

Matt Esche Proposal (Amended)

Align Men's and Women's Cross Country with other Division I Sports in Qualifying for NCAA Championships

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What is the purpose of the proposal?

To align Men's and Women's Cross Country with other Division I sports in qualifying for NCAA Championships.

How does the current men's and women's championships qualifying format not align with other Division I sports in qualifying for NCAA Championships?

The current format does not require a team or individual to qualify in order to participate in the regional round of the current Cross Country Championships. It doesn't meet the standard of providing national-level competition among the best eligible student-athletes and teams of member institutions in the regional round of the current Cross Country Championships.

The current format does not grant eligible Division I conferences sponsoring Cross Country an automatic qualification into the Championships.

Why is the current regional round of the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships not perceived as providing national-level competition among the best eligible student-athletes and teams of member institutions?

The current regional round of the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships allows any team and/or individual within a region, regardless of talent level or current season success, to enter and participate.

Why is it important for Division I Men's and Women's Cross Country to align with how other Division I sports qualify for NCAA Championships?

In June 2016, the Division I Council approved policy recommendations by the Competition Oversight Committee to establish championship formats that support excellence, fairness, and consistency; to conduct championships at sites with exceptional atmosphere and facilities; to support automatic qualifier policies; and to enhance the student-athlete experience and bolster financial stewardship.

In what ways would the Esche Proposal support excellence, fairness, and consistency at the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships?

Excellence: Excellence over the course of the regular season, including the conference championships, is rewarded with entry into the postseason Championships.

Fairness: The conduct of the competition at the First Round of the Championships provides each participating team and individual the fairest possible conditions for qualification into the Final Round of the Championships through head-to-head competition. Each team and individual would race on the same course, on the same day, for the same number of qualifying spots in each race.

Consistency: Establishes consistency at the First Round of the Championships by conducting one meet at one site with a consistent number of teams and individuals in the meet and in each race, year after year, competing for the same number of qualifying spots to advance from each race.

In what ways would the Esche Proposal elevate the atmosphere and facilities at the Men’s and Women’s Cross Country Championships?

The Esche Proposal would elevate the atmosphere and facilities of the Championships by enabling the NCAA to direct all funding for the First Round of the Championships to a single event. It would further elevate the facilities at the Championships by reducing the number of facilities required each year to conduct the Championships, as well as allowing a nationwide bidding process for each round of the Championships, enabling the best facilities in the country to compete to host the Championships regardless of geography.

In what ways would the Esche Proposal support automatic qualifier policies at the Men’s and Women’s Cross Country Championships?

The Esche Proposal would ensure that every champion (team and individual) of an eligible NCAA Division I conference has access to the Championships via an automatic qualifier (AQ) into the First Round of the Championships.

In what ways would the Esche Proposal enhance the student-athlete experience at the Men’s and Women’s Cross Country Championships?

The Esche Proposal would enhance the student-athlete experience by creating a championship atmosphere at each round of the Championships, in which qualification into the postseason Championships is recognition of and a reward for excellence during the regular season. Further, by enabling the NCAA to direct all funding for the First Round of the Championships to a single event, the NCAA and host would have greater opportunities to improve the student-athlete experience at the event via increased Championships site amenities.

In what ways would the Esche Proposal bolster financial stewardship at the Men’s and Women’s Cross Country Championships?

The Esche Proposal would bolster financial stewardship by eliminating the duplicative spending for meet hosting services that currently occurs across nine regional sites and concentrating spending and services in the First Round of the Championships into a single site.

The Esche Proposal also would create a First Round of the Championships that includes all of the nation’s best teams and individuals at a single site, thereby enhancing the opportunity for revenue streams like tickets, merchandise, concessions, parking, etc.

QUALIFYING TO THE CHAMPIONSHIPS

How many teams would qualify for the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships under the Esche Proposal?

72 men's teams and 72 women's teams.

Why did the Esche Proposal establish 72 as the number of men's teams and the number of women's teams to be selected in the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships?

72 teams is the largest number of teams selected for a Division I championship for a women's sport. The fact that 72 teams is the largest number of teams selected in any Division I women's sport is important because there are 32 more Division I institutions that sponsor Women's Cross Country as a sport (348) than sponsor Men's Cross Country as a sport (316).

After consulting with the NCAA, there was a clear message that, going forward, men's sports with less institutional sponsorship than the same women's sport will not have a larger number of qualifiers than the corresponding women's sport. Given that Women's Golf currently has the largest women's championships field at 72 teams, and given our lower sponsorship numbers in Men's Cross Country, it would be highly unlikely that Men's and Women's Cross Country would be able to successfully pursue a larger championships field than 72 teams per gender.

72 teams also provides a manageable number of teams when split into two races. Previous experience with the Pre-National Invitational has shown that 36 teams in each race is a manageable number for championship-level courses.

Would any teams be granted automatic qualification into the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships in the Esche Proposal?

Yes.

What teams would be granted automatic qualification into the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships in the Esche Proposal?

The men's and women's team champion from each eligible Division I conference is granted an automatic qualification.

How many eligible Division I conferences exist for Men's and Women's Cross Country?

32 eligible conferences for Men's Cross Country and 32 eligible conferences for Women's Cross Country.

Would any teams be selected at-large into the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships in the Esche Proposal?

Yes.

How many at-large teams would be selected into the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships in the Esche Proposal?

40 at-large men's teams and 40 at-large women's teams.

How many individuals would qualify for the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships, other than individuals on teams selected for the championships, under the Esche Proposal?

40 individual men and 40 individual women.

Why did the Esche Proposal establish 40 as the number of individual men and number of individual women to be selected into the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships?

The Esche Proposal sought to 1) maintain a manageable overall field size in the First Round of the Championships, which could be conducted on our current championships-level courses, 2) provide championships access to conference champions through automatic qualifiers (AQs), bringing Men's and Women's Cross Country in line with AQs awarded in 18 other NCAA Division I sports and 5 National Collegiate Championships, and 3) reward performance over the course of the season through the selection of the best-eligible at-large individuals into the championships. The number of individual men and women selected to the Championships also needed to be an even number, to be able to seed and serpentine the individuals equally into two races.

Would any individuals be granted automatic qualification into the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships in the Esche Proposal?

Yes.

What individuals would be granted automatic qualification into the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships in the Esche Proposal?

The men's and women's individual champion from each eligible Division I conference, who is not a member of one of the 72 teams selected into the championships, is granted an automatic qualification.

Would any individuals be selected at-large into the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships in the Esche Proposal?

Yes.

What is the rationale behind the at-large selection processes for teams and individuals in the Esche Proposal?

The Esche Proposal seeks to, as much as possible, utilize objective, fair, and consistent processes to select at-large teams and at-large individuals to the Championships that do not rely on subjective judgments. The intent of the proposal is to create at-large selection processes in which the Sport Committee runs and oversees the selections without subjectively making the selections.

How many at-large individuals would be selected into the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships in the Esche Proposal?

The number of at-large individuals selected would vary by gender, as well as from year-to-year depending on the number of individuals granted an automatic qualification based on winning their individual conference championship.

How many individuals are projected to be selected at-large, after individual conference champions who are not a member of one of the 72 teams selected for the championships?

Using mock selections from 2012 to 2015, an average of 32 individual men (31.75) and an average of 28 individual women (27.75) would have been chosen at-large each year.

This means that an average of 8 men (8.25) and an average of 12 women (12.25) would have earned individual automatic qualification into the championships by winning their individual conference championship and not being a member of one of the 72 teams selected into the championships.

FIRST ROUND OF THE CHAMPIONSHIPS FORMAT

How many teams will participate in the First Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

72 men's teams and 72 women's teams.

How many individuals, other than those student-athletes who are a member of their institution's team that has been selected into the men's and women's championships, will participate in the First Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

40 individual men and 40 individual women.

How many races will be conducted at the First Round of the Championships for men and women in the Esche Proposal?

2 men's races and 2 women's races.

How many teams will compete in each race in the First Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

36 teams will compete in each men's race, and 36 teams will compete in each women's race.

How many individual qualifiers will compete in each race in the First Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

20 individual qualifiers will compete in each men's race, and 20 individual qualifiers will compete in each women's race.

How will teams be assigned to each race at the First Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

Each team selected to participate in the Championships will be seeded in ranked order, 1st through 72nd, based on their season's rating percentage index (RPI).

Once all 72 teams have been seeded, teams then will be serpentine into one of 2 race sections in the following format.

<i>Section #1</i>	<i>Section #2</i>
1	2
4	3
5	6
8	7
9	10
12	11
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How will individual qualifiers be assigned to each race at the First Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

Each individual selected to participate in the First Round of the Championships will be seeded in ranked order, 1st through 40th, based on their season’s individual rating percentage index (iRPI).

Once all 40 individual qualifiers have been seeded, individuals then will be serpentine into one of 2 race sections in the following format.

<i>Section #1</i>
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<i>Section #2</i>
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How many team starting boxes will be used at the First Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

36 starting boxes will be used for each of the two men’s races and each of the two women’s races.

How will team starting boxes be assigned at the First Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

Starting boxes will be assigned by random draw in both men’s races and both women’s races.

How many individual starting boxes will be used at the First Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

Three starting boxes for individuals will be used for each of the two men’s races and each of the two women’s races.

How will individual starting boxes be assigned at the First Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

Starting boxes for individuals will be assigned by random draw in both men’s races and both women’s races.

How will individual starting positions within each individual starting box be assigned at the First Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

Starting box positions for individuals within their assigned individual starting box will be assigned by random draw in both men’s races and both women’s races.

How many total starting boxes will be used in each men’s and women’s race at the First Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

Each first-round race will have 39 starting boxes: 36 for the assigned teams and three for the 20 individuals.

ADVANCING TO THE FINAL CHAMPIONSHIPS ROUND

How many teams would advance from the First Round of the Championships to the Final Round of the Championships under the Esche Proposal?

32 men's teams and 32 women's teams.

Why did the Esche Proposal establish 32 as the number of men's teams and the number of women's teams that would advance to the Final Round of the Championships?

The Esche Proposal seeks to adhere as closely as possible to the size of our current Championships field in the proposed Final Round of the Championships, both for the purpose of remaining within current NCAA budget guidelines, as well as for the purpose of maintaining student-athlete access to the Final Round of the Championships. In fact, the Esche Proposal only increases the total overall participants in the Final Round of the Championships by one man and one woman.

The proposal also intentionally established an even number of teams in the Final Round of the Championships so that teams could qualify equally from either section of the First Round of the Championships (i.e., 16 teams qualify from each of two races).

How many teams would advance from each race of the First Round of the Championships to the Final Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

16 men's teams from each of the two men's races and 16 women's teams from each of the two women's races.

How would the 16 teams from each men's race and each women's race at the First Round of the Championships be selected to advance to the Final Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

The top 16 finishing men's teams in each men's race and the top 16 finishing women's teams in each women's race will advance.

Would a tie for the 16th finishing team in either of the two men's races or the two women's races at the First Round of the Championships, be broken under NCAA Rules to determine the last team to advance from that respective race in the Esche Proposal?

Yes.

Would any at-large teams be selected to advance from the First Round of the Championships into the Final Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

No.

How many individuals would advance from the First Round of the Championships to the Final Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

32 individual men and 32 individual women.

Why did the Esche Proposal establish 32 as the number of individual men and the number of individual women that would advance to the Final Round of the Championships?

The Esche Proposal seeks to adhere as closely as possible to the size of our current Championships field in the proposed Final Round of the Championships, both for the purpose of championship management and course selection, as well as for the increased probability of achieving NCAA support for the proposed change. In fact, the Esche Proposal only increases the total overall participants in the Final Round of the Championships by one man and one woman.

The proposal also intentionally established an even number of individuals in the Final Round of the Championships so that individuals could qualify equally from either section of the First Round of the Championships (i.e., 16 individuals qualify from each of two races).

How many individuals would advance from each race of the First Round of the Championships to the Final Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

16 individual men from each of the two men's races and 16 individual women from each of the two women's races.

How would the 16 individuals from each men's race and each women's race at the First Round of the Championships be selected to advance to the Final Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

The top 16 finishing individuals in each men's race, who are not on one of the 16 advancing teams, and the top 16 finishing women in each women's race, who are not on one of the 16 advancing teams, will advance.

FINAL ROUND OF THE CHAMPIONSHIPS FORMAT

How many teams will participate in the Final Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

32 men's teams and 32 women's teams.

How many individuals, other than those student-athletes that are a member of their instruction's team that advanced into the men's and women's Final Round Of the Championships will participate in the Final Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

32 individual men and 32 individual women.

How many races will be conducted at the Final Round of the Championships for men and women in the Esche Proposal?

1 men's race and 1 women's race.

How many team starting boxes will be used at the Final Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

32 starting boxes will be used for the men's race and 32 starting boxes for the women's race.

How will team starting boxes be assigned at the Final Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

Starting boxes will be assigned by random draw in both the men's race and the women's race.

How many individual starting boxes will be used at the Final Round of the Championships?

4 individual starting boxes will be used for the men's race and 4 individual starting boxes for the women.

How will individual starting boxes be assigned at the Final Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

Starting boxes for individuals will be assigned by random draw in both the men's race and the women's race.

How will individual starting positions within each individual starting box be assigned at the Final Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

Starting box positions for individuals within their assigned individual starting box will be assigned by random draw in both the men's race and the women's race.

AT-LARGE QUALIFYING – TEAM SELECTIONS

How many Division I sports use conference automatic qualifiers (AQs)?

18 NCAA Division I championships and five national collegiate championships, including individual-team sport championships like Men's and Women's Golf, Wrestling, and Men's and Women's Tennis.

Men's and Women's Cross Country are the only NCAA Division I sports that qualify teams to the championships without utilizing conference AQs.

How was the at-large selection criteria for teams in the Esche Proposal developed?

After Matt Esche made his initial proposal to align the Cross Country championships with championships in other NCAA Division I sports, the Championships Committee of the USTFCCCA Division I Cross Country Executive Committee formed a working group to study and make a recommendation on at-large qualifying criteria for the Esche Proposal.

The Working Group for At-Large Qualifying included co-Chairs Mick Byrne (Wisconsin) and Scott Jones (Illinois), as well as committee members Forest Braden (UCLA), Sean Cleary (West Virginia), Dale Cowper (Louisville), Steve Dolan (Penn), Rollie Geiger (NC State), John Oliver (Stanford), Gina Procaccio (Villanova), Ricardo Santos (Iona), Patrick Shane (BYU), Stephanie Stiles (North Texas), and Ray Treacy (Providence).

Over the course of the last 12 months, the Working Group developed their recommended at-large qualifying criteria for the Esche Proposal. Matt Esche accepted the Working Group's recommendation and included it within his amended proposal.

Which teams are eligible to be selected at-large in the Esche Proposal?

All Division I teams are eligible for at-large selection consideration if they face and receive a result against 30 Division I opponents during the regular season. Opponents need NOT be unique.

How is the regular season defined in the Esche Proposal?

The regular season is defined as any race from the beginning of the NCAA season through the institution's conference championships.

What makes a race eligible for consideration for a team's at-large selection in the Esche Proposal?

The race must (1) be part of the regular season, (2) have more than one Division I institution(s) that finishes five or more athletes (e.g., intrasquad races and competitions only against non-Division I institutions are not eligible), and (3) meet the course length requirements for at-large selection consideration as defined by the NCAA.

How will the 40 at-large teams be selected into the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

Selections will be made in three rounds or “considerations.” In the first round, 20 at-large teams are selected. Another 15 at-large teams are selected in the second round, and then the final five at-large teams are selected in the third round.

The following items are involved in the selection process (not listed in order of priority):

- National ratings percentage index (RPI) rank and its components:
 - Winning percentage
 - Opponents’ winning percentage (aka strength-of-schedule)
 - Opponents’ opponents’ winning percentage
- Performance against current selection pool
- Performance against quality teams selected (QTS)
- Performance against any region’s best four teams in the national RPI rank (restricted to top 100 teams by final RPI only)

What is the ratings percentage index (RPI) referenced in the Esche Proposal?

The ratings percentage index (RPI) is a season-based performance metric used by the NCAA statistics department to provide data for sport committees in the selection of at-large teams for a number of team sports in all divisions.

The basic team ratings percentage index (RPI) formula is calculated by adding three parts.

- **1 PART - Team winning percentage (25% of the RPI):** For Cross Country, this can be calculated simply by dividing the number of Division I teams defeated over the number of teams faced in a given regular season. Based on the NCAA rule book’s tie-breaking procedure, there should be no ties recorded in a final meet result.
- **2 PARTS - Opponents’ win-loss record (50% of the RPI):** A sum of all the wins and losses by a team’s opponents. Contests involving the team for whom we are calculating the ratings percentage index (RPI) are ignored. For Cross Country, combine the win-loss records of each team faced and tabulate a percentage.
- **1 PART - Opponents’ opponents’ win-loss record (25% of the RPI):** The win-loss records for all of the team’s opponent’s opponents are added together and are used to tabulate a percentage.

Does competition against a non-Division I institution affect a team’s ratings percentage index (RPI) in the Esche Proposal?

No.

Do I have to defeat a team for my ratings percentage index (RPI) to benefit, as referenced in the Esche Proposal?

A loss will impact a team’s win-loss record, but the quality of the opponent may have a larger positive effect on the overall RPI.

Does every eligible race in which an institution competes affect the team's ratings percentage index (RPI)?

Yes, every eligible race in which an institution finishes five or more student-athletes affects the team's RPI.

What is the Weighted Winning Index (WWI) referenced in the Esche Proposal?

Taking into account the wins and losses in a specific category, those teams with a .500 record-or-better in that category (wins equal to or greater than the number of losses) will have a WWI that is a whole number that is equal to $\frac{10(W-L)+W}{W+L}$ or read as "10 times the number of wins above losses will be added to the number of wins" to determine weighted winning index (WWI).

Those with a losing record in a specific category will have a weighted winning index (WWI) that is simply the winning percentage, calculated as wins divided by wins plus losses.

In all cases, teams with a .500 record or better in a category will always have a weighted winning index (WWI) better than that of a team with a losing record.

What are Quality Teams Selected (QTS) referenced in the Esche Proposal?

Teams that have been chosen into the championships field, and have a national final ratings percentage index (RPI) rank of 75 or better, are referred to as quality teams selected (QTS).

What is the composite ranking formula (CRF) used to make at-large team selections in the Esche Proposal?

The composite ranking formula (CRF) is a proprietary formula that is calculated for each team eligible for at-large selection in each step of the at-large selection process. The CRF total for a team in consideration is calculated as the sum of: (1) the rank-order of the team's performance against other teams within the at-large selection consideration pool, (2) the rank-order of the team's performance against quality teams selected (QTS), and (3) the rank-order of the team's performance against any region's best four teams in national ratings percentage index (RPI) rank (restricted to top 100 teams by final RPI only).

What is the first step, or "first consideration," of the team at-large selection process in the Esche Proposal?

In the first step, or "first consideration," of the at-large selection process, only those teams that have a final national ratings percentage index (RPI) rank of 50 or better and a season winning percentage of .500 or better are eligible for selection. This group of teams, minus the conference champions that have already been selected, moves into the "first consideration selection pool." Only these teams can be among the first 20 selected in the at-large process.

In the first consideration, the quality teams selected (QTS) are teams that won their conference championship and rank in the nation's top 75 in final RPI. Conference champions with a final RPI outside of the top 75 are not included in the QTS for the purpose of calculating the composite ranking formula (CRF).

The CRF total of each team is placed in ranked order, and the top 20 teams, plus ties, from the “first consideration selection pool” are selected at-large to the championship field. The remainder of the pool is automatically moved to the “second consideration selection pool.”

What is the second step, or “second consideration,” of the team at-large selection process in the Esche Proposal?

In the second step, or “second consideration,” the non-selected teams from the first consideration selection pool are joined by teams that have a final national ratings percentage index (RPI) rank of 75 or better to form the “second consideration selection pool.” As in the first consideration selection process, the teams in the pool are rank-ordered by composite ranking formula (CRF).

In the second consideration, the quality teams selected (QTS) are teams that won their conference championship and rank in the nation’s top 75 in final RPI, as well as teams that were chosen at-large in the first consideration.

The top 15 teams in CRF, including any ties, are chosen at-large to the championship field. The remainder of the pool is automatically moved to the “third consideration selection pool.”

What is the third step, or “third consideration,” of the team at-large selection process in the Esche Proposal?

The third and final step, or “third consideration,” has a selection pool that combines the non-selected teams from the second consideration pool with teams that have a final national ratings percentage index (RPI) of 100 or better. Once again, the composite ranking formula (CRF) is used to rank-order the field.

In the third consideration, the quality teams selected (QTS) are teams that won their conference championship and rank in the nation’s top 75 in final RPI, as well as teams that were chosen at-large in the first or second considerations.

In the third and final consideration, the number of teams selected at-large to the championship field is equal to 40 minus the number of teams selected in the first and second considerations. A maximum of five teams could be selected in this third consideration, if there were no ties in the first or second considerations.

What happens if there are any ties for the final team at-large qualifying spots in the Esche Proposal?

If there are ties for the final team at-large qualifying spots, the following process will break the tie(s). If at any time the tie(s) are broken for a distinguishable rank-order to achieve the desired result, the process stops:

1. Head-to-head results among tied teams, with the most recent result taking precedence so long as the matchup(s) occurred during or after the first weekend of October; if ties still remain, proceed to step 2. If the tie(s) are broken, the process stops.

2. Win-loss records against common opponents among the tied teams; if ties still remain, proceed to step 3. If the tie(s) are broken, the process stops.
3. Win-loss record of tied teams versus quality teams selected (QTS).

AT-LARGE QUALIFYING – INDIVIDUAL SELECTIONS

How was the at-large selection criteria for individuals in the Esche Proposal developed?

After Matt Esche made his initial proposal to align the Cross Country championships with championships in other NCAA Division I sports, the Championships Committee of the USTFCCCA Division I Cross Country Executive Committee formed a working group to study and make a recommendation on at-large qualifying criteria for the Esche Proposal.

The Working Group for At-Large Qualifying included co-Chairs Mick Byrne (Wisconsin) and Scott Jones (Illinois), as well as committee members Forest Braden (UCLA), Sean Cleary (West Virginia), Dale Cowper (Louisville), Steve Dolan (Penn), Rollie Geiger (NC State), John Oliver (Stanford), Gina Procaccio (Villanova), Ricardo Santos (Iona), Patrick Shane (BYU), Stephanie Stiles (North Texas), and Ray Treacy (Providence).

Over the course of the last 12 months, the Working Group developed their recommended at-large qualifying criteria for the Esche Proposal. Matt Esche accepted the Working Group's recommendation and included it within his amended proposal.

How many meets is an individual athlete required to compete in to be eligible for at-large selection in the Esche Proposal?

Individuals must compete in a minimum of 2 eligible races during the regular season AND compete and finish races versus at least 100 Division I individuals during the regular season (these opponents need NOT be unique).

OR

An individual must compete at and finish in his/her respective conference championship race.

How is the regular season defined in the Esche Proposal?

The regular season is defined as any race from the beginning of the NCAA season through the institution's conference championships.

What makes a race eligible for consideration for an individual's at-large selection in the Esche Proposal?

The race must (1) be part of the regular season, (2) have more than one Division I institution(s) that has at least one finisher (e.g., intrasquad races and competition only against non-Division I institutions are not eligible), and (3) meet the course length requirements for at-large selection consideration as defined by the NCAA.

How will at-large individuals be selected to the First Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

Eligible individuals will be placed in ranked-order based on their individual ratings percentage index (iRPI). Selections will be made in that order until the number of individuals (automatic and at-large combined) equal 40.

How many individuals will be selected at-large, after individual conference champions who are not a member of one of the 72 teams selected into the championships are included, in the Esche Proposal?

Using mock selections from 2012 to 2015, an average of 32 individual men (31.75) and an average of 28 individual women (27.75) would have been chosen at-large each year.

This means that an average of 8 men (8.25) and an average of 12 women (12.25) would have earned individual automatic qualification into the championships by winning their individual conference championship and not being a member of one of the 72 teams selected into the championships.

What is an individual ratings percentage index (iRPI), as referenced in the Esche Proposal?

The individual ratings percentage index (iRPI) combines an athlete's regular season winning percentage and strength-of-schedule to produce a means to compare an individual's season performance on a national scale. The individual ratings percentage index iRPI algorithm differs from the rating percentage index (RPI) procedure used to evaluate at-large teams.

How is the individual ratings percentage index (iRPI) determined in the Esche Proposal?

Athletes who finish 3 or more races in the regular season will have an individual ratings percentage index (iRPI) calculation that is the average of the athlete's winning percentage and strength-of-schedule.

Athletes who finish only 2 meets during the regular season will have an individual ratings percentage index (iRPI) calculation that is a 2-to-3 ratio of the athlete's winning percentage to strength-of-schedule.

Athletes who finish only their conference championship meet during the regular season will have an individual ratings percentage index (iRPI) calculation that is a 1-to-2 ratio of the athlete's winning percentage to strength-of-schedule.

Winning Percentage: take the number of athletes defeated by the athlete in eligible races throughout the regular season and divide by the total number of athletes who finished the race. The result is a decimal number between 0 and 1.

Strength-of-Schedule: add together the win-loss records of each opponent faced throughout the regular season and convert that into a percentage. The result is a decimal number between 0 and 1.

Does every eligible race in which a student-athlete competes affect his/her individual ratings percentage index (iRPI)?

Yes.

How deep in the national individual ratings percentage index (iRPI) rankings would selections go for the individual field?

For men, using mock selection data from 2012 to 2015, an average of the top 198 men on the individual ratings percentage index (iRPI) list would have been included in the Championships as either an individual qualifier or a member of a qualifying team.

For women, using mock selection data from 2012 to 2015, an average of the top 154 women on the individual ratings percentage index (iRPI) list would have been included in the Championships as either an individual qualifier or a member of a qualifying team.

CHAMPIONSHIPS FUNDING

Will the NCAA pay for hosting and conducting the First Round of the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships in the Esche Proposal?

Yes.

Where would the funding for hosting and conducting the First Round of the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships come from in the Esche Proposal?

Currently, the NCAA has a budget of approximately \$180,000 - \$200,000 allocated for regional competitions in Men's and Women's Cross Country. These funds could be utilized for the cost of hosting and conducting the First Round of the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships.

Will the NCAA pay for travel and per diem for the First Round of the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships in the Esche Proposal?

No.

Why wouldn't the NCAA pay for travel and per diem for the First Round of the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships?

Currently, Division I sports classified as individual-team sports, which includes Division I Men's and Women's Cross Country, are not funded for the first round of their respective sports' championships.

Which Division I individual-team sports select teams into their respective championships, other than Men's and Women's Cross Country?

Men's Golf, Women's Golf, Men's Tennis, and Women's Tennis.

Does the NCAA pay for travel and per diem for the first round of the championships in the individual-team sports of Men's and Women's Golf and Men's and Women's Tennis?

No.

How does the Esche Proposal compare to the NCAA's current Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships funding formula?

The current NCAA Division I Cross Country Championships funding formula provides funding for 255 participants per gender plus related travel parties as defined by NCAA Championships policy. The Esche Proposal adds only one additional participant per gender (256 participants per gender) to the funding formula, and continues to include related travel parties as defined by NCAA Championships policy.

How does a field size of 72 teams per gender for a Men’s and Women’s Cross Country Championships compare with other Division I sports that select teams for participation in their respective sports championships?

The chart below illustrates team participation in each sport’s championship(s), as well as the number of conference automatic qualifiers (AQs) in each championship(s).

<i>Sport</i>	Men’s Championship		Women’s Championship	
	Teams	AQs	Teams	AQs
<i>Baseball</i>	64 teams	31	---	---
<i>Basketball</i>	68 teams	32	64 teams	32
<i>FCS Football</i>	24 teams	10	---	---
<i>Field Hockey</i>	---	---	16 teams	10
<i>Golf</i>	81 teams	31	72 teams	28
<i>Ice Hockey</i>	16 teams	6	---	---
<i>Lacrosse</i>	16 teams	10	26 teams	13
<i>Rowing</i>	---	---	22 teams	11
<i>Soccer</i>	48 teams	24	64 teams	31
<i>Softball</i>	---	---	64 teams	32
<i>Tennis</i>	64 teams	31	64 teams	32
<i>Volleyball</i>	---	---	64 teams	32

How does a field size of 72 teams per gender for a Men’s and Women’s Cross Country Championships in the Esche Proposal compare with the championships access of other Division I sports that select teams for their respective championships?

The chart below illustrates team participation in each sport’s championship(s) as a percentage of the total number of Division I institutions that sponsor the sport.

Sport	Men’s Championship	Women’s Championship
<i>Cross Country (current)</i>	9.8%	8.9%
<i>Cross Country (proposed)</i>	22.8%	20.7%
<i>Baseball</i>	21.7%	---
<i>Basketball</i>	19.7%	18.7%
<i>FCS Football</i>	19.2%	---
<i>Field Hockey</i>	---	20.8%
<i>Golf</i>	27.4%	27.9%
<i>Ice Hockey</i>	27.1%	---
<i>Lacrosse</i>	23.5%	24.5%
<i>Rowing</i>	---	25.0%
<i>Soccer</i>	23.9%	19.6%
<i>Softball</i>	---	22.2%
<i>Tennis</i>	24.9%	20.1%
<i>Volleyball</i>	---	19.5%

CHAMPIONSHIPS CALENDAR

Does the Esche Proposal affect the current date of the last weekend of conference Cross Country championships?

No.

How would the Esche Proposal affect the current championships schedule?

The Esche Proposal recommends reverting to the scheduling formula previously used for the Division I Cross Country postseason calendar (last used in 2011). The First Round of the Championships would take place on the Saturday nine days prior to the Final Round of the Championships. The Final Round of the Championships would take place on the Monday prior to Thanksgiving.

Why does the Esche Proposal recommend reverting to the scheduling formula previously used for the Division I Cross Country postseason Championships calendar?

There are four reasons that the Esche Proposal recommends reverting to the scheduling formula previously used for the Division I Cross Country postseason Championships calendar:

Recovery: This postseason championships scheduling would provide nine days between the First Round of the Championships and the Final Round of the Championships, which would add one extra day of recovery for those student-athletes advancing to the Final Round of the Championships over the current eight-day time frame.

Travel: The scheduling allows an additional day for student-athletes to recover from traveling between the First Round and the Final Round of the Championships. The scheduling also allows an additional day for the NCAA, teams, administrators, media, families, and fans to make travel arrangements for the Final Round of the Championships.

Television: Moving the Final Round of the Championships back to the Monday prior to Thanksgiving opens up an array of opportunities for a live television broadcast of the Final Round of the Championships, which are not available on the current Saturday Championships date.

Publicity: Moving the Final Round of the Championships back to the Monday prior to Thanksgiving allows an additional day to publicize the advancing student-athletes and teams ahead of the Final Round competition. It also increases the likelihood of institutional administrators being available to attend the Final Round of the Championships.

How would the Esche Proposal's Championships calendar affect student-athletes' missed class time for Championships competition?

Under the current Championships calendar, the majority of student-athletes who compete at the regional meets miss two days of class, and student-athletes who compete at the Final Round of the Championships miss another two days of class.

Under the Championships calendar in the Esche Proposal, the majority of student-athletes who compete at the First Round of the Championships would miss one day of class, and most student-athletes who compete at the Final Round of the Championships would only miss one day of class.

Does the Esche Proposal have an alternate recommendation for the postseason championships schedule, other than reverting to the scheduling formula previously used for the Division I Cross Country postseason calendar (last used in 2011)?

Yes.

What is the alternate recommendation for a postseason Championships schedule in the Esche Proposal?

The alternate recommendation for a postseason Championships schedule would be to retain the current regional competition day of Friday for the First Round of the Championships and move the Final Round of the Championships to the previous Championships day of the Monday prior to Thanksgiving.

Why does the Esche Proposal alternately recommend considering a postseason championships schedule that would retain the current regional competition date for the First Round of the Championships and move the Final Round of the Championships to the Monday prior to Thanksgiving?

It enhances the same four reasons why that the Esche Proposal recommended reverting back to the scheduling formula previously used for the Division I Cross Country Championships by:

Recovery: This postseason championships scheduling would provide ten days between the First Round of the Championships and the Final Round of the Championships, which would add two extra days of recovery for those student-athletes advancing to the Final Round of the Championships over the current eight-day time frame.

Travel: The scheduling allows two additional days for student-athletes to recover from traveling between the First Round and the Final Round of the Championships. The scheduling also allows two additional days for the NCAA, teams, administrators, media, families, and fans to make travel arrangements for the Final Round of the Championships.

Television: Moving the Final Round of the Championships back to the Monday prior to Thanksgiving opens up an array of opportunities for a live television broadcast of the Final Round of the Championships, which are not available on the current Saturday Championships date. The Friday date for the First Round also opens up opportunities for a live television broadcast of the First Round of the Championships, which would not be available on a Saturday date.

Publicity: Moving the Final Round of the Championships back to the Monday prior to Thanksgiving and retaining the Friday date for the First Round of the Championships allows two additional days to publicize the advancing student-athletes and teams ahead of the Final Round

competition. It also increases the likelihood of institutional administrators being available to attend the First Round of the Championships and the Final Round of the Championships.

How would the Esche Proposal's alternate Championships calendar affect student-athletes' missed class time for Championships competition?

Under the current Championships calendar, the majority of student-athletes who compete at the regional meets miss two days of class, and student-athletes who compete at the Final Round of the Championships miss another two days of class.

Under the alternate Championships calendar in the Esche Proposal, the majority of student-athletes who compete at the First Round of the Championships would miss two days of class, the same as under the current calendar, and most student-athletes who compete at the Final Round of the Championships would only miss one day of class.

When could the Esche Proposal go into effect if approved?

Competition sites have been determined for regional and national sites through 2017. If approved, the working assumption is that the Esche Proposal would not be implemented before the 2018 Cross Country season, at the earliest.

Who would be responsible for establishing the effective date of implementation for the Esche Proposal, if approved?

The Esche Proposal would have to be approved by the Division I Competition Oversight Committee within the Division I Council, who would be responsible for determining the effective date of implementation.

CHAMPIONSHIPS SITES

Why does the Esche Proposal conduct both races of the First Round of the Championships at a single site?

Fairness: Conducting First Round races at the same site enables each race to be evenly seeded and serpentine based on season-ending RPI and iRPI, regardless of the geographical location of the qualifying teams/individuals, providing each team and individual with an equitable opportunity to advance to the Final Round of the Championships. It also ensures that competitors in each race are competing in similar conditions and environments.

Combined Programs: Because nearly all men's and women's programs are combined programs with shared coaching staffs, men's and women's teams and individuals from each institution would need to compete at the same site, making it far more difficult, if not impossible, to seed teams and individuals into evenly-matched races for each gender at multiple sites.

Marketing/Publicity: By conducting all First Round races at the same site, the First Round of the Championships would be more attractive from the standpoint of creating a marketable event. A single, national event will receive more publicity than multiple separate events and have greater potential for growth of the sport in publicity through television, media, fan attendance, etc.

Student-Athlete Championships Experience: By conducting all First Round races at the same site, the student-athlete experience can be enhanced through larger fan attendance, increased amenities, exceptional atmosphere and facilities, etc.

Will the First Round of the Championships and the Final Round of the Championships be conducted at the same site in the Esche Proposal?

No.

Will the First Round of the Championships and the Final Round of the Championships be conducted in the same geographic area?

At this time, this question cannot be answered with certainty, as the NCAA controls the bidding process and awarding of sites for all Championships events.

It is important to note that there are courses, hosts, and cities capable of hosting either round of the Championships in multiple regions of the country, as supported by the fact that the NCAA has received more bids for the Championships in the current bid cycle than at any time in recent memory. In addition, these bids have come from a more diverse range of geographical areas of the country than at any time in recent memory, including from the Great Lakes Region, South Region, Southeast Region, South Central Region, and West Region.

It certainly would be possible, and perhaps even be preferable, to conduct the First Round of the Championships and the Final Round of the Championships in different geographical areas of the country, thus providing the two Championships events with greater exposure to media and fans

in different areas of the country, as well as providing a better balance to team travel to the two Championships events.

How will the site of the First Round of the Championships and the site of the Final Round of the Championships be selected?

The site of the First Round of the Championships and the site of the Final Round of the Championships will both be selected through the standard NCAA Championships Bid and Selection process as per NCAA Championships Policy.

Who will decide the site of the First Round of the Championships and the site of the Final Round of the Championships at the conclusion of the NCAA Championships Bid and Selection process?

The NCAA Division I Track & Field/Cross Country Sport Committee would make a recommendation on a host site for both the First Round of the Championships and the Final Round of the Championships based on bids submitted to the Division I Competition Oversight Committee of the Division I Council. The Division I Competition Oversight Committee is responsible for championships site selection.

CHAMPIONSHIPS COURSES

Are there courses that would be able to host the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships format in the Esche Proposal?

Yes.

What type of course would be required to host the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships format in the Esche Proposal?

The course requirements for hosting the Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships format in the Esche Proposal would be no greater than the needs for the current championships.

How would the number of teams and individuals in each men's and women's race at the current championships compare to the number of teams and individuals in each men's and women's race at the Final Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

In the current championships, there are 31 teams and 38 individuals in the men's race and 31 teams and 38 individuals in the women's race. With each team having seven student-athletes, there are a total of 255 student-athletes in each race.

In the Esche Proposal, at the Final Round of the Championships, there would be 32 teams and 32 individuals in the men's race and 32 teams and 32 individuals in the women's race. With each team having seven student-athletes, there would be a total of 256 student-athletes in each race.

How would the number of teams and individuals in each men's and women's race at the current championships compare to the number of teams and individuals in each men's and women's race at the First Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

In the current championships, there are 31 teams and 38 individuals in the men's race and 31 teams and 38 individuals in the women's race. With each team having seven student-athletes, there are 255 student-athletes in each race.

In the Esche Proposal, at the First Round of the Championships, there would be 36 teams and 20 individuals in each of the two men's races; and 36 teams and 20 individuals in each of the two women's races. With each team having 7 student-athletes, there would be total of 272 student-athletes per race.

How would the number of teams and individuals in each men's and women's race at the 2015, 2014 and 2013 Pre-National Invitational compare to the number of teams and individuals in each men's and women's race at the First Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal?

At the 2015 Pre-National Invitational, 288 student-athletes finished the men's Red race; and 311 student-athletes finished the women's Red race.

At the 2014 Pre-National Invitational, 310 student-athletes finished the men's Blue race; and 293 student-athletes finished the women's Blue race.

At the 2013 Pre-National Invitational, 359 student-athletes finished the men's Blue race; and 340 student-athletes finished the women's Blue race.

In the Esche Proposal, at the First Round of the Championships, there would be 272 individual student-athletes in each of the two men's races and 272 individuals student-athletes in each of the two women's races.

STARTING LINE BOXES

How many total starting boxes would be used at the First Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal compared to the total number of starting boxes used at the current Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships?

A total of 39 starting boxes, 36 for teams and 3 for individuals, would be used in each men's race and each women's race at the First Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal.

In the current Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships, there are a total of 41 starting boxes used, 31 for teams and 10 for individuals, in both the men's race and the women's race.

How many total starting boxes would be used at the Final Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal compared to the total number of starting boxes used at the current Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships?

A total of 36 starting boxes, 32 for teams and 4 for individuals, would be used in both the men's race and the women's race at the Final Round of the Championships in the Esche Proposal.

In the current Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships, there are a total of 41 starting boxes used, 31 for teams and 10 for individuals, in both the men's race and the women's race.