



2019-20 Legislative Proposals Related to Olympics and Paralympics Participation – Additional Information and Questions and Answers

Updated 1/18/2020

Proposals.

NCAA Division I Proposal No. 2019-101 – Autonomy Proposal – Athletics Personnel and Awards, Benefits and Expenses – Paralympic and Parapan American Games and Paralympic Teams.

Proposal No. 2019-106 Various Bylaws – Paralympic and Parapan American Games and Paralympic Teams.

Proposal No. 2019-107 Amateurism – Exceptions to Amateurism – Developmental Training Expenses for Elite Athletes.

Proposal No. 2019-121 Playing and Practice Seasons – Time Limits for Athletically Related Activities – Exception – Individual Workouts – Elite Athlete Training.

Overview.

These proposals were developed by the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee Collegiate Advisory Council, which is comprised of nine directors of athletics and one commissioner, to identify and remove impediments faced by elite student-athletes who are developing, training and competing both collegiately and internationally. The proposals are based on the idea that intercollegiate Olympic sports thrive when national team student-athletes can pursue both their academic and athletics dreams. In an effort to ease the burdens for elite student-athletes to compete in both systems, insights from more than 300 national team athletes, coaches and national governing body administrators were gathered and examined. Through surveys and interviews, four priority areas were identified: (1) training flexibility; (2) resource access; (3) Paralympic inclusion; and (4) transitional/advocacy support.

Additional Information.

Student-athletes who are members of national teams are often self-managing conflicts related to scheduling, training and finances. These issues are further complicated by policies and practices that do not address international sport structures, quadrennial calendars, Olympic/Paralympic qualification requirements and increased financial demands. The proposals were designed to provide flexibility to allow clearly identified elite athletes to reach their potential, which helps the athletes, programs and, ultimately, the sport. The proposals do not compromise the integrity of existing academic regulations and preclude missing class for additional training. The proposals are intended to allow flexibility and student-athlete customization of training and to encourage collaboration across the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee, school and national team.

Collegiate Olympic Footprint.

The NCAA collegiate athletics system is unique. Eighty percent of the 2016 U.S. Olympic Team and one-third of the 2018 U.S. Olympic Team competed collegiately. Meanwhile, the number of Paralympic national team student-athletes on campuses continues to grow. The Olympic & Paralympic Committee and national governing bodies collaborate annually to identify athletes who will participate on senior-level national teams. In a given year, approximately 300 student-athletes, representing 100 different schools, participate simultaneously on Team USA in various sports.

The following chart provides a sampling of senior-level national team roster structures, team sizes and current student-athletes involved. This information reflects roster data collected between 2018-19, but team sizes and collegiate student-athlete participation vary annually.

SPORT	STRUCTURE	APPROXIMATE TEAM SIZE	CURRENT STUDENT-ATHLETES
Baseball	Roster	26	26
Basketball	Pool	69	3
Biathlon	Roster	14	0
Diving	Roster	30	16
Equestrian	Ranking	NA	NA
Fencing	Ranking	24	3
Field Hockey	Roster	27	6
Golf	Ranking	NA	NA
Gymnastics	Roster	86	10
Women's Hockey	Pool	23	9
Rowing	Roster	146	55
Rugby	Pool	43	4
Shooting	Roster	53	8
Ski/Snowboard	Ranking	193	5
Soccer	Pool	46	0
Softball	Roster	18	2
Swimming	Roster	111	43
Tennis	Ranking	NA	NA
Track and Field	Ranking	150	14
Triathlon	Roster	61	7
Volleyball	Pool	86	2
Water Polo	Pool	35	12
Wrestling	Roster	90	21
<i>2018-19 TOTALS:</i>		<i>1331</i>	<i>246</i>

Structure Definitions.

Roster: Annually named team of athletes who earned their place through a tryout or designation process.

Pool: Annual list of athletes who may earn their position to represent Team USA in designated events.

Ranking: A list of athletes ranked by their performance, which results in their opportunity to represent Team USA.

Process.

The United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee and national governing bodies collaborate annually through the high performance process, which evaluates national team scope/roster size, schedules, finances and strategy. The high performance planning process uses performance analytics to evaluate the annual depth and probability of the team size. Each of the team size structures (roster/pool/ranking) all account for the senior team needs and projected use of alternate athletes.

Questions and Answers.

Question No. 1: Who is eligible to receive developmental training expenses and participate in individual workout sessions permitted by Proposal Nos. 2019-107 and 2019-121, respectively?

Answer: Only an individual who has been designated by the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee and the sport-affiliated national governing body (or the international equivalent) as an elite athlete may receive developmental training expenses or participate in individual workout sessions.

Question No. 2: How are individuals designated as elite athletes by the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee and the sport-affiliated national governing body?

Answer: An individual designated by the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee and the sport-affiliated national governing body as an elite athlete is a member of a U.S. senior national team. The USOPC annually works with the national governing bodies to forecast the national team strategy through a high performance planning process. This process involves the construction of a contractual agreement that outlines goals, funding and scope of the national team activities in a given year. Through this process, the national team rosters are shared and discussed, and constructed through sport-specific qualification procedures. The USOPC collegiate partnerships team reviews the national team rosters and confirms the school affiliation of current student-athletes. The USOPC collegiate partnerships team will release the list of current student-athletes listed as members of senior national teams annually.

Question No. 3: How frequently will the list of elite athletes who are on national teams be updated?

Answer: The United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee collegiate partnerships team will maintain an annual list, which will be distributed publicly in August. The list will be updated in January with additions. The January updates are intended to accommodate sports with different seasons (summer versus winter).

Question No. 4: How long may an individual use the elite-athlete exceptions?

Answer: Elite athletes who are on national teams will be eligible to use the exceptions for the duration of the academic year, regardless if their world ranking and/or national team performance status fluctuates during the academic year. Only in circumstances of egregious violations of national team code of conduct would a student-athlete be removed from the list during the academic year. Elite student-athletes must requalify for the exceptions on an annual basis through their sport-specific qualification procedures.

Question No. 5: How are international athletes designated as elite athletes?

Answer: An individual designated by the international equivalent of the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee and the sport-affiliated national governing body as an elite athlete must be a member of his or her country's senior national team. The status of an international athlete as a member of a senior national team could be confirmed by reviewing an active international roster (e.g., national team website and/or letter from the national team). An institution may also inquire with the USOPC collegiate partnerships team regarding the status of an athlete. The USOPC has access to a database of world-level event results and can validate that an elite student-athlete was representing his or her country at world-level competitions.

Question No. 6: Are there any restrictions on when a student-athlete who has been designated as an elite athlete may participate in an individual workout session with his or her coach, other than during class time?

Answer: No. A student-athlete who has been designated by the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee and the sport-affiliated national governing body (or the international equivalent) as an elite athlete may participate in an individual workout session conducted by a coaching staff member at any time (e.g., in season, out of season, during the academic year, vacation periods, summer) without such activity being considered a countable athletically related activity, provided the workout is initiated by the student-athlete and he or she does not miss class.

Question No. 7: May other student-athletes who have not been designated as an elite athlete participate in workout sessions with the elite designated student-athlete?

Answer: No. If a student-athlete who has been designated as an elite athlete is participating in an individual workout session pursuant to the “elite-athlete exception,” no other student-athletes who have not been designated as elite athletes may participate.

Question No. 8: If multiple student-athletes from the same team have been designated as elite athletes, may they participate in workout sessions together with the institution’s coaching staff member?

Answer: Yes

Question No. 9: May more than one of the institution’s coaching staff members conduct a workout with a student-athlete who has been designated as an elite athlete, either at the same time or at different times?

Answer: Yes.

Question No. 10: What entities may provide developmental training expenses to an individual who has been designated as an elite athlete?

Answer: An individual designated as an elite athlete may receive developmental training expenses from the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee, the appropriate national governing body in the sport (or the international equivalent) or a governmental entity. In addition, a separate entity that is affiliated with the USOPC, a national governing body or governmental entity (e.g., governmental assistance program, local swimming committee) may provide developmental training expenses, provided the USOPC, the national governing body or governmental entity specifically identifies the amounts and recipients consistent with their policies and procedures for access to training expenses; and the use of such a program or affiliated entity is one of the normal processes for raising and distributing the funds of the USOPC, the national governing body or governmental entity. **In wrestling, Regional Training Centers will not be authorized to distribute training expenses to current student-athletes on behalf of USA Wrestling.**