

## Criteria for Emerging Sports

**Definition of an emerging sport:** An emerging sport is a sport recognized by the NCAA that is intended to provide additional athletics opportunities to female student-athletes. Institutions are allowed to use emerging sports to help meet the NCAA minimum sports-sponsorship requirements and also to meet the NCAA's minimum financial aid awards.

**Definition of a sport:** For purposes of reviewing emerging sports for women proposals, a sport shall be defined as an institutional activity involving physical exertion with the purpose of competition versus other teams or individuals within a collegiate competition structure. Furthermore, sport includes regularly scheduled team and/or individual, head-to-head competition (at least five) within a defined competitive season(s); and standardized rules with rating/scoring systems ratified by official regulatory agencies and governing bodies.

If an activity meets the definition of a sport, then a proposal and 10 commitment letters are submitted to the Committee on Women's Athletics (CWA). The proposal has to include documentation/supporting information that demonstrates that the sport meets the criteria received by the CWA when assessing the viability of the sport.

### The Criteria Addressed in the Proposal Must Include the Following:

- There must be 20 or more varsity teams and/or competitive club teams that currently exist on college campuses in that sport.
- Other data exists that demonstrates support for the sport. For example:
  - Collegiate recreation and intramural sponsorship.
  - High-school sport sponsorship.
  - Nonscholastic competitive programs.
  - Association and organization support.
  - U.S. Olympic Committee support (e.g., classified as an Olympic sport, National Governing Body support, grants).
  - Conference interest in sports sponsorship.
  - Coaches Association support.
  - Professional sports support.
- There is a demonstrated understanding that once identified as an emerging sport, all NCAA institutions wishing to sponsor the sport at the varsity level must abide by all NCAA regulations, which include limits on playing and practice seasons, recruiting regulations and student-athlete eligibility.
- Emerging-sport proposals must include information on general championship rules and format for the sport.

In addition to the proposal, 10 letters of commitment must be submitted. The letters must be from 10 member institutions that sponsor or intend to sponsor the sport as an emerging sport and include the signatures of the president and the athletics director of those institutions. Additionally, the letters must be dated within one year of the submission of the proposal and letters.

A sport that is removed from the list of emerging sports for women can seek reinstatement. At least twelve months must have passed since the effective date of removal from the list.

The criteria for the proposal remain the same, except that 15 letters of commitment must be included and the proposal should explain why the circumstances for support of the proposal have changed since the sport's removal from the list.