



Thank you for your interest in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA).

NAIA membership is available to four-year colleges and universities that meet established criteria and adhere to the overall mission and beliefs of nearly 300 institutions from across North America.

The membership application process allows the NAIA to learn more about your institution's athletics philosophy and operations and, in turn, permits you to become familiar with NAIA mission, structure, operating policies and legislative requirements. We believe that by completing this process, a prospective member institution can conduct a meaningful assessment of its interest in, and readiness to join, the Association.

Membership applications are reviewed and acted upon twice each year, in conjunction with spring and fall meetings of the NAIA Council of Presidents. Completed applications must be submitted to the NAIA national office **no later than 90 days prior** to the semiannual Council of Presidents meeting. The **2010 submission deadlines are:**

January 13, 2010 for April 13, 2010 COP review

June 2010 for September 2010 COP review (dates to be determined)

Prior to Council of Presidents deliberations, a campus visit will be conducted by a peer-review team of campus administrators from NAIA institutions in your region. The campus visit is an important part of the application process, affording opportunities for face-to-face discussions in advance of a membership decision. Written recommendations of the team are given significant weight by the Council of Presidents during final review of an institution's membership application. A \$2,000 nonrefundable application fee, submitted with the formal application, is required primarily to offset expenses for the visit.

Following is a complete guide to the application process. This process helps ensure full compliance with NAIA regulations and institutional responsibilities during the transition to NAIA membership.

The NAIA is committed to helping your institution make a well-informed decision, and we look forward to talking with you further concerning NAIA membership. As questions arise, please feel free to contact me or **Marcus Manning, Director of Membership Services.**

John Leavens
NAIA Senior Vice President
for Membership Services

NAIA's mission is to promote the education & development of students through intercollegiate athletics participation.



NAIA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION GUIDEBOOK

Submitting your institution's membership application

Institutions that have expressed interest in NAIA membership are assigned a *liaison from the national office* who works with other NAIA members in your area and maintains close contact with key conference and campus administrators. Your liaison guides you through the application process and provides easy access to the necessary forms and instructions.

Formal application for NAIA membership requires submission of the following materials:

- NAIA Membership Application Form
- Institutional Mission Statement
- Most recent regional accreditation review letter
- Copies of key institutional publications (e.g., catalog, student handbook, athletics policies)
- Current budget for athletics, by sport
- Independently audited financial statements including revenues and expenditures and management letter for the institution as a whole for the two most recent fiscal years
- Most recent freshman class and student body profiles (e.g., gender, ethnicity, academics)
- Current and prospective sports sponsorship information.
- Non-refundable \$2,000 application fee, which is used to offset expenses for a required campus evaluation visit by NAIA administrators from your area.

Completed applications must be received in the national office **90 days prior** to the spring or fall meetings of the NAIA Council of Presidents.

Process Timeline

90 days — Applications are due 90 days prior to the spring (April) or fall (September) meetings of the NAIA Council of Presidents (COP).

30 days — Membership Evaluation Team visits campus at least one month prior to the COP meeting.

Two weeks after visit — Institution receives written confirmation once the team's deliberations are complete.

Spring approvals — If approved during spring COP meeting, institution will be notified within 10 days; membership becomes effective August 1 the same year.

Fall approvals — If approved during the fall COP meeting, membership becomes effective immediately

Immediately after membership approval — Compliance documentation must be submitted as soon as possible using the NAIAHelp online reporting system.

Conducting the campus evaluation visit

At least 30 days prior to the Council of Presidents meeting during which your application will be considered, members of an NAIA **Membership Evaluation Team (MET)** will visit your campus.

The purpose of the campus visit is two-fold. It allows the MET and Council of Presidents to learn more about your institution and make an educated decision concerning your institution's application for NAIA membership. More importantly, the campus visit presents a unique educational opportunity for your institution to learn firsthand about the NAIA, its structure and rules from current NAIA administrators and faculty members.

Your NAIA national office liaison will contact you to arrange the campus visit date. The visit is usually completed in one day and includes a variety of opportunities for campus staff to interact informally with MET members.

Membership Evaluation Team includes:

- NAIA national office liaison
- Member of the NAIA Council of Presidents (or another chief executive officer) from your area
- NAIA athletics director from an institution near yours
- NAIA institutional faculty athletics representative or conference eligibility chair, or registrar from a nearby institution or conference

Typical Campus Visit Agenda

| | |
|------------------|--|
| 9-9:45 a.m. | Campus Tour The athletic director and representatives of the institution lead MET members on a campus tour, with emphasis on athletics facilities, student academic centers, dormitories and administrative offices. |
| 10-11 a.m. | Opening Session Senior campus administrators, selected faculty and athletics department staff members and coaches share information concerning the institution's application, campus operations, and current and future plans for intercollegiate athletics. Members of the MET provide information about NAIA history, governance and operations, academic requirements, championships and the NAIA <i>Champions of Character</i> initiative. |
| 11:15-11:45 a.m. | Senior Administration The institution's chief executive officer and MET president and chair exchange information about athletics philosophy on campus and in the NAIA, issues of institutional control, budgetary and financial issues, student-athlete experience and long-range plans for the institution and athletics. Administration and Competition Members of the institution's athletics administration and coaching staff meet with the MET athletic director for a discussion of athletics (and, if applicable, conference) administration, qualification for postseason play, student-athlete experience, and selected NAIA rules. Legislation and Compliance Key campus faculty and administrators involved in certifying initial and continuing eligibility meet with the evaluation team's faculty athletics representative to discuss campus responsibilities for rules compliance, internal lines of communication, legislative process, treatment of potential rules violations and eligibility appeals. Those in attendance also discuss NAIA eligibility and financial aid rules. |
| 1:15-1:45 p.m. | Student-Athletes All enrolled student-athletes are invited to attend an informal session with all MET members to discuss the NAIA athletics and championships experiences, <i>Champions of Character</i> , and basic eligibility and financial aid rules. |
| 2-2:45 p.m. | Wrap-up Session |

Evaluation team's recommendation to the Council of Presidents

Approximately two weeks after the campus visit, the Membership Evaluation Team convenes by phone conference and prepares a formal written report that includes the team's recommendation. Your institution will receive written confirmation once the team's deliberations are complete, and the team will identify any areas of concern or additional information needed.

The full application packet – your completed application, the evaluation team's campus visit report and the evaluation team recommendations – is sent to all members of the NAIA Council of Presidents for review during the council's next regularly scheduled meeting.

Preparing for active membership

In anticipation of membership in the NAIA, your institution needs to be prepared to submit a variety of eligibility and compliance documentation for the coming academic year. Some compliance information is due immediately after membership approval and is submitted through NAIAHelp online reporting system. Most eligibility forms are due before competition begins, but it is highly recommended they be submitted as soon as possible.

NAIA liaisons assist new members with obtaining passwords to the reporting system and send reminders about the documentation and deadlines. All required eligibility forms can be found in the New Member Resources section of the website.

Eligibility & Compliance documentation deadlines:

Immediately after membership approval

— Compliance documentation must be submitted as soon as possible using the NAIAHelp online reporting system.

Before competition begins — New members must complete all eligibility forms found online.

Taking final action on your membership application

Completed membership applications may be acted upon only in regularly scheduled meetings of the Council of Presidents. A simple majority vote of the council determines membership. If approved during spring COP meetings, membership becomes effective August 1 the same year. If approved in the fall COP meeting, membership becomes effective immediately at the conclusion of the COP meeting.

Once your membership application has been approved:

- Your institution will be notified formally of the decision within 10 days.
- The NAIA national office will work with your institution to prepare press releases on the NAIA website and to selected local and regional media outlets.
- Representatives of Summit America Insurance will contact you concerning enrollment in the required NAIA catastrophic insurance program.
- Your institution will receive an invoice for the first year's membership dues.

Note:

New members must wait one-year before their teams are eligible for post-season competition. In exceptional circumstances, waiver requests may be submitted by the applicant institution at the same time its membership application is considered by the Council of Presidents.