

Division II Priorities 2015-16

Brand Enhancement Activation and Media Presence



The division will activate the “Make It Yours” initiative with messaging and tools that provide external audiences (such as prospective athletes, their parents/guardians and community stakeholders) and those within the Division II membership a better understanding of the division’s unique attributes. The activation beginning in August 2015 includes a credit for Division II member institutions to purchase customized signs highlighting the new brand and moniker “Make It Yours.”

The division also will launch a new national media campaign that offers more regular-season broadcasts on various television and digital networks, and enhanced coverage of Division II events and team championship webcasts on NCAA.com.

Championships Operations

The division continues to review ways to enhance access and ensure the best possible championships experience for Division II student-athletes. For 2015-16, these include:

- ▶ Educating and training various Division II constituents, particularly those serving on regional advisory committees and national governing sport committees, about the new selection criteria set to take effect September 1, 2015.
- ▶ Evaluating legislation expected to be proposed at the 2016 NCAA Convention that could modify various components of automatic qualification (AQ) (for example, whether to offer AQ for brackets with fewer than 48 teams; whether to allow conferences to use affiliate members to meet AQ requirements; and whether to continue requiring 50 percent of the bracket to be filled with at-large berths).
- ▶ Charging the Division II Championships Committee to collaborate with sport committees to determine how transparent the selection process and data should be for the Division II membership.



GOALS Data

The 2015 GOALS study conducted by the NCAA research staff will provide detailed information on the athletics, academic and social experiences of student-athletes across all sports, which will help the division shape policy and devote resources to enhance those experiences in the future. The study also will provide the first comprehensive assessment of the “Life in the Balance” playing and practice season legislative changes the Division II membership adopted in 2010 and 2011.



Coaches Outreach

The division will launch year five of the Division II Coaches Connection program, which uses former coaches to strengthen communication between the coaching constituency and the NCAA national office in various sports. The division also will conduct an Identity Workshop in the spring of 2016 to (1) educate coaches on the benefits of membership in Division II, (2) encourage participation in the governance structure and the Coaches Connection program, and (3) provide an opportunity for one-on-one dialogue with sport committee managers.



Joint Championships

The NCAA will celebrate the 2015-16 women’s basketball season – the 25th in which the NCAA has sponsored national championships in the sport – by staging the Division II and Division III national championship games in conjunction with the Division I Women’s Final Four in Indianapolis.

Additionally, the division will conduct its ninth National Championships Festival (the fourth for spring sports and the first in Denver) May 16-21, 2016. The Festival, hosted by Metropolitan State University of Denver and the Denver Sports Commission, will crown champions in men’s and women’s tennis, softball, men’s and women’s golf, and women’s lacrosse.



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Legislative Issues

The Division II governance structure has committed to the following in 2015-16:

- ▶ A comprehensive review of Bylaw 15 (financial aid) to determine what, if any, changes should be proposed;
- ▶ Considering legislation and interpretations related to student-athletes who compete as “unattached” during regular-season competition;
- ▶ A review of strength and conditioning coach certification; and
- ▶ Assessing the NCAA’s role in cases of institutional academic misconduct.

Various Division II groups will examine each of these issues to determine the best course of action. After receiving feedback from the membership, legislation is expected to be proposed for either the 2016 or 2017 NCAA Convention.

Online Education Resource Center and Institutional Performance Program



Division II has developed online resources to help Division II athletics staff and coaches do their day-to-day jobs more effectively and efficiently. Each area of the site includes instructional material, and sample forms, deadlines, data and details pertaining to the topic.

Division II also will offer the Institutional Performance Program (IPP) at the 2016 NCAA Convention as a resource to the membership (not a requirement like the ISSG) that increases transparency and usability of the data institutions are required to submit annually. The IPP allows institutions to compare data with peer groups and determine areas in which they may be an outlier.

Student-Athlete Initiatives

The Division II Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) is working with institutional SAACs across the country to promote the “It’s On Us” national initiative aimed at raising awareness and prevention of campus sexual assault. The Division II SAAC and Management Council have teamed up to film an “It’s On Us” video that will be shared and promoted in 2015-16.

The Division II SAAC also is working to better educate campus SAACs on national issues, including establishing a “Division II SAAC Network” that connects campus SAAC presidents and advisors with the national committee. The national SAAC also will finalize policies and procedures as it prepares for the 2016 NCAA Convention – the first at which Division II student-athletes will cast votes on legislative proposals.

Further, the division has partnered with nationally known social media consultant Erik Qualman to create tools and training that help

Division II student-athletes best represent themselves via digital platforms. The partnership will provide video tutorials, webinars, relevant case studies, news feeds and more for student-athletes, athletics administrators and Division II stakeholders.



Strategic Plan Implementation and Funding “Foundation for the Future”

The Division II Management Council and Presidents Council have formally approved the 2015-21 Division II Strategic Plan. The plan will begin being implemented in the fall of 2015, and the membership will receive regular updates starting with the 2016 NCAA Convention. Committees or constituent groups overseeing specific areas will be asked to submit status reports twice annually (fall and winter/spring).

Additionally, the division will solicit proposals from the governance structure on ways to use funds to create new initiatives or enhance current programs to benefit the Division II membership and support the strategic plan. A task force composed of individuals from the membership will review the proposals and make recommendations for funding Division II’s “Foundation for the Future.” The Planning and Finance Committee and Presidents Council will consider the recommendations at their spring 2016 meetings.