Division II is a collection of more than 300 NCAA colleges and universities that provide thousands of student-athletes the opportunity to compete at a high level athletically while excelling in the classroom and fully engaging in the broader campus experience.

This booklet is designed to help coaches tout the benefits of Division II to prospects, parents, campus personnel and community stakeholders.

For more information about Division II, visit www.NCAA.org/D2.
Division II spans from New England to Hawaii, from Florida to Alaska, from Texas to Minnesota and from North Carolina to California.

Division II is the only NCAA division with schools in Alaska (Anchorage and Fairbanks), Puerto Rico (Bayamon, Mayaguez and Rio Piedras) and Canada (Simon Fraser).

Division II’s access ratio to NCAA championships is the best of the three divisions, with at least one of every seven athletes enjoying postseason competition annually (even more in some sports).

Division II believes in a balanced approach that integrates athletics into the college experience and allows students to focus fully on their academic pursuits and participate in other campus and community activities.

In a recent survey of current Division II athletes, 95 percent of them said they would recommend a Division II experience to a prospective student. A similar percentage (93 percent) of athletes 10 years removed from their DII athletics experience said they would recommend Division II to a prospect. That represents an ongoing and lasting impact!
Coaches have found success with prospective athletes by touting the plentiful opportunities in Division II of becoming an All-American and competing for a national title.

Division II’s partial-scholarship model allows coaches to offer athletics-based aid like Division I schools do, while also granting the prospective athlete access to all the academic and need-based aid prospects would find at Division III colleges.

Coaches also gain traction by pointing out the fact that Division II athletics are a more affordable entertainment option. The games are played in a more intimate setting; the fans are right there, and after the game, the families come down to the field or onto the court. One coach said, “The Division II atmosphere is not such a business, but more of a community environment.”

Division II athletes are celebrated on television and digital networks, as more than 100 regular-season contests are broadcast nationally. All Division II championship finals are broadcast either nationally or streamed live on NCAA.com.

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People often underestimate the quality of Division II competition, but they change their minds quickly when they watch us play. Our stadiums might not be as large as some other schools, but our talent is.

Joe Reich
Head Football Coach
Wingate University
Division II sponsors and fully funds 25 national championships –12 in men’s sports and 13 in women’s sports – that annually give the more than 16,000 student-athletes who participate in them the experience of a lifetime.

Of the three divisions, Division II provides its athletes with the most access to championships competition (one championships opportunity for every seven athletes in highly sponsored sports such as basketball, volleyball and track; the ratio is even higher in sports such as lacrosse and field hockey).

Most Division II championships have large brackets, which means there are several berths for each of the division’s eight competition regions.

Division II is the only NCAA division that conducts “National Championships Festivals,” an Olympic-style event in which a number of national championships are held at a single site during a period of several days.

The ability to say to our recruits that the opportunity to compete for an NCAA championship is a legitimate option has enabled us to sway them toward our program.

Barbara Stevens
Head Women’s Basketball Coach
Bentley University
Division II's academic philosophy calls for a comprehensive program of learning and development in a personal setting. Graduation rates indicate the model’s success, as student-athletes graduate at rates about 6 percentage points higher than their student body counterparts. Also, Division II established an “Academic Success Rate” in 2006, which, unlike the federal graduation rate, measures graduation outcomes for athletes who are not receiving athletically related financial aid (it also includes transfers and mid-year enrollees). The ASR for the most recent four-year cohort is 71 percent.

### DIVISION II GRADUATION RATES (2005-08 COHORTS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Student body Federal rate</th>
<th>Student-athlete Federal rate</th>
<th>ASR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Division II overall</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division II men</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division II women</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Division II athletes are very driven and focused on becoming the best they can be in all aspects of their educational experience, including doing all they can to prepare themselves for their future careers. At Nova Southeastern, we’re able to give them that experience, not only on the court, but also in the classroom and in all the other aspects of campus life.

LeAnn Freeland  
Head Women’s Basketball Coach  
Nova Southeastern University

Division II colleges and universities accommodate more first-generation students than any other division. Among a recent sample of approximately 20,000 college athletes, 16 percent of Divisions I and III athletes reported being first-generation college students, while 24 percent of Division II student-athletes reported first-generation status.
Division II means achieving balance

- Division II shapes student-athletes who graduate with the skills and knowledge to be productive citizens.

- Division II students are able to play sports, be integrated in campus life, do well in the classroom and graduate with distinction. They are able to have a much more well-rounded experience, because their seasons don’t last all year long.

- Division II students have an excellent opportunity to be highly skilled and highly decorated athletes, but the balanced approach allows them to become marketable in their career because they’ll have time to focus on their academic pursuits, their grades, their internships, and whatever else it takes to prepare themselves for life after graduation.

- Division II athletics programs actively engage with their communities, which helps drive attendance at athletics contests, fosters relationships between student-athletes and community members, and develops more of a shared civic experience. Community engagement also strengthens the bond among teammates and fosters individual and personal growth.

Not one thing in what we do focuses on winning or championships – it all focuses on the players, their experiences on and off the field – and their journeys to be selfless together. That fabric of who we are and what makes us what we are is the reason why and how we win championships.

Shelley Behrens
Head Field Hockey Coach
Millersville University of Pennsylvania
Division II student-athletes have strong representation in the Division II governance structure, serving on NCAA committees and voting on the Convention floor.

The new “Make It Yours” brand enhancement offers Division II student-athletes a rallying cry to celebrate and own their unique athletics experiences.

Division II’s commitment:
Make It Yours

- Division II student-athletes have strong representation in the Division II governance structure, serving on NCAA committees and voting on the Convention floor.

- The new “Make It Yours” brand enhancement offers Division II student-athletes a rallying cry to celebrate and own their unique athletics experiences.

Division II is nationally known for its long-standing commitment to the Make-A-Wish Foundation and Team IMPACT, both of which improve the lives of children with life-threatening illnesses. The Division II Student-Athlete Advisory Committee established the Make-A-Wish partnership in 2003 and has since become one of the foundation’s largest and most consistent contributors. Division II has raised more than $4.1 million toward granting the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions.

DID YOU KNOW?

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Reality trumps perception

The recruiting trail is tough enough, so as a coach, the last thing you need is your competitors making false claims about Division II to gain an advantage. Here are some of the more common misperceptions you might run into along the way, and the realities to counter them:

**Perspective:** Division II athletes aren’t good enough to play professionally.

**Reality:** On the contrary, here’s just a sampling of pros and their DII alma maters:
- **Matt Adams** (MLB St. Louis Cardinals; Slippery Rock)
- **Tesho Akindele** (2014 Major League Soccer Rookie of the Year; Colorado Mines)
- **Lee Janzen** (Two-time U.S. Open golf champion; Florida Southern)
- **Billie Jean King** (Tennis Hall of Fame; Cal State Los Angeles)
- **Earl “The Pearl” Monroe** (Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame; Winston-Salem State)
- **Chris Wondolowski** (2012 Major League Soccer MVP, U.S. National Team; Chico State)
- **Roberto Garza** (NFL Chicago Bears; Texas A&M-Kingsville)

The only two NBA officials who are female both played Division II hoops:
- **Violet Palmer** (Cal Poly Pomona) and **Lauren Holtkamp** (Drury).

**Perspective:** Division II is never on TV.

**Reality:** The fact is, DII athletes are featured on more than 100 national broadcasts:
- Six nationally televised postseason basketball games ([men’s semifinals on CBS Sports Network (CBSSN) and NCAA.com; women’s semifinals and final on CBSSN and NCAA.com; and the men’s final on CBS]
- 25 regular-season and postseason football games (11 “Game of the Week” broadcasts on ESPN3; 11 games on American Sports Network/regional syndication and NCAA.com; semifinals on ESPN3/ESPNU; championship game on ESPN2)
- 48 regular-season men’s and women’s basketball games ([24 “Game of the Week” broadcasts on ESPN3 (12 doubleheaders); 24 games on American Sports Network/regional syndication and NCAA.com (12 doubleheaders)]
- 10 regular-season games in other sports (10 games on ESPN3 or American Sports Network)
- All other championships are streamed live on NCAA.com.

**Perspective:** The fan experience is inferior at DII events.

**Reality:** Bad assumption. Not only are Division II athletes talented, they also are accessible. Almost all Division II schools invite families and fans onto the fields and courts after contests, and most stadiums and arenas are constructed such that fans are close to the action. DII contests are affordable, family-friendly options for community members.

**Perspective:** DII athletes aren’t as talented as their DI counterparts.

**Reality:** Here’s an exercise for you: Compare DII championships results in individual sports such as swimming and track and field with conference championship results from the so-called “mid-majors” in Division I. In many cases, the DII performances are better.

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