



NCAA Opt-In / Opt-Out Questions & Answers

- **Why is this decision the best one for Winthrop?**

- A part Winthrop University's strategic plan, United in Excellence, is continual improvement of Winthrop's national and regional rankings. Winthrop Athletics is the 'winningest' program of active Big South Conference schools with 73 Big South Championships. This level of success differentiates Winthrop as a leader in the region. Further, Winthrop Athletics claims 26 All-Americans and 16 Academic All-Americans, along with 7 National Championships. This national recognition attracts prospective students from across the country, diversifies our student body, and expands and unites our alumni, supporters, and community.

Opting-in to the settlement promotes a competitive advantage to contend on a national landscape, provides significant recruiting advantages within the Big South Conference, and aligns Winthrop with the evolving business model of college athletics which will open new partnerships and investment opportunities.

- **What has been done to best position Winthrop for success?**

- Winthrop Athletics has been fortunate to connect with NCAA Senior Administrators to be at the forefront of this movement. NCAA President Charlie Baker released a [letter](#) that provides guidance and understanding to this next era. In addition, we have worked with the [Knight Commission](#) and the [Pictor Group](#), leading NCAA organizations, that are developing a strategic plan for intercollegiate athletics to ensure the fundamental purpose is ultimately the academic mission of the university.

Winthrop Athletics has been preparing diligently to continue to succeed at the highest level of Division I athletics. This includes education of the College Sports Commission and the [NIL Go](#) platform that will oversee the system, and strengthened compliance to ensure greater transparency along with a sustainable model for the future of college sports to safeguard our student-athletes.

- **How will this impact student-athletes?**

- The NCAA House settlement fundamentally promotes the student-athlete experience through a revenue share opportunity, introduces new oversight



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for third-party Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) deals and replaces scholarship limits with roster size limits. The aim is greater protection for the student-athlete and a sustainable future in college athletics.

- **How will revenue share take place at Winthrop?**

- Revenue share is an option, not a requirement, to an athletic department that chooses to opt-in. Revenue share will not be equal among student-athletes as there will be some student-athletes that will have the opportunity, while others will not.

Winthrop Athletics is committed to securing new external funding for potential opportunities, thereby not drawing from the current university budget nor compromising the financial health of the institution.

- **What is available for all student-athletes at Winthrop?**

- There is an incredibly positive side of Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) that empowers all student-athletes to independently build their personal brand, secure marketing opportunities during college, and enhance their resumes for post-graduate degrees or careers through outside, third-party NIL deals. Those NIL deals will need to meet standards set by the new framework monitored through a partnership between the [NCAA and Deloitte](#) a new platform called NIL Go, created for third-party NIL deal reporting.

- **How will current student-athletes be impacted with the new roster limits?**

- The NCAA settlement will reduce some roster sizes, yet on the positive side, will remove scholarship limits. The settlement will grandfather in and protect student-athletes so that no current student-athletes will be cut from rosters. While removing scholarship limits gives greater flexibility to teams to offer more educational and athletic opportunities.

- **What is the Title IX implication of the NCAA House Settlement?**

- The NCAA House settlement, while allowing for revenue sharing to student-athletes, the settlement does not address potential Title IX concerns nor participation opportunities for male and female athletes.



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- **Can a school decide later to opt out?**
 - Based on the information available about the NCAA House settlement, non-Power Five schools have the option to opt in or opt out of the revenue-sharing component of the agreement on a yearly basis.
- **Why are non-defending schools having to contribute to back-pay of former student-athletes?**
 - The settlement includes a component for back damages to former athletes who were unable to receive NIL compensation due to previous NCAA rules. All Division I institutions, including those in non-defending conferences, will contribute to this settlement fund. This is because all Division I members operated under the same NCAA rules that are the subject of the lawsuit.
- **How many other Big South schools are opting-in and which ones?**
 - Information about which specific Big South schools are opting-in is not yet publicly available. Schools have a deadline of June 30, 2025 to declare their intentions, but these plans are not yet public.
- **What is the best way to support Winthrop in the next era of intercollegiate athletics?**
 - Follow our teams and student-athletes on social media: A growing digital presence will positively impact our brand regionally and nationally. We have partnered with a platform that helps our student-athletes enhance and leverage their online profiles. Every like, comment and follow makes a difference!
 - Explore partnership opportunities: Businesses, alumni, and fans interested in sponsoring or collaborating with our athletic department and/or student-athletes should connect with Winthrop's external partnership team found at www.WinthropEagles.com/staff-directory
 - Support the [Eagle Club](#): The Eagle Club will continue to play a pivotal role connecting the community with our student-athletes. As the intercollegiate landscape evolves, the Eagle Club will continue to help us fulfill our mutual mission.