

MODELS FOR SUCCESS FOR A DIVISION II ATHLETICS PROGRAM

In 2002, the Division II Athletics Directors Association (DII ADA) identified a need to define a model athletics department at the DII level. Led by past presidents Mac Cassell, Bill Fusco and Jon Carey, the Association developed a document titled “Guiding Principles for a Model Division II Athletics Program”, and has as its base 21 guiding principles to assist Division II administrators as they strategically plan for program enhancements. The document was endorsed by the Management Council and the Presidents Council, and is being used to evaluate new and reclassifying institutions. Similar to the Division II Model Conference Office document that has done so much to advance the operations of Division II conference offices, it was the belief of the Management Council and Presidents Council that the Division II membership would appreciate receiving some general guidelines and strategic goals that might help to enhance operations for the athletics program.

The Division II Strategic Plan and the Division II Institutional Self-Study Guide have served as resources for development of the following documents. Some of the principles may reflect an institution’s current state of operations; others may be unrealistic to achieve. While Division II has a very diverse membership of varying sizes and institutional missions, most of the guidelines represent attributes that are found in successful Division II athletics programs and reflect real goals that, if achieved, should enhance an institution’s operations. Without exception, a Division II athletics program should be an extension of the educational mission of the institution and reflect the standards of higher education.

In 2006, the NCAA Division II Presidents Council adopted the NCAA Division II Strategic Positioning Platform, which more clearly defines the unique philosophy and position of Division II within the overall Association. The platform includes a Division II positioning statement that describes the student-athlete experience in Division II as “a comprehensive program of learning and development in a personal setting”. In addition, the platform also describes six Division II Attributes: Learning, Service, Passion, Sportsmanship, Resourcefulness and Balance.

With the adoption of the Strategic Positioning Platform, the Division II ADA was charged with modifying the original NCAA Division II Model Athletics Department document so that it is more closely aligned with the Division II Strategic Positioning Platform and the key attributes of the Platform. Parts of the former document remain unchanged; however, the revised document correlates the Model Athletics Department with the Strategic Positioning Platform. The various roles and responsibilities for athletics department staff and the 21 guiding principles are linked in the revised document to the six NCAA Division II attributes at the forefront of the platform.

The Division II ADA is committed to making the Division II Strategic Positioning Platform a dynamic document that will guide institutions in their future decision-making and further enhance Division II as a membership destination. A goal of the Model Athletics Department Document is to serve as a resource for specific guidelines for Division II institutions for implementing the strategic platform to their unique settings. The following guiding principles for a model Division II athletics department are intended to support and reflect the NCAA Division II Strategic Positioning Platform:

Guiding Principles for the Program

1. **Integration and Institutional Control.** A model Division II athletics program is integral to the educational mission of the institution, is fully integrated as an athletics department in the institution's budget and management operations, and is committed to the principle of institutional control. A model Division II athletics program should be an extension of the educational mission of the institution and higher education. A model athletics program is committed to ensuring that student-athletes learn in the classroom, on the field of play and through the overall experience of being a college student. **(Learning, Service, Resourcefulness, Balance)**
2. **Chancellor/President Oversight.** A model Division II member institution's Chancellor/President sets forth a vision for the institution's intercollegiate athletics program, that adequate resources exist for the athletics department to carry out this vision, ensures athletics is an extension of the educational mission of the institution, ensures the activation of the Division II Strategic Positioning Platform at their institution and in their community, emphasizes the importance of the institution's compliance system and the roles of various departments (e.g., financial aid office) in this system, and prioritizes self-reporting of compliance violations and compliance with Title IX. **(Learning, Service, Passion, Sportsmanship, Resourcefulness, Balance)**
3. **AD Management.** A model Division II athletics program shall feature a full-time administrator that takes responsibility for the academic and athletics success of the athletics department. As the manager for the department, the AD shall implement the institution's vision for intercollegiate athletics consistent with the institution's educational mission and philosophy. The AD is also responsible for creating an environment that prioritizes sportsmanship and civility, and establishing departmental goals that are aligned with the DII Strategic Positioning Platform including the role athletics can play in strengthening the bond between the institution and community. The AD should serve as a primary athletics administrator and should not have other major responsibilities (e.g., should not also serve as a compliance officer; should not also serve as a coach). With the adoption of the Strategic Positioning Platform, and implementation of the six key attributes, the importance of having sufficient athletics department staff to promote the platform through its new community-engagement initiative is further demonstrated. **(Learning, Service, Passion, Sportsmanship, Resourcefulness, Balance)**
4. **FAR Involvement.** A model Division II member institution shall include the active involvement of the faculty athletics representative as the key institutional liaison to the athletics department, and should be supported and funded by the institution to perform these functions. The involvement of the FAR should include eligibility or academic related duties, maintaining an atmosphere of compliance and institutional control, and assisting in investigations of rules compliance. The FAR should also serve as a key contact for student-athletes. **(Learning, Service, Resourcefulness)**

5. SWA or Fifth Representative to the Governance Structure. An institutional Senior Woman Administrator is the highest ranking female involved with the management of an institution's intercollegiate athletics program. An institution with a female director of athletics may designate a different female involved with the management of the institution's program as a fifth representative to the NCAA governance system. A model Division II athletics program shall include active involvement of the fifth representative to the governance structure in decision making regarding key issues and in the general operations of the athletics department. The fifth representative to the governance structure should be a senior level administrator and she should have the title of assistant or associate athletics director. **(Service, Balance)**

6. Coach's Role. A model Division II athletics program shall feature an environment where head coaches understand their responsibility in establishing a culture of compliance with conference and NCAA rules within the program. A model athletics program also features coaches who have a clear understanding of the institution's emergency medical plans and are certified in CPR/AED operation and first aid. **(Learning, Service, Passion, Sportsmanship)**

7. SAAC Involvement. A model Division II athletics program shall feature an active institutional SAAC that represents the concerns and ideas of the institution's student-athletes in all sports and is committed to the overall welfare of the student-athlete. The institution should designate an athletics department administrator to serve as a liaison to the SAAC and have at least one student-athlete representative on the conference SAAC. **(Learning, Service, Passion, Sportsmanship, Balance)**

8. Athletic Trainers. A model Division II athletics program shall feature an adequate number of certified athletic trainers (per NATA guidelines) who are able to provide for the safety and well-being of the student-athletes. Practices should adhere to the NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook. **(Resourcefulness)**

9. Academic Success. A model Division II athletics program shall be committed to the academic success of its student-athletes, measured in part by the total number of student-athletes that earn degrees within six years of initial collegiate enrollment and the fact that student-athletes graduate at least at the same rate as the institution's student body. **(Learning, Balance)**

10. Diversity and Inclusion. A model Division II athletics program shall be committed to the principle of diversity and inclusion. The athletics department shall promote an atmosphere of respect for and sensitivity to the dignity of every person. The department shall also value the opinions of all, initiate a leadership role on campus in this area, and, through diverse hiring pools, strive for gender and ethnic diversity in the institution's administrative and coaching positions. **(Service, Resourcefulness)**

11. Compliance. A model Division II athletics program shall feature a full-time compliance coordinator whose primary responsibility is the oversight of the institution's compliance system, the coordination of the institution's rules education and the monitoring of rules compliance. The compliance officer should not be a coach and should not be the athletics director. The athletics department should use an electronic or Web-based system for compliance monitoring. The department should also commit to a regular self-analysis to ensure Title IX compliance and a regular external assessment (e.g., Division II Compliance Blueprint visit) to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the institution's compliance systems. **(Learning, Service, Resourcefulness)**
12. Institutional Self-Study Guide. Each Division II institution shall conduct a comprehensive self-study and evaluation of its intercollegiate athletics program at least once every five years, using the NCAA's Institutional Self-Study Guide (ISSG). Note that the five-year cycle should be accelerated when there are personnel or administrative changes on campus. **(Learning, Resourcefulness, Balance)**
13. Community Engagement/Game Environment. A model Division II athletics program will emphasize that a "family friendly" environment should exist at all athletics department events and shall be active in promoting community engagement activities. A model program shall promote and support a positive game environment that will encourage all student-athletes, coaches and fans to respect each other, practice civility, encourage teamwork and understand citizenship responsibilities during the conduct of intercollegiate practice and competitions. An athletics department should develop a policy on sportsmanship and fan behavior for home events. The Student-Athlete Advisory Committee could provide leadership with the development of such a policy. **(Learning, Service, Passion, Sportsmanship, Resourcefulness, Balance)**
14. Finances and Sports Sponsorship. A model Division II athletics program shall be administered with prudent management and fiscal practices to ensure financial stability. Sufficient operating and travel budgets should be maintained to allow for the effective operation of the athletics department. The current average for a Division II athletics department budget is posted on line in the **NCAA** Division II Membership Report. The model program should also feature participation opportunities that are consistent with the institution's mission and the interests of the institution's student-athletes. The minimum sports-sponsorship and financial aid requirements are legislated in the NCAA Division II Manual. **(Resourcefulness, Balance)**
15. Continuing Education and Professional Development. A model Division II athletics program shall be committed to sending its key personnel to educational events (e.g., NACWAA) and to the annual NCAA Convention to enhance the success of the institution and to further the professional development of the coaches and administrators in the athletics department. In addition, the athletics department should look for regional and national workshops or seminars to send student-athletes to enhance their leadership skills. **(Learning, Resourcefulness)**

16. Life Skills. A model Division II athletics program shall be committed to the total development of a student-athlete's life skills, as evidenced by implementing the NCAA CHAMPS/Life Skills or similar program. Life skills programming should effectively engage the community in preparing student-athletes for successes both concurrent with their athletics careers and after their collegiate experiences. A model Division II athletics program will assist student-athletes in developing, identifying and applying transferable skills such as citizenship and leadership in their careers and in their community. (**Learning, Service, Passion, Resourcefulness, Balance**)
17. Assessment. A model Division II athletics program shall feature a tool that is used as a written assessment each year to measure the student-athletes' experience. In addition, the athletics department should feature annual written evaluations by managers (e.g., AD, SWA) regarding the performance of coaches and administrators. (**Learning, Service, Resourcefulness, Balance**)
18. Marketing, Promotions and Media Relations. A model Division II athletics program shall feature a person responsible for promoting the institution's athletics department, and for building key relationships with the media and the community. The athletics program should include marketing strategies for the Division II Strategic Positioning Platform and the six key attributes of the platform. The task of implementing these marketing strategies should be shared by all institutional constituencies. (**Service, Passion, Resourcefulness**)
19. Communication/Campus Relationships. A model Division II athletics program features a communication strategy to keep other key departments (registrar) and positions (financial aid director) on campus up to date regarding athletics department issues. Through communication and collaboration, a model athletics program will reach outward to communities as well as inward to other campus units. (**Service, Resourcefulness**)
20. Strategic Plan for Intercollegiate Athletics. A model Division II athletics program features a strategic vision for an integrated athletics model that specifies the goals and objectives for the intercollegiate athletics experience and identifies how athletics enhances the mission of the campus. A model Division II athletics department shall engage in long range planning and develop a long-range strategic plan that supports initiatives consistent with the Division II Strategic Positioning Platform. (**Learning, Service, Passion, Sportsmanship, Resourcefulness, Balance**)
21. Fundraising. A model Division II athletics program provides for an individual whose primary assignment is athletics fundraising and development. If that individual is the athletics director, an additional assistant athletics director would be necessary for the day-to-day operations of the department. If the function is handled outside the athletics department, the institution's development office should provide for an individual whose primary responsibility is athletics fundraising and development. (**Service, Resourcefulness**)

The Model NCAA Division II Athletics Program

The Division II Athletics Directors Association (DII ADA) has developed the following specific features of a model Division II athletics department within a model program. Some of these features may already exist; others may be unrealistic to achieve. These features are offered to assist your evaluation of current program operations and to discuss possible ways to improve your institution's athletics program. With the adoption of the Division II Strategic Positioning Platform, and implementation of the six key attributes, the importance of having sufficient athletics department staff to promote the Platform through its new community-engagement initiative is further demonstrated.

1. STAFF.

The model athletics department should consist of no less than four full-time staff members. In addition to a full-time athletics director, each office should have a full-time administrative assistant (clerical) and two assistant or associate directors with specific duties. At least one of the assistant or associate ADs should be a female. Head and assistant coaches, in some sports, should also assume some administrative responsibilities. Using the job descriptions of several current athletics directors, the following are examples of duties and responsibilities that might be assigned to the different administrators in the department.

a. Possible Athletics Director Functions.

- Report directly to the Chancellor/President (or have access to the Chancellor/President if reporting directly to a vice-president) and have the primary responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the department and the supervision of the athletics department staff. **(Learning, Service, Passion, Sportsmanship, Resourcefulness, Balance)**
- Be the champion and primary caretaker for the institution's athletics department's strategic plan and compliance with Title IX. **(Service, Resourcefulness)**
- Promote effective communication among the institution's Chancellor/President, staff, faculty, student-athletes, media and the public. **(Learning, Service, Resourcefulness, Balance)**
- Take an active role in conference and national affairs. **(Learning, Service, Passion)**
- Maintain vital communications with outside organizations that are vital to the athletics department's operations, such as the NCAA, NACDA, NACWAA, CoSIDA, etc. **(Service, Resourcefulness)**

- Provide professional growth opportunities for athletics department staff. **(Learning, Resourcefulness, Balance)**
- Coordinate fundraising and development activities for the department or communicate with other units on campus that have this responsibility. **(Service, Passion, Resourcefulness)**
- Ultimately, be accountable for the compliance and fiscal stability of the athletics department. **(Service, Resourcefulness)**
- Establish and coordinate departmental goals that are aligned with the Division II Strategic Positioning Platform including the role athletics can play in strengthening the bond between the institution and community. **(Learning, Service, Passion, Resourcefulness, Balance)**

b. Possible Administrator Functions.

Administrator functions could be assigned to the following positions, depending on the size of the department. **(Service, Resourcefulness)**

- (1) Associate/Assistant Athletics Director.
- (2) Director of Marketing/Promotions
- (3) Sports Information/ Media Relations Director.
- (4) Athletics Development Director.
- (5) Compliance Coordinator.
- (6) Facilities/Operations Manager.
- (7) Athletic Trainer.
- (8) Business Manager.
- (9) Equipment Manager.

Functions:

- Coordinate athletics department statistics services. **(Service)**
- Assist with institutional marketing, fundraising and development activities. **(Service, Passion)**
- Assist with athletics department goals in strengthening the bond between the institution and community. **(Learning, Service, Passion, Resourcefulness, Balance)**
- Coordinate and produce news releases and printed promotional material. **(Service)**

- Coordinate all athletics department awards. **(Service)**
- Enhance athletics department community relations by marketing, promoting and communicating community engagement activities and positive game environment initiatives. **(Balance, Passion, Resourcefulness)**
- Serve as the department's primary media liaison. **(Service)**
- Manage the athletics department's Web page. **(Resourcefulness, Balance)**
- Manage the athletics department's compliance and monitor compliance issues; the associate or assistant athletics director for internal operations should educate the staff regarding NCAA rules and regulations. **(Learning, Service, Sportsmanship, Balance)**
- Organize professional development opportunities for key department personnel. **(Learning)**
- Coordinate the meetings, activities and professional development activities for the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee. **(Learning, Balance)**
- Monitor the commitment to diversity of the athletics department staff and student-athletes. **(Resourcefulness, Balance)**
- Apply for and monitor awards, scholarships and grants made available through the conference and from the NCAA. **(Resourcefulness)**
- Administer secondary rules violation and institutional rules violation investigations. **(Balance)**
- Help coordinate the institution's student-athlete support services (e.g., Life Skills). **(Learning, Balance)**
- Assist with sport event administration. **(Service, Passion, Sportsmanship)**
- Supervise coaches and other athletics department personnel, as assigned. **(Learning, Balance)**
- Assist in the athletics department budgetary process. **(Resourcefulness, Balance)**

c. Possible Administrative Assistant (clerical) Functions.

- Manage the athletics department office. (**Service, Resourcefulness**)
- Maintain files required by the NCAA and conference office. (**Resourcefulness**)
- Coordinate clerical work for the full-time staff. (**Resourcefulness**)
- Other specific duties as assigned by the athletics director. (**Service**)

2. TECHNOLOGY.

Athletics department technology and communication capabilities should be consistent with those that exist in other departments on campus. (**Balance**)

Appropriate staff members of the athletics department might be provided with the following capabilities, depending on specific duties and responsibilities. (**Service, Resourcefulness**)

- a. Hardware and software that permits the electronic transfer of statistics. (**Service, Resourcefulness**)
- b. Telephone system that includes voice mail. (**Resourcefulness**)
- c. Athletics department Web page. (**Resourcefulness**)
- d. Compliance Assistant Software or Web technology for compliance monitoring. (**Learning, Resourcefulness**)
- e. Videoconferencing capabilities. (**Resourcefulness**)
- f. Laptop computers with internet access. (**Learning, Resourcefulness, Balance**)
- g. E-mail accounts. (**Learning, Resourcefulness**)
- h. Cell phones. (**Resourcefulness**)

3. OFFICE LOCATIONS.

- Each athletics department should have sufficient office space so that athletics department personnel (coaches and administrators) are located in one building. (**Service, Resourcefulness**)

4. SALARIES AND BENEFITS.

- Salary and benefits for the athletics director should be comparable to other similar administrators on campus. [The Division II Athletics Directors Association has collected data on salaries for various administrative positions. The most recent data is available online at <http://nacda.cstv.com/sports/div2ada/spec-rel/040605aae.html>.] The salary ranges may reflect differences in the cost of living in various regions of the country, private vs. public institutions, local collective bargaining agreements and market forces. Coaches' salaries will vary by sport, and by full-time status and responsibilities. (**Service, Passion**)
- All full-time employees of the athletics department should have benefits comparable to other full-time employees on campus. (**Service, Passion, Balance**)
- Note that all salary and benefit decisions for coach and administrative positions are subject to regulations set forth in the Fair Labor Standards Act. (**Service, Resourcefulness**)