

PROPOSED – SUSTAINABLE OLYMPIC SPORT MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY PILOTS
Men’s Gymnastics and Men’s Volleyball

PILOT CONCEPT: The USOPC Think Tank, in partnership with national governing body leaders, the Collegiate Gymnastics Association and American Volleyball Coaches Association, have begun exploring a pilot of flexible membership policies in the sports of men’s gymnastics and men’s volleyball. These pilot adjustments would leverage the Olympic Sustainability Membership Category, which seeks flexibility for multidivisional status and conference flexibility as outlined below. Should these pilot efforts be successful, they could be scaled to additional low-sponsored male and female sports.

Amend NCAA membership legislation to permit flexibility for men’s gymnastics and men’s volleyball in the membership areas of: (1) multidivisional status and (2) conference flexibility.	
INTENT	<p>Permit schools sponsoring men’s gymnastics and men’s volleyball to be considered part of the Olympic sustainability pilot and have flexible membership status by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Multidivisional option: Permit DII/DIII schools to have multidivisional status when sponsoring men’s gymnastics at the DI level and permit DII schools to sponsor men’s volleyball at the DI level. ● Conference affiliation option: Permit men’s gymnastics and men’s volleyball schools to have immediate access to post-season play.
RATIONALE	<p>NCAA Division I membership policies tend to manage school affiliations through national-level metrics and thresholds, which do not account for regional, cultural and structural nuances in each sport. Customization would benefit men’s gymnastics and men’s volleyball schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sustainability: Multidivisional alignment may encourage regional competition, aid in conference stability, ease competition options and reduce travel costs. ● Rules: National collegiate championship sports are pursuing the same post-season opportunities, but not all teams play by the same regular season rules. If DII and DIII schools are permitted to have their programs recognized as DI, the sports would operate under the same rules per 20.7.1. ● Scheduling: DI membership status requires schools to compete against DI opponents to meet sport sponsorship minimums. Multidivisional classification would increase competition options and encourage regionalization, easing travel time/budgets, strengthening regional rivalries and aiding geographically challenged programs with access to more competition.
IMPACT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Estimated budget impact: The fiscal impact will vary given various competitive footprints across national collegiate championship sports; however, the effort to regionalize competitive pockets will strengthen sport sponsorship and ease travel budgets. ● Impact on student-athletes: The pilot could enhance the student-athlete experience by increasing regional interest in the sport and easing travel demands.

**NOTE: These pilots have been recommended for men’s gymnastics and men’s volleyball due to the number of dropped programs and significance of the dropped teams during the pandemic, which spurred leadership planning by the NGB and coaches associations.*

SPORT SPONSORSHIP FOOTPRINTS: The following tables outline the current school sponsorship footprint for men’s gymnastics and men’s volleyball, which demonstrate natural regionalization.

M. Gymnastics: 13 DI & DIII teams
<p>Midwest footprint [5 schools]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Big Ten Conf.:</i> 5xDI (1xIL, 1xMI, 1xNE, 1xOH, 1xPA); - MN and IA dropped <p>Eastern footprint [4 schools]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Eastern College Athletic Conf.:</i> 3xDI (1xNY, 1xPA, 1xVA); 1xDIII (1xMA) <p>Western footprint [4 schools]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Mountain Pacific Sports Federation:</i> 4xDI (2xCA, 1xOK, 1xCO)

M. Volleyball: 55 NCAA DI & DII teams
<p>Midwest footprint [8 schools]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Midwestern Intercollegiate Volleyball Assoc.:</i> 4xDI (1xIN, 2xIL, 1xOH); 4xDII (3xIL, 1xMO) <p>Eastern footprint [11 schools]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Eastern Intercollegiate Volleyball Conf.:</i> 7xDI (1x VA, 1xMA, 1xNJ, 2xPA, 1x NJ, 1xCT); 1xDII (1xWV) - <i>Independents:</i> 1xDI (1xNY); 2xDII (2xNY) <p>Western footprint [13 schools]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Big West Conf.:</i> 6xDI (5xCA, 1xHI) - <i>Mountain Pacific Sports Federation:</i> 6xDI (1xUT, 4xCA, 1xAZ); 1xDII (1xCA) <p>Southern footprint [23 schools]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Conference Carolinas:</i> 9xDII (4xNC, 3xSC, 1xGA, 1xTN) - <i>Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conf.:</i> 6xDII (1xSC, 1xOH, 1xGA, 1xKY, 2xGA) - <i>Independents:</i> 8xDII (1xWV, 1xSC, 2xTN, 1xNC, 3xPR)

PROPOSED - NCAA DIVISION I LEGISLATIVE AMENDMENTS
BYLAWS 18, 20, 31: MEMBERSHIP & CONFERENCE/SCHOOL FLEXIBILITY

1. MULTIDIVISIONAL FLEXIBILITY -----

20.4 Multidivisional Classification / Reclassification of Football Subdivision.

20.4.1 Multidivision Classification. A member of Division II or Division III may have a sport classified in Division I, provided the sport was so classified during the 2010-11 academic year. Such a classification shall continue until the institution fails to conduct the sport in Division I in any subsequent academic year. *(Revised: 8/9/07, 1/15/11 effective 8/1/11)*

20.4.1.1 Reclassification of a Sport of the Opposite Gender. A member of Division II or Division III that had one sport classified in Division I during the 2010-11 academic year may petition to have one sport of the opposite gender, other than football or basketball, classified in Division I, provided the original sport remains classified in Division I. *(Adopted: 10/27/11 process to begin with applications received by 6/1/12)*

20.4.1.2 Men's Gymnastics Exception. A member of Division II or Division III may have the sport of men's gymnastics classified in Division I.

20.4.1.2 Men's Volleyball Exception. A member of Division II may have the sport of men's volleyball classified in Division I.

2. CONFERENCE/SCHOOL FLEXIBLE AFFILIATION -----

18.4 Eligibility for Championships.

18.4.2.2 Championships -- Eligibility. To be eligible to enter a team or an individual in an NCAA championship, a member institution also shall: *(Revised: 1/10/90 for data collection, effective 10/1/91 for disclosure, 10/28/97, 11/1/00 effective 8/1/01, 3/8/06, 12/15/06, 11/1/07 effective 8/1/08, 7/30/10, 8/7/14, 4/28/16 effective 8/1/16, 6/19/17)*

(a) Limit its athletically related grant-in-aid awards and eligibility for participation in practice or competition to student-athletes who meet the following requirements:

(1) Freshman eligibility requirements for financial aid, practice and competition set forth in Bylaws 14.3.1 and 14.3.2; and

(2) Transfer eligibility requirements for financial aid, practice and competition set forth in Bylaws 14.5.4.1 and 14.5.4.2 (for transfer from a two-year college) or in Bylaw 14.5.5.1 (for transfer from a four-year college);

(b) Have operated for a period of two years in conformity with the requirements of Bylaw 18.4.2.2-(a) at the time it certifies conformance;

(c) Report annually to the NCAA, through the president or chancellor, the admissions and graduation-rate data specified in Bylaws 18.4.2.2.1, 18.4.2.2.2 and 18.4.2.2.3. The data shall be received in the national office not later than March 1. Any data received after that date shall appear on a form postmarked not later than February 22;

(d) In championship subdivision football, have complied with the minimum scheduling requirements set forth in Bylaw 20 for a period of two years; and

(e) In indoor and outdoor track and field, have met the minimum contests and participants requirements for sports sponsorship set forth in Bylaw 20.9.6.3.

18.4.2.2.1 Men's Gymnastics Exception. Member institutions conducting men's gymnastics competitions are not bound by the two-year waiting period.

18.4.2.2.2 Men's Volleyball Exception. Member institutions conducting men's volleyball competitions are not bound by the two-year waiting period.

18.4.2.2.4 Division II or Division III Institution Petitioning for Division I Classification. A Division II or Division III institution petitioning for Division I institutional membership or eligibility in a sport (in accordance with Bylaw 20) shall have operated in conformity with the requirements of Bylaw 18.4.2.2-(a) for a period of two years preceding the effective date of its Division I membership or be ineligible for Division I championships.

18.4.2.2.4.1 Men's Gymnastics Exception. Member institutions conducting men's gymnastics competitions are not bound by the two-year waiting period.

18.4.2.2.4.2 Men's Volleyball Exception. Member institutions conducting men's volleyball competitions are not bound by the two-year waiting period.

31.3.4 Automatic Qualification.

31.3.4.2 Requirements -- National Collegiate Championship. [#] To be eligible for automatic qualification in a National Collegiate Championship, a member conference must meet the following general requirements: *(Adopted: 1/9/06 effective 8/1/06)*

- (a) Have at least six active members that sponsor the applicable sport in any division (Note: A provisional member in the process of becoming an NCAA member may not be used to meet the requisite number.);
- (b) The six active members must have conducted conference competition together for the preceding two years in the applicable sport;
- (c) There shall be no waivers of the two-year waiting period; and
- (d) Any new member added to a conference that is eligible for an automatic bid shall be immediately eligible to represent the conference as the automatic qualifier.

31.3.4.2.1 Men's Gymnastics Exception. Members of a conference conducting men's gymnastics competitions are not bound by the two-year waiting period.

31.3.4.2.2 Men's Volleyball Exception. Members of a conference conducting men's volleyball competitions are not bound by the two-year waiting period.

31.3.4.4.2 Single-Sport Conference. To be considered for automatic qualification in a particular sport, a single-sport member conference for a sport sponsored by less than 50 percent of the Division I membership must include six institutions that have conducted conference competition together the preceding two years in the sport in question at the Division I level. *(Adopted: 8/5/04, Revised: 4/27/06 effective 8/1/06)*

31.3.4.4.2.1 Men's Gymnastics Exception. Members of a conference conducting men's gymnastics competitions are not bound by the two-year waiting period.

31.3.4.4.2.2 Men's Volleyball Exception. Members of a conference conducting men's volleyball competitions are not bound by the two-year waiting period.