5 Seasons of Competition Survey

Synopsis: All Member Responses

This synopsis summarizes final membership survey results (n=1,874). Several questions were only shown to respondents who indicated support for a 5 SOC model or opted to continue past a gating question; each table's base is noted below the table.

Presidents: 80	Conference Commissioners: 13
ADs/Associate ADs: 239	Registrars: 35
Coaches/Asst. Coaches: 1,248	Other (SIDs, ATs, Other): 126
FAR/Eligibility Chair/Compliance Admins: 133	**TOTAL: 1,874**

Key Takeaways:

A. 84% of respondents support 5 SOC, while only 10% support the current four-season model.

B. 56% prefer Option A: 5 Seasons with 10 Terms of Attendance, while 26% prefer Option B, and 16% are flexible as long as a fifth season is allowed.

C. 88% believe current eligible students should be able to take advantage of the new 5 SOC model in 2027-28. Of all constituent groups, presidents and ADs/Asst ADs have the strongest preference for Option A as compared to Option B.

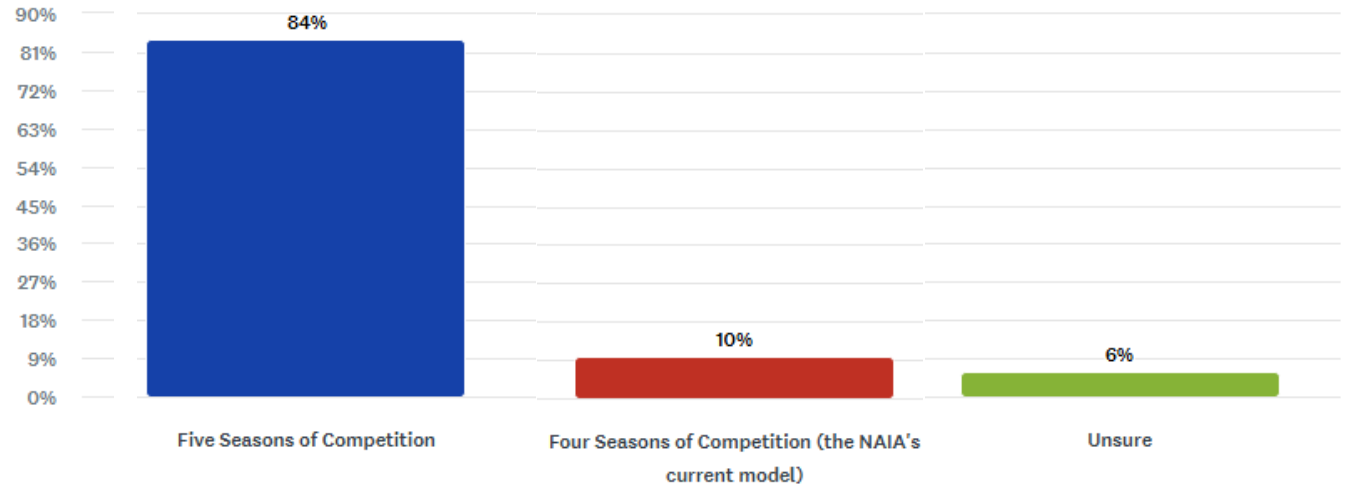
D. The top concern with Option A is compliance or eligibility complications from using a different model than the rest of the industry. For the academic and eligibility professionals, the greatest concern was the ability for students to stretch out their enrollment to maximize their use of 5 seasons, regardless of an academic need; the student-athlete survey shows this is the 2nd-ranked reason students desire a 5th season.

E. The top concern with Option B across all respondents is that an age-based model limits opportunities for non-traditional students. Presidents and academic/eligibility professionals agreed this was the top concern, while ADs/Assistant ADs were most concerned with the limited ability to differentiate ourselves from the NCAA.

F. With Option A, 46% of all respondents support continuing the 20% rule for determining whether a student is charged a season, 42% do not support it, and 12% are unsure. However, when looking at individual respondent groups, only presidents, coaches, and "other" prefer keeping the 20% approach, with presidents also reporting a high level of uncertainty on this question.

G. With both options (A and B), 47% support keeping the 20% rule in effect for determining if a student's financial aid counts towards the team limits; 26% do not support it, and 27% are unsure. Every respondent group prefers maintaining the 20% approach over eliminating it.

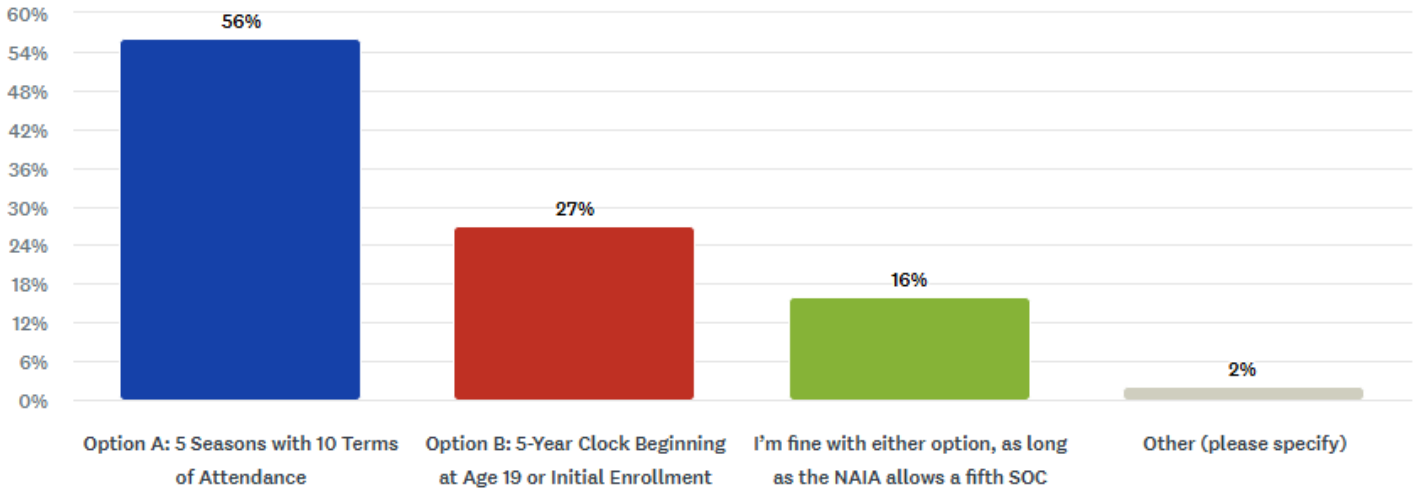
1. Please indicate which seasons of competition option you support:



	Pres	AD/Asst. AD	Coach/ Asst.	FAR/EC/ Com. Admin	Conf. Comm.	Registrar	Other	Total
5 SOC	65%	86%	88%	74%	69%	46%	79%	84%
4 SOC (current model)	25%	10%	7%	14%	8%	34%	10%	10%
Unsure	10%	4%	5%	12%	23%	20%	11%	6%

(N=1,874)

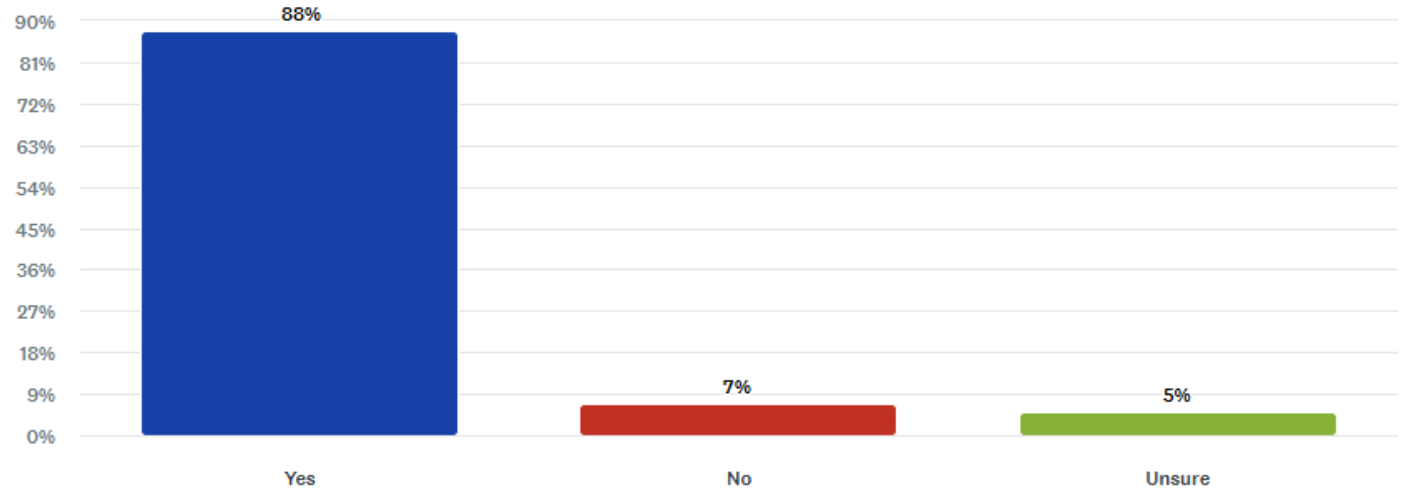
2. Please select which 5 SOC model you prefer:



	Pres	AD/Asst. AD	Coach/ Asst.	FAR/EC/ Com. Admin	Conf. Comm.	Registrar	Other	Total
Option A (5 seasons/ 10 terms)	73%	65%	53%	58%	40%	44%	52%	56%
Option B (clock)	13%	23%	26%	33%	30%	38%	35%	27%
Fine with either	10%	10%	19%	8%	30%	13%	11%	16%
Other	4%	2%	2%	1%	0%	6%	2%	2%

(N=1,475)

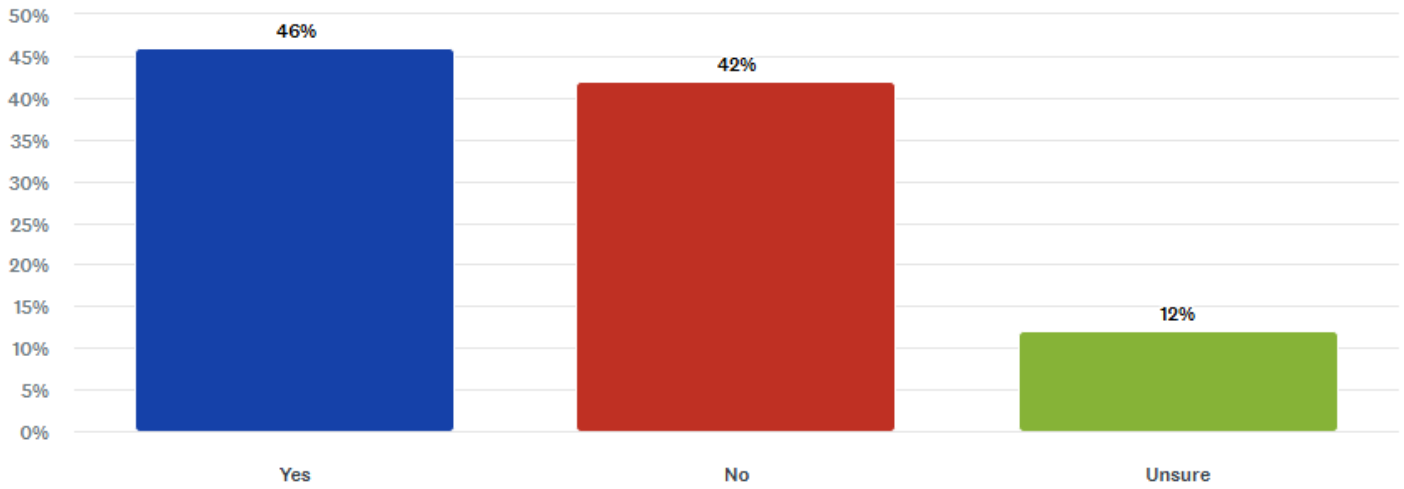
3. **If the NAIA approves a 5 SOC model, should a student-athlete who has eligibility available this year (2026-27) be able to take advantage of the new model in 2027-28?**



	Pres	AD/Asst. AD	Coach/ Asst.	FAR/EC/ Com. Admin	Conf. Comm.	Registrar	Other	Total
Yes	85%	87%	90%	82%	100%	81%	85%	88%
No	2%	7%	6%	7%	0%	13%	8%	7%
Unsure	13%	6%	4%	11%	0%	6%	7%	5%

(N=1,475)

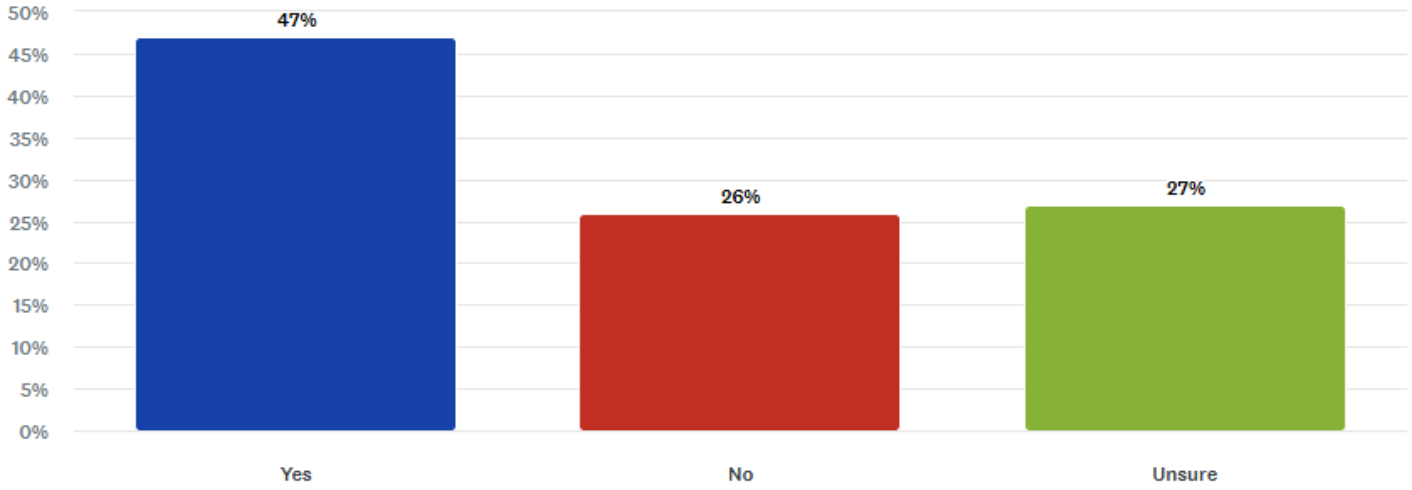
4. **If option A is proposed, should the 20% rule remain in effect for determining if a student is charged a season?**



	Pres	AD/Asst. AD	Coach/ Asst.	FAR/EC/ Com. Admin	Conf. Comm.	Registrar	Other	Total
Yes	52%	29%	50%	40%	40%	25%	49%	46%
No	21%	62%	38%	53%	60%	50%	33%	42%
Unsure	27%	9%	12%	7%	0%	25%	18%	12%

(N=1,475)

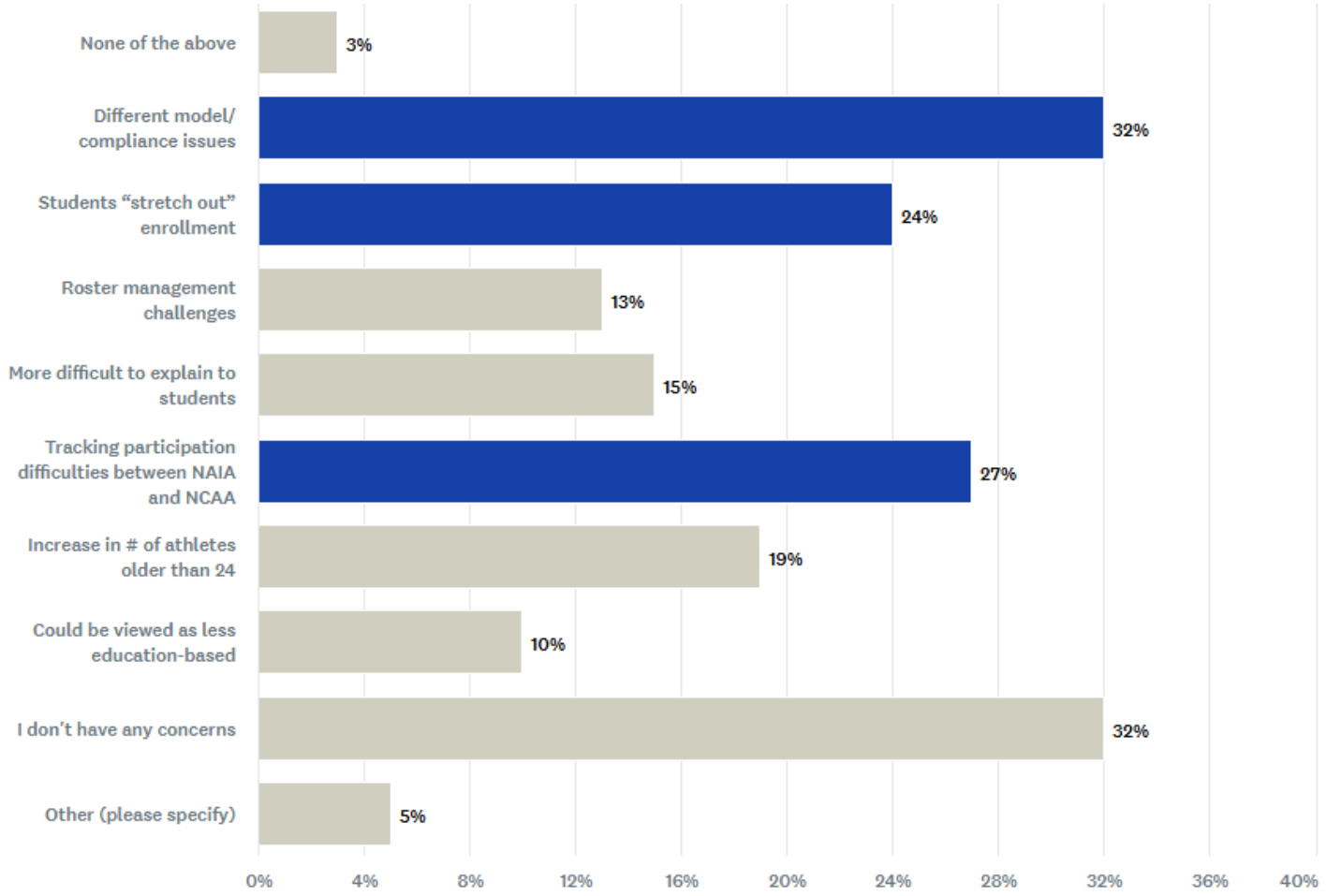
5. If either option A or B is proposed, should the 20% rule remain in effect for determining if a student's financial aid counts towards the team limits?



	Pres	AD/Asst. AD	Coach/ Asst.	FAR/EC/ Com. Admin	Conf. Comm.	Registrar	Other	Total
Yes	44%	50%	49%	30%	50%	19%	54%	47%
No	10%	36%	25%	27%	40%	6%	24%	26%
Unsure	46%	14%	26%	42%	10%	75%	22%	27%

(N=1,475)

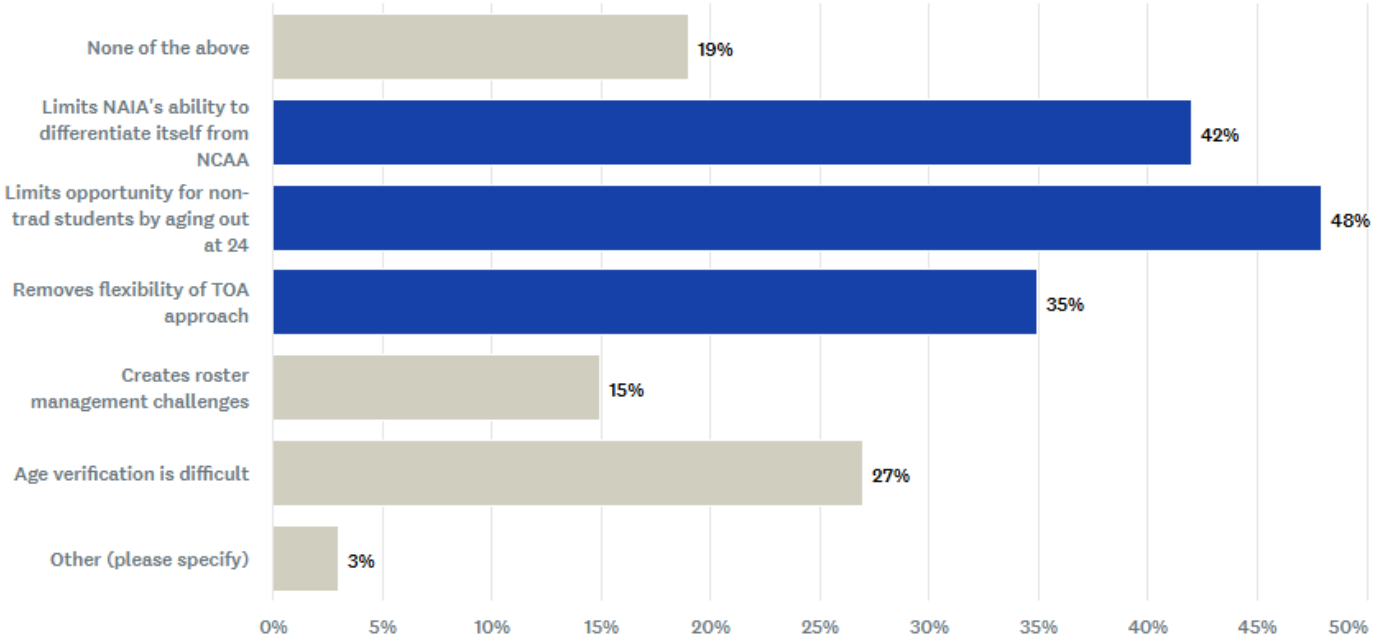
6. What are your biggest concerns with Option A: 5-season / 10-term attendance model? (Select a maximum of 3.)



	Pres	AD/Asst. AD	Coach/ Asst.	FAR/EC/ Com. Admin	Conf. Comm.	Registrar	Other	Total
Different model/ compliance issues	27%	27%	31%	43%	20%	38%	40%	32%
Students "stretch out" enrollment	33%	24%	20%	44%	40%	56%	45%	24%
Roster management challenges	19%	18%	11%	15%	10%	6%	20%	13%
More difficult to explain to students	10%	13%	15%	19%	20%	0%	18%	15%
Tracking SOC difficulties between NAIA and NCAA	17%	35%	24%	43%	30%	50%	28%	27%
Increase in # of athletes older than 24	8%	17%	20%	22%	30%	19%	17%	19%
Could be viewed as less education-based	13%	13%	8%	14%	10%	44%	13%	10%
No concerns	35%	29%	36%	20%	40%	6%	13%	32%
None of the listed concerns	4%	3%	4%	2%	0%	0%	4%	3%
Other	2%	5%	5%	7%	0%	0%	4%	5%

(N=1,475)

7. What are your biggest concerns with Option B: 5-year clock model? (Select a maximum of 3.)



	Pres	AD/Asst. AD	Coach/ Asst.	FAR/EC/ Com. Admin	Conf. Comm.	Registrar	Other	Total
Limits NAIA's ability to differentiate from NCAA	46%	51%	41%	40%	40%	13%	36%	42%
Limits opportunity for non-trad students by aging out at 24	60%	48%	46%	54%	60%	63%	48%	48%
Removes flexibility of TOA approach	31%	38%	33%	51%	20%	38%	30%	35%
Creates roster management challenges	15%	15%	14%	20%	30%	44%	18%	15%
Age verification difficult	21%	33%	24%	40%	40%	44%	42%	27%
None of the above	17%	13%	22%	11%	0%	6%	15%	19%
Other	8%	4%	3%	4%	29%	6%	2%	3%

(N=1,475)

Open Text Themes by Question

The count indicates the number of comments each topic received.

Please provide insight into why you support 4 SOC:	Count
Academic Focus & Timely Degree Completion	34
Academic/Eligibility Administration	2
Competitive & Age Balance	2
Current Model Works/No Need for Change	14
Enrollment & Recruiting Impact	2
Existing Flexibility is Sufficient	9
Graduate Program Availability	7
Institutional & Competitive Equity	8
Institutional Financial & Resource Impact	6
International Student Considerations	2
Life After College/Career Progression	5
NAIA Identity, Mission & Differentiation	10
Non-traditional Student-Athlete Access	6
Other/Unclear	6
Roster Management & Participation Opportunities	13
Student Financial Impact & Debt	12
Student-Athlete Health & Injury Risk	1
Grand Total	**139**

Other options for 5 SOC:	Count
5 SOC/ 3+2 Academic Model	1
5 SOC/10 Terms + Age Limit	1
5 SOC/12 Terms	9
5 SOC/Injury Exception	1
5 SOC/No Additional Structure Specified	1
5 SOC/Progress Rule Tied to TOA	1
6-Year Clock/Age or Enrollment Trigger	1
6-Year Clock/Initial Full-Time Enrollment	1
Add Terms of Attendance	2
Age-Based Eligibility Clock	2
Change in Countable Season	1
Eliminate Terms of Attendance Limit	1
Option A/Retain 20% Rule	1
Option B/Modified	1
Unsure/No Preference	1
Grand Total	**25**

Please provide insight into why you support 5 SOC:	Count
Academic Progress & Degree Completion	64
Age & Competitive Balance	91
Expanded Student-Athlete Opportunity & Development	34
Fairness & Competitive Equity	10
Financial Considerations	1

Flexibility for Nontraditional Students/Life Circumstances	54
Injury/Hardship Protection	32
NAIA Identity & Differentiation	108
NCAA Alignment & Transfer Consistency	45
Other/Unclear	85
Preserve Current TOA Framework	67
Recruiting, Retention & Enrollment Competitiveness	206
Simplicity, Compliance & Ease of Administration	58
Grand Total	**855**

Please share the rationale for your answer on whether 2026-27 athletes should be able to use the new model in 2027-28.	**Count**
Academic Progress / Degree Completion / Graduate Education	65
Administrative Simplicity & Consistency	27
Age / College-Age / Competitive Balance	6
Eligibility / TOA / Grandfathering Criteria	77
Enrollment & Institutional Financial Benefit	17
Fairness & Equal Opportunity	100
Immediate Implementation / Transition Timing	83
Injury / Redshirt / Hardship Considerations	15
Legal / Litigation Risk	60
NCAA Alignment & Competitive Position	42
Other / Unclear	27
Retention / Prevent Transfers / Recruiting	58
Roster / Recruiting / Financial Planning Concerns	20
Start with Future Class / Clean Slate	27
Student-Athlete Opportunity & Experience	60
Grand Total	**684**

If Option B is proposed, exceptions to the clock will be identified, including time away for religious missions, pregnancy, or military service. Are there any other scenarios that are significant enough to warrant an exception to stop the clock?	**Count**
Academic/Educational Circumstances	8
Caregiving/Family Responsibility	16
Family Emergency/Bereavement	57
Financial Hardship	5
General Appeal/Case-by-Case Exception	7
Incarceration/Second-Chance Circumstances	5
Injury/Medical Hardship	90
Institutional Closure/Program Discontinuation	8
International/Immigration Circumstances	11
Mental Health	13
Natural Disaster/Extraordinary Event	9
No Additional Exceptions	263
Olympic/Elite Competition Opportunity	3
Opposed to Clock/Prefer Alternative Model	23
Other Life Circumstances	6

Paternity/Parental Leave	6
Serious Illness/Health Circumstances	61
Unsure/Unclear	93
Grand Total	**684**

What are your biggest concerns with Option A: 5-season / 10-term attendance model? (Select a maximum of 3.)	**Count**
Academic Progress / Degree Intent	2
Age / Older Student-Athletes	5
Compliance / Administrative Complexity	3
Graduate Program Availability	1
Implementation / Transition Concerns	1
Injury / Insufficient Terms to Use 5 SOC	4
Institutional Financial / Revenue Impact	5
International Student Considerations	2
NAIA Identity / Differentiation	7
NCAA Alignment / Competitive Positioning	5
No Significant Concerns / Support for Option A	10
Other / Unclear	4
Redshirt / 20% Rule	4
Roster Management & Incoming Student Opportunities	3
Scholarship / Financial Aid Limits	6
Transfer Rules / Transfer Eligibility	6
Grand Total	**68**

What are your biggest concerns with Option B: 5-year clock model? (Select a maximum of 3.)	**Count**
Academic Progress / TOA Accountability	1
Age-Based Restrictions / Nontraditional Students	6
Appeals / Exception Complexity	1
Compliance / Tracking / Administration	6
Enrollment Impact	1
Financial / Scholarship Impact	3
Gap Year / Life Circumstances	1
Implementation / Transition Concerns	3
Injury / Lost Season Flexibility	6
International Student Considerations	1
NAIA Identity / Differentiation	7
No Significant Concerns / Support for Option B	6
Other / Unclear	4
Recruiting / Retention / NCAA Competitiveness	2
Redshirt / 20% Rule	1
Grand Total	**49**