Sports Information Committee: statistics, power ratings, awards.
 2. Competition Experience Committee: rules, regional championships, national championships.
 3. Division I Regional Experience Committee: competition within the region, regional awards, regional championships.
 4. Division II Regional Experience Committee: competition within the region, regional awards, regional championships.
- B. Council Voting
 1. Voting in the committees shall be tallied with each member of the committee having a single vote, with a simple majority passing the considered motion.
 2. Individuals are expected to recuse themselves from voting on a particular issue if they have prior knowledge or previous involvement in the situation to the extent they cannot be unbiased, or there is likely to be a presumption that the individual has a bias. The Administration Committee is also authorized to initiate a member's recusal, if necessary.
- C. Meetings

Committees shall meet up to four times per year via Zoom, with a minimum of two times per year. Meetings shall be held in August, November, February, and April.

XXVIII. PROCESS FOR AMENDING THE BYLAWS AND MAKING CHANGES TO THE HANDBOOK

- A. Bylaws and Constitution Proposals
 1. Proposed by Region, coaches' group, or Administration Committee.
 2. Supporting groups may be asked to vote to demonstrate support for or against a proposal.
 3. The Administration Committee votes to propose to membership for vote to amend the Bylaws or Constitution.
- B. **National Handbook Proposal Process**

Should changes to a sport specific section or the Sports Policies and Procedures section of the NCCAA Handbook be desired, the following process shall be followed:

 1. The coaching group may propose changes to their sport handbook.
 2. Coaching group votes to present proposal(s) to the appropriate committee within the National Administrative Council (NAC), if needed, or directly to the Administration Committee, as determined with the Director of Membership.
 3. The appropriate committee within NAC votes whether to advance it to the Administration Committee who then votes to accept or reject the proposal.
 4. Proposals for change may also come from regions and subcommittees of the Administration Committee such as the National Administrative Council (Sports Information Committee, Competition Experience Committee, Regional Experience Committee), Eligibility Committee, or Handbook Committee.
 5. All proposals must come in written form and identify which section of the handbook is being addressed.
 6. All proposals must have a vote of support.
 7. All proposals must be submitted for consideration to the Administration Committee by May 1 for possible inclusion for the upcoming academic year. If the proposal requires review of a committee within NAC, it must be submitted by March 15.
- C. **Regional Handbook Proposal Process**

Should changes to a section of the Regional Handbook be desired, the following process shall be followed:

 1. The coaching group may propose changes to their sport section.
 2. Coaching group votes to present proposal(s) to the Regional Institutions' Athletic Directors.

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3. Regional Institutions' Athletic Directors vote to accept or reject the proposal.
 4. Proposals for change may also come from the Regional Institutions' Athletic Directors.
 5. All proposals must come in written form and identify which section of the handbook is being addressed.
 6. All proposals must have a vote of support.
 7. All proposals must be submitted for consideration to the Regional Coordinator by April 1 for inclusion as an agenda item at the Regional Meeting during the NCCAA Annual Convention.
 8. All proposals must be sent by the Regional Coordinator to all Regional Institutions' Athletic Directors by April 15.
 9. Any proposal that comes from the floor at the Regional Meeting during the NCCAA Annual Convention is required to be reviewed by all Athletic Directors before a vote can be taken.

Appendix A

Expectations of Behavior at an NCCAA Event

The following are the expectations of student-athletes and coaches participating in an NCCAA event.

- A. Participants shall respect others involved in the event including, but not limited to:
 - 1. Opponents/teammates.
 - 2. Host institution personnel.
 - 3. Officials.
- B. Profanity (foul or abusive language) is not permitted and should:
 - 1. Always be corrected.
 - 2. Not be pervasive.
 - 3. Never be from a coach.
- C. There should be no threatening conduct or words toward:
 - 1. Opponents.
 - 2. Fans.
 - 3. Officials.
- D. Athletes and coaches should maintain self-control and:
 - 1. React appropriately even when others do not.
 - 2. Remember he/she represents his/her institution, team, and Jesus Christ.
- E. Remember that participating is a privilege, not a right, and responses should reflect such.

Appendix B

2026-2027 National Championships & Invationals Calendar

2026

MEN'S GOLF – October 19-21
National Championship
Hammock Beach Resort, The Conservatory Course
Palm Coast, Florida

WOMEN'S GOLF – October 19-21
National Championship
Hammock Beach Resort, The Conservatory Course
Palm Coast, Florida

M&W CROSS COUNTRY II – November 13
National Championships
Tom Rutledge Cross Country Course
Joplin, Missouri

M&W CROSS COUNTRY I – November 13
National Championships
Tom Rutledge Cross Country Course
Joplin, Missouri

MEN'S SOCCER II – November 16-21
National Championship
Austin-Tindall Sports Complex
Kissimmee, Florida

WOMEN'S SOCCER II – November 16-20
National Championship
Austin-Tindall Sports Complex
Kissimmee, Florida

WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL II – November 18-21
National Championship
Arlington Baptist University
Arlington, Texas

MEN'S SOCCER I – November 30 – December 5
National Championship
Austin-Tindall Sports Complex
Kissimmee, Florida

WOMEN'S SOCCER I – November 30 – December 5
National Championship
Austin-Tindall Sports Complex
Kissimmee, Florida

WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL I – December 2-5
National Championship
College of the Ozarks
Point Lookout, Missouri

2027

M&W INDOOR TRACK & FIELD – February 12-13
National Championships
Cedarville University
Cedarville, Ohio

MEN'S BASKETBALL II – March 10-13
National Championship
Pensacola Christian College
Pensacola, Florida

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL II – March 10-13
National Championship
Pensacola Christian College
Pensacola, Florida

MEN'S BASKETBALL I – March 17-20
National Championship
College of the Ozarks
Point Lookout, Missouri

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL I – March 17-20
National Championship
College of the Ozarks
Point Lookout, Missouri

MEN'S VOLLEYBALL – April 23-24
National Championship
TBA

M&W TRACK & FIELD – May 12-14
National Championships
Asbury University
Wilmore, Kentucky

BASEBALL II – May 19-21
National Championship
Arlington Baptist University
Arlington, Texas

BASEBALL I – May 22-26
National Championship
Kansas City Urban Youth Academy
Kansas City, Missouri

SOFTBALL – May 24-26
National Championship
Oak Grove Softball Complex
Grapevine, Texas

As of 7/10/2026

Appendix C

NCCAA National Championship & Invitational Calendar: **2026-2031**

Men's Golf

October 19-21, 2026	October 18-20, 2027
October 23-25, 2028	October 22-24, 2029
October 21-23, 2030	

Women's Golf

October 19-21, 2026	October 18-20, 2027
October 23-25, 2028	October 22-24, 2029
October 21-23, 2030	

Men's & Women's Cross Country II

November 13, 2026	November 12, 2027
November 10, 2028	November 9, 2029
November 15, 2030	

Men's & Women's Cross Country I

November 13, 2026	November 12, 2027
November 10, 2028	November 9, 2029
November 15, 2030	

Men's Soccer II

November 16-21, 2026	November 15-20, 2027
November 13-18, 2028	November 12-17, 2029
November 18-23, 2030	

Women's Soccer II

November 16-20, 2026	November 15-19, 2027
November 13-17, 2028	November 12-16, 2029
November 18-22, 2030	

Women's Volleyball II

November 18-21, 2026	November 17-20, 2027
November 15-18, 2028	November 14-17, 2029
November 20-23, 2030	

Men's Soccer I

Nov. 30-Dec. 5, 2026	Nov. 29-Dec. 4, 2027
Nov. 27-Dec. 2, 2028	Nov. 26-Dec.1, 2029
December 2-7, 2030	

Women's Soccer I

Nov. 30-Dec. 5, 2026	Nov. 29-Dec. 4, 2027
Nov. 27-Dec. 2, 2028	Nov. 26-Dec.1, 2029
December 2-7, 2030	

Women's Volleyball I

December 2-5, 2026	December 1-4, 2027
Nov. 29-Dec. 2, 2028	Nov. 28-Dec. 1, 2029
December 4-7, 2030	

Men's & Women's Indoor Track & Field

February 12-13, 2027	February 11-12, 2028
February 9-10, 2029	February 8-9, 2030
TBA, 2031	

Men's Basketball II

March 10-13, 2027	March 8-11, 2028
March 7-10, 2029	March 6-9, 2030
TBA, 2031	

Women's Basketball II

March 10-13, 2027	March 8-11, 2028
March 7-10, 2029	March 6-9, 2030
TBA, 2031	

Men's Basketball I

March 17-20, 2027	March 15-18, 2028
March 14-17, 2029	March 13-16, 2030
TBA, 2031	

Women's Basketball I

March 17-20, 2027	March 15-18, 2028
March 14-17, 2029	March 13-16, 2030
TBA, 2031	

Men's Volleyball

April 23-24, 2027	April 28-29, 2028
April 27-28, 2029	April 26-27, 2030
April 25-26, 2031	

Men's & Women's Track & Field

May 12-14, 2027	May 10-12, 2028
May 9-11, 2029	May 8-10, 2030
May 7-9, 2031	

Baseball II

May 19-21, 2027	May 17-19, 2028
May 16-18, 2029	May 15-17, 2030
May 14-16, 2031	

Baseball

May 22-26, 2027	May 20-24, 2028
May 19-23, 2029	May 18-22, 2030
May 17-21, 2031	

Softball

May 24-26, 2027	May 22-24, 2028
May 21-23, 2029	May 20-22, 2030
May 19-21, 2031	

*As of 7/10/2026
Tentative and subject to change*

Appendix D

2026-27 NCCAA Championship Travel Reimbursement Model

Sport	Total Funds	Payout Structure
DI Baseball (10 teams)	\$ 10,000	\$1,000 per team
DII Baseball (4 teams)	\$ 6,000	\$1,500 per team
DI Men's Basketball (8 teams)	\$ 8,000	\$1,000 per team
DI Women's Basketball (8 teams)	\$ 8,000	\$1,000 per team
DII Men's Basketball (10 teams)	\$ 15,000	\$1,500 per team
DII Women's Basketball (10 teams)	\$ 15,000	\$1,500 per team
Cross Country	\$ 17,000	\$450/team; \$75/individual* (max 4)
Men's Golf (9 teams and medalists)	\$ 7,050	\$750/team; \$100/medalist*
Women's Golf (6 teams and medalists)	\$ 4,800	\$750/team; \$100/medalist*
Indoor Track & Field	\$ 17,500	\$35/registered individual (max 25)
Outdoor Track & Field	\$ 17,500	\$35/registered individual (max 25)
DI Men's Soccer (9 teams)	\$ 9,000	\$1,000 per team
DI Women's Soccer (9 teams)	\$ 9,000	\$1,000 per team
DII Men's Soccer (8 teams)	\$ 12,000	\$1,500 per team
DII Women's Soccer (6 teams)	\$ 9,000	\$1,500 per team
Softball (8 teams)	\$ 8,000	\$1,000 per team
Men's Volleyball (4 teams)	\$ 2,000	\$500 per team
DI Women's Volleyball (8 teams)	\$ 8,000	\$1,000 per team
DII Women's Volleyball (8 teams)	\$ 12,000	\$1,500 per team
Total	\$194,850	

**Individuals unattached to a team*

For sports with an unknown number of teams/individuals attending (e.g., Cross Country, Golf, and Indoor/Outdoor Track & Field), the total funds listed is the maximum that shall be given. If following the payout structure equates to more than the total funds listed, the payout shall be prorated for each team.

For sports with a set number of teams attending, if the format changes and fewer teams attend (e.g., fewer teams were available due to not meeting declarations), the per team payout structure shall not change.

Appendix E
NCCAA Rules Education Verification Form
Due August 31

ANNUAL RULES EDUCATION

All staff members involved in the administration of athletics shall complete an annual online rules education training program. For NCCAA-only members, this includes the faculty athletics representative, registrar, and all identified athletic department administrators and coaches, including but not limited to all paid and voluntary head, associate, assistant, and graduate assistant coaches. For dually affiliated members, this includes all identified athletic department administrators and head coaches. For each individual required to participate in the training program, comprehensive rules education is required upon initial appointment to his/her role.

New coaches must complete the required training within the first 60 days of hire or prior to the coach's first competition, whichever is earlier. New staff members must complete the required training within the first 60 days of hire or prior to the institution's next certification, whichever is earlier. Returning coaches and staff members must complete the required training prior to the earliest starting date for competition for any sport sponsored by the institution. Each institution shall verify that its staff members complete the requisite training every year. Institutions failing to have all staff complete the training as required shall be subject to disciplinary penalties.

Each individual required to participate in the training program must achieve an 80% grade in each required training within his/her track. Individuals can retake any quiz as many times as needed until the 80% grade is achieved. Athletic Directors shall manage this requirement internally and annually sign a form that the institution is in compliance.

I attest that each individual required to participate in the training program has achieved (or will achieve) at least an 80% grade in each required training within his/her track prior to the earliest starting date for competition for any sport sponsored by the institution. I further attest that all new coaches & staff members will complete the required training in the timeframe as outlined above.

Institution _____

Athletic Director _____

Athletic Director's Signature _____ **Date** _____