

NCAA Division II Membership Committee
Minimum Requirements for a Conference to be Considered for Membership in Division II

In order for a conference application to be considered by the NCAA Division II Membership Committee for entrance into the Division II membership, a conference must demonstrate that it meets the following minimum requirements. Ultimately, the committee has the authority to accept or not accept a conference's application to enter Division II, even if the conference is meeting the minimum requirements at the time of application.

Analysis/Feasibility Study

The conference shall demonstrate that broad-based discussions have occurred regarding membership in Division II including a discussion of the necessary resources and personnel to effectively operate a Division II conference. The conference should also demonstrate consideration of its overall fit and alignment with Division II philosophy, attributes and the strategic platform. If the conference used the services of an outside firm or consultant to conduct a feasibility study, the conference must share the findings of the study with the committee.

Accredited Four-Year Baccalaureate Degree(s) Granting Institutions

The conference shall demonstrate that its members are accredited by one of the six regional accrediting agencies and that all institutions have been offering four-year baccalaureate degree(s) for a minimum of one academic year prior to the conference submitting an application to enter the Division II. Conferences with a Canadian institution(s) must indicate whether the Canadian institution(s) have applied to a United States regional accrediting agency prior to being considered for acceptance into Division II.

Strategic Plan for the Conference

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

Financial Model for the Conference

The conference shall demonstrate that it administers its office with prudent management and fiscal practices to ensure financial stability including, but not limited to, sufficient operating budgets for the effective operation of conference championships.

Commitment of Personnel and Current Staff

The conference shall demonstrate that it has the necessary personnel to operate the conference office at the Division II level including, but not limited to, a full-time commissioner and a full-time administrator whose primary responsibility is compliance.

Sports Sponsorship

The conference shall demonstrate that it is meeting the Division II minimum sports-sponsorship requirements for a conference as outlined in NCAA Constitution 3.3.2.2.3 and the three-season requirement as outlined in Constitution 3.3.2.2.3.1 at the time of application. An institution in the conference would have to satisfy the minimum contest and minimum participant requirements in Bylaw 20.10.3.5 in a given sport in order for that sport to be considered when determining whether the conference has six member institutions that sponsor and compete in that sport.

Student-Athlete Advisory Committee

An applicant conference shall demonstrate that it has established at the time of application a student-athlete advisory committee (SAAC) for its member institutions' student-athletes. The conference shall be able to produce bylaws and/or policies and procedures for the duties of the SAAC.

NCAA Division II Membership Committee Additional Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria are important in determining a conference's fit for Division II membership.

Demonstrated Commitment to the Community

The conference shall demonstrate that it is committed to the Division II Community Engagement Initiative for developing student-athletes and communities by actively engaging in shared experiences. The conference shall demonstrate with specific examples for each sport, a commitment to serving the communities in which their member institutions reside and/or where conference championship events are hosted.

Success of Member Institutions in Athletics

The conference shall demonstrate that the varsity athletics programs of its members have demonstrated a history of success on the playing fields as measured by athletic accomplishments on a national level.

Academic Achievement of Student-Athletes

The conference shall demonstrate a commitment to the academic success of student-athletes at its member institutions, measured by the graduation rate of the student-athletes in each sport being equal to or greater than that of the general student body.

Demonstrated Commitment to Sportsmanship

The conference shall have policies in place that demonstrate a commitment to the Division II game environment initiative including good sportsmanship by all coaches, fans and student-athletes.