



NAIA: progress and innovation

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) is a governing body for athletic programs at its nearly 300 colleges and universities throughout the United States and Canada. The long-held mission of the NAIA is to promote the education and development of well-rounded students and productive citizens through intercollegiate athletics.

Founded in 1937, the NAIA is a leader in the development of student-athletes and continues to be a pioneer in implementing exceptional standards for academics, diversity and character. Those standards are evident not only on the campuses of our member institutions, but in the competitive fields of our 23 national championships. Our shared commitment: quality athletics, deeply rooted in education.

Today, the NAIA strengthens that commitment to student-athletes and strives to enrich their college experience by supporting academic achievement and character development. NAIA *Champions of Character* is the association's innovative flagship program designed to instill character values in student-athletes, coaches and youth in the communities we serve.

Champions of Character – changing the culture of sport

Possibly the NAIA's single most important program ever, *Champions of Character* is a comprehensive character training program available to all athletic administrators, coaches and student athletes. In a time when stories abound of fighting spectators, over-zealous parents, elbow-throwing athletes, and irresponsible coaches in all levels of sport, the NAIA is reclaiming the true spirit of the game.

- Integrity**
- Respect**
- Responsibility**
- Sportsmanship**
- Servant Leadership**

Champions of Character is grounded in five core values: respect, integrity, responsibility, servant leadership and sportsmanship. The program is designed to instill an understanding of character in sport and provide student-athletes, coaches and parents hands-on training to know the right thing, do the right thing and value the right thing inside and outside the sports setting.

NAIA Program Centers act as distribution points across the country, using trained instructors and student leaders to promote and incorporate the five core character values within daily campus life and among coaches, parents and youth in their local communities.

NAIA – first in college sports to:

Eliminate racial barriers to membership and competition

Adopt strong academic standards for eligibility

Provide championships for women and men

Elect an African-American and woman as presidents

Enact presidential governance



Why choose the NAIA?

Good financial decision

- Average NAIA institution athletics budget is lower than those in both NCAA Division II and III
- NAIA conference dues are lower on average than NCAA conference dues.
- Flexibility in sports sponsorship and ease of administration mean lower operating costs.
- Athletics budgets are under clear institutional control, subject to the same policies and constraints that exist for all departments.

Institutional flexibility and autonomy

- Size and scope of athletics programs are determined solely by member institutions and conferences.
- Student-athletes are recruited in the same manner as non-athletes.
- No mandated competition against only NAIA members, no limits on foreign tours or trips.

Simple approach to rules compliance

- Rules and regulations can be administered easily without a compliance officer or staff.
- Rules interpretations are handled most often within the institution or conference.
- A trust-based system places primary responsibility with the institution to investigate potential rules violations and enforce standards of conduct and ethics.

Serious about academic success

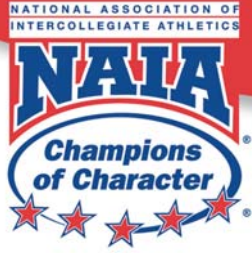
- Every entering freshman must meet stringent academic standards for initial eligibility.
- Student-athletes must demonstrate steady progress toward graduation prior to each subsequent season of competition.
- Academic progress is monitored at the beginning of *each* academic term.
- Financial aid rules provide motivation for high academic achievement.

Development of the “whole person”

- Campuses are close-knit communities with small class sizes.
- Recruitment process provides many opportunities to get to know potential students and meaningfully evaluate the institutional “fit.”
- Admissions decisions are a regular part of the institution’s established process for all students.
- Student-athletes are treated generally the same as other students, with opportunities to strengthen relationships with coaches and faculty throughout the year.
- *Champions of Character* initiative is central to all association programs.
- All NAIA championship events focus on character through awards, recognition and special programs targeted to schools and youth sports.

Opportunities for postseason play

- Conference champions automatically qualify to national postseason play in all team sports.
- Independent institutions are guaranteed an opportunity to qualify for postseason play.



NAIA Membership FAQs

Who can become an NAIA member?

Active membership in the NAIA is open to four-year colleges and universities, and upper-level, two-year institutions in the United States and Canada that award the bachelor's (baccalaureate) degree, or its equivalent. Active members must be not-for-profit organizations and (for members in the United States) fully accredited by one of the six established regional accrediting bodies.

Associate membership is available to four-year colleges and universities, and two-year institutions in the U.S. and Canada that award bachelor's degree(s) but do not hold full accreditation by one of the six institutional accrediting bodies.

How many NAIA members are there?

Nearly 300 member institutions in the United States and Canada comprise the NAIA. The association includes 25 affiliated conferences (and independent institutions) that qualify for 23 national championships in 13 sports.

What are the minimum sports sponsorship requirements?

The NAIA does not require a minimum number of sponsored varsity sports. Consistent with the association's philosophy of institutional autonomy, active members are permitted to make decisions about sports sponsorship consistent with their institution's mission and overall budgetary needs. Affiliated NAIA conferences, however, often do have minimum sponsorship requirements that conference members must meet.

Is there a waiting period before new members can qualify for NAIA championships?

Yes. NAIA rules stipulate a one-year waiting period before new members are eligible for championships selection. It is possible, however, to seek a waiver of this waiting period through the Council of Presidents, and, under exceptional circumstances, newly elected members have obtained waivers in this manner.

When would your student-athletes be subject to NAIA rules?

Eligibility of student-athletes at a new member institution must be certified according to NAIA rules as soon as the institution's NAIA membership becomes effective. For example, if an institution becomes an NAIA member effective August 1, 2010, student-athletes must be certified eligible in order to represent the institution in intercollegiate competition at that time. This is true, even though the institution is not eligible for postseason play during the first year of NAIA membership.

Need more information?

Contact: Marcus Manning, Director of Membership Services
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What are the costs for NAIA membership?

One-time nonrefundable application fee \$2,000
Annual membership dues.....\$5,400 (2009-10)
Affiliated conference or independent institutions dues (average) \$3,500
NAIA members also are required to participate in a national catastrophic injury insurance program administered by Summit America Insurance Company. Premiums vary each year and depend on each institution's sponsored sports. For estimated premiums, go to:
www.SummitAmerica-ins.com/products/pdf_forms/SAIS_NAIA_group_app.pdf.

What are NAIA limits on athletics grants?

Maximum institutional aid limits exist for each sport. Financial aid limitations are outlined in Article VIII, Section G of the current NAIA Council of Presidents policy manual.

All or a portion of institutional aid awarded to individual student-athletes may be exempted based on academic performance. For example, aid to continuing students with a 3.60 cumulative grade-point average or who are in the top 10 percent of their class will not count against financial aid limits.

How do independent institutions qualify for NAIA championships?

The NAIA National Administrative Council, which governs championships play in all NAIA-sponsored sports, guarantees opportunities for independent institutions to qualify for postseason play in each NAIA national championship. Specific means for selection are determined by the National Administrative Council on a sport-by-sport basis.

Are members of club teams subject to NAIA eligibility or rules?

Students who participate solely as members of an institution's club teams are not subject to NAIA eligibility, financial aid or other regulations. Please note, however, that at whatever point a particular student-athlete subsequently participates as a member of an institution's intercollegiate team, that student-athlete will be subject to all NAIA regulations.

Institutions in the process of building sports programs also have the option of sponsoring an intercollegiate sport and confirming with the national office its intention to "opt out" of NAIA championships on a year-by-year basis. This affords the institution (and its opponents) scheduling advantages and requires application of NAIA rules for participating student-athletes in that sport.

Are there any regulations concerning athletics facilities?

The National Administrative Council adopts playing rules for each sport (usually consistent with widely accepted collegiate or amateur standards), and those playing rules may stipulate facility or playing field dimensions or standards (for postseason play only). At the time of membership application, membership evaluation teams may take into consideration in evaluation and recommendations the quality of current athletics facilities and feasibility of planned improvements.