



# The Student- Athlete

January 2024

# 5 Important Questions for Student-Athletes

1. What are your grades like? Can you compete and make grades?
2. Are you athletically good enough to play at the next level? Are you walk-on caliber?
3. Are you resilient, disciplined, a team player?
4. Do you REALLY want to commit to playing at the next level?
5. How will you finance college? Do you need a scholarship to play in college?

**\*\*Only about 2% of high school athletes are awarded athletic scholarships\*\***

# Academic Eligibility

## NCAA Division I Requirements:

- Graduate from High School
- Complete 16 core courses in required areas with minimum 2.30 GPA

## NCAA Division III:

- Does not require registration with NCAA Eligibility Center
- Schools set their own admissions standards

## NCAA Division II Requirements:

- Graduate from High School
- Complete 16 core courses in required areas with minimum 2.20 GPA

## NAIA Requirements:

- Graduate from High School
- Meet 1 of the following
  - HS GPA of 2.3
  - HS GPA of 2.0 with qualifying test score or graduate in top half of class

# NCAA Core Course Requirements

## DIVISION I

### 16 Core Courses

- 4 Years of English
- 3 Years of Math (Algebra 1 or higher)
- 2 Years of Natural or Physical Science (Including one year of lab science)
- 1 Extra year of English, Math, or Science
- 2 Years of Social Science
- 4 Years of additional core courses

## DIVISION II

### 16 Core Courses

- 3 Years of English
- 2 Years of Math (Algebra 1 or higher)
- 2 Years of Natural or Physical Science (Including one year of lab science)
- 3 Extra years of English, Math, or Science
- 2 Years of Social Science
- 4 Years of additional core courses

# NCAA Eligibility Center

- Certifies every college-bound student-athlete in Division I or II – [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org)
- Amateurism Certification
- Makes sure student-athletes meet the minimum academic requirements:
  - Graduate from High School
  - Complete NCAA Approved CORE Courses
  - Earn the minimum required Core Course GPA

**\*\*Standardized test scores are not required for NCAA certification, but may be required for college admission or scholarships\*\***

# Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center

- **Free Profile Page Account:** For anyone in high school planning to compete at an NCAA division school but not sure of which division. Create account freshman year. Can transition later to an Academic & Amateurism Certification Account as needed.
- **Academic & Amateurism Certification Account:** For anyone in high school planning to compete at an NCAA Division I or Division II school. Must also have this type of account to take an official visit, and/or sign a National Letter of Intent. Cost - \$100.00.

# NAIA Eligibility Center

- NAIA schools do not have as many rules and regulations on recruiting student-athletes and/or eligibility requirements
- [www.playnaia.org](http://www.playnaia.org)
- Build your profile as early as freshman year
- Cost - \$100.00
- Must send transcript upon HS graduation
- Junior Early Decision
  - 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale AND
  - 18 on ACT or 970 on SAT
  - OR 3.3 GPA without qualifying test score

# Where do I belong?

- ACADEMICS, ACADEMICS, ACADEMICS

- The “FIT” – Don’t get caught up in the name or the division.
- Student-Athletes can have both an over-inflated and under-inflated sense of talent level – need to compare themselves to the current college team
- Student-Athletes must demonstrate their ability – being seen at events, games, meets, having time standards
- “Big fish in small pond vs small fish in big pond”
- The college coach has the ultimate say if a student-athlete belongs or should receive a scholarship



# Getting Recruited

- There are two reasons high school students do not get recruited:
  1. They are not good enough
  2. College coaches who may need their talent have not heard of them.....

**IT IS ALL ABOUT  
MARKETING YOURSELF!!**

# HOW DO YOU GET RECRUITED?

- Recruiting services are not needed – coaches want to hear from YOU – not a company you paid to do it for you.
- Letter of Interest – college team website.
- Sports Resume
- Skills Video – simply use phone to video, and iMovie to edit.
- Phone Calls/Emails – appropriate email address is a must!
- Being “Seen” – good behavior before, during, & after is essential.
- Unofficial/Official Campus Visits

# The Game of Recruiting

- Start Early!
- Do not hesitate to call or email coaches. If you don't, they may not know about you. Advocate for yourself!
- First impressions count! Professional email address is a must.
- Personalize your email – discuss recent exciting win, a team community service project, potential academic interests.
- Prepare a list of good questions about each school - remember you may be spending the next 4 years with this coach, team, and university.
- Students contact the coaches, not the parents.

# Parent Role in Recruiting Process

- Take active approach but not the lead – create spreadsheet comparing colleges, proofread emails.
- Value academics early.
- Be realistic and help student-athlete be open to opportunities.
- Do not make the initial contact – coaches want to hear directly from the student-athlete.
- Parent's behavior on the sidelines can impact coach's decision.

# OFFICIAL CONTACT PERIODS

- Contact – Any face-to-face meeting
  - Contact Period – on or off campus contact
  - Evaluation Period – games, events – no face-to-face contact off campus
  - Quiet Period – on campus contact only
  - Dead Period – no in-person contact on or off campus
- Coaches may call, write, text, or email during all contact periods. They may contact HS/Club coaches to invite student-athletes for unofficial visits to campus.

# Scholarships and Financial Aid

- Most athletic scholarships are one-year renewable scholarships, NOT automatic four-year scholarships.
- Athletic scholarships may be increased, renewed, reduced, or withdrawn each academic year for a maximum of 5 years.
- Athletic scholarships can be awarded in a variety of amounts – full to partial to books.
- A student-athlete may only be offered a roster spot without any financial aid.
- Verify how injuries will impact an athletic scholarship long term.
- Ask if the athletic scholarship could increase or decrease depending on athletic performance.

# Scholarships and Financial Aid

- The “Head Count” sports – Basketball, Football, Girls Volleyball, Tennis, Gymnastics - scholarship more likely “full ride”.
- The “Equivalency” sports divide scholarships many ways.
- Not all programs are fully funded at the maximums allowed by the governing body, and often vary between men’s and women’s sports.
- Many athletes receive a combination of athletic and academic aid:
  - Example Swimmer: 65% scholarship - only 35% is athletic aid
  - Example Soccer player: \$45,000 merit/aid at D3 School

# Verbal Commitment & Official Signing

- Verbal Commitment – not binding but essential to take seriously. Do not continue to “shop around” as demonstrates lack of integrity. College coaching circles are VERY small. Athletes may commit verbally their junior year.
- National Letter of Intent (NLI – NCAA) or Letter of Intent (LOI – NAIA) provides written binding commitment, provides athletic financial aid, and ends recruiting process. Letters are signed senior year.
- An NLI & LOI are LEGALLY BINDING.
- Student-Athletes who walk-on may sign a commitment letter, but not an NLI or LOI as no athletic aid is involved.
- Student-Athletes must still apply and be accepted to the college or university. Admission acceptance is NOT guaranteed.



# CHECKLIST

- ACADEMICS
- Register with NCAA/NAIA
- Research colleges that interest you and where you would be happy at if you did not play a sport or were injured – *The Broken Leg Test*
- Send letter of interest to college coaches with unofficial transcripts
- Create skills video
- Create and update sports resume
- Attend sports camps at prospective colleges
- Sit down with parents/coach and weigh pros and cons of each school
- Let coaches know when their school is no longer in the running - THANK them!

# REMINDERS

- ACADEMICS, ACADEMICS, ACADEMICS!!!
- Think realistically about ability.
- Think about academic and career goals.
- Review carefully the *NCAA Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete* and/or the *NAIA Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete*.
- Be sure of final choice BEFORE signing any papers.

# Student Athlete Resources

- Helpful Websites
  - [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org)
    - Determines academic eligibility - NCAA
  - [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org)
    - Official NCAA website
  - [www.playnaia.org](http://www.playnaia.org)
    - Determines academic eligibility - NAIA
  - [www.njcaa.org](http://www.njcaa.org)
    - National Junior College Athletic Association