



Staying Compliant with NCAA Division III Financial Aid Requirements

This resource is intended to facilitate communication across all campus constituencies (e.g., director of athletics, director of financial aid, development office, admissions office and athletics compliance) with a role in the institution's financial aid awarding process. The NCAA Division III Financial Aid Committee recommends that Division III institutions engage in these conversations regularly to help ensure compliance with Bylaw 15.

Please have the following resources on hand for all discussions:

- NCAA Division III Manual – Bylaw 15: Financial Aid
- Annual Financial Aid School Profile Report
- Institutional Financial Aid Policies and Procedures
- Institutional Awards Applications and Descriptions
- NCAA Division III Financial Aid Reporting Program Policies and Procedures Worksheet

Guidelines to a Consistent Financial Aid Package:

1. Financial aid cannot be granted based on a student-athlete's athletics participation. This means institutions should not consider athletics leadership, ability or performance when formulating a financial aid package. [Bylaw 15.4.1-(a)]

Discussion Questions:

- Is the financial award based on the student-athlete's financial need?
- What criteria are used for awarding non-need based aid?
- Do we have a non-need based award policy?
- Is there an application process for non-need based awards?
- Who makes non-need based award decisions and are athletics personnel involved?
- Are extracurricular activities considered in awarding non-need based aid?
- Are leadership positions considered in non-need based awards?
- When considering extra curricular activities and leadership positions in awarding non-need based aid, may athletics be a component?
- What criteria are included in our award matrix?

2. Financial aid procedures should be the same for all students. Student-athletes and non-athletes should be treated the same. [Bylaw 15.4.1-(b)]

Discussion Questions:

- What methods are used to determine financial need for need-based aid?
- Is there a policy directing the proportion of financial need that will be met by institutional gift aid?
- What are our policies and procedures for awarding non-need based aid and do they differ for any student subpopulation?
- What policies and procedures inform our award matrix?
- How do our policies and procedures remove athletics from consideration in the admissions rating system before a financial aid award?

3. The financial aid packages for student-athletes should resemble similar packages offered to non-athletes. [Bylaw 15.4.1-(c)]

Discussion Questions:

- Do student-athletes appear to receive preferential financial aid packaging?
- Do specific athletics teams appear to benefit from preferential, specific institutional awards or grants?

4. The total award amount given to student-athletes compared to the total award amount given to the overall student population should be proportionate to the number of student-athletes compared to the overall student population. [Bylaw 15.4.1-(d)]

Discussion Questions:

- What is the percentage of student-athletes in the student body and what percentage of total institutional aid do student-athletes receive?
- Is there a difference in proportion in the amount given to student-athletes when compared to the rest of the student population?
- What considerations do we make when awarding institutional aid?

Athletics Staff Involvement:

Athletics staff members are not allowed to have any role in determining institutional aid and are not permitted to modify or arrange financial aid packages. [Bylaw 15.4.5]

Discussion Questions:

- What role do athletics department staff members play in the awarding of financial aid?
- Are athletics staff members on our financial aid committee?
- Do we have members of the athletics staff also employed by the admissions department? If so, do employees of the admissions department play a role in the financial aid award process?

For additional resources:

- Contact your conference office
- File an interpretive request in RSRO
- Call the AMA Interpretations Line at 317/917-6003