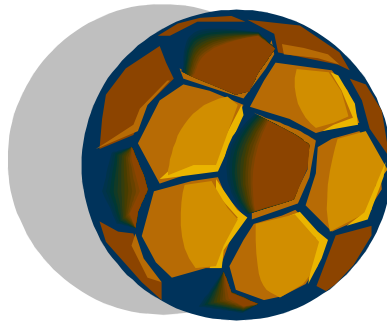


The Columbus Academy

Student-Athlete's

Guide to College Sports

2006 - 2007



Compliments of

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INTRODUCTION

Thinking about playing a sport in college and then actually making it happen can be a curious, exciting, and nerve-wracking experience with many ups and downs along the way. This guide is intended to assist you, your parents, your coach, and your counselor as you move towards achieving that goal.

Take time to read through the sections of this guide and familiarize yourself with NCAA rules and regulations, recruiting procedures, and expectations regarding athletes and coaches.

An important rule of thumb is to make sure that the academic match is appropriate. Also, keep your coaches and counselors apprised of your progress. We are happy to help as we can and look forward to working with you.



NOTE: In preparing this guide, we are indebted to Mr. Frank DuBois, Admission Counselor at Lewis University in Chicago, who presented much of what follows at a College Board conference in February 2006. Mr. DuBois is no stranger to the process. A coach and counselor for over twenty years, he is the National High School Leadership Director for NIKE, Inc. in Beaverton, Oregon. He has authored two books on the topic of student-athletes, appeared on various television sports programs, appeared in articles written in major newspapers across the United States, and presented speeches at a number of local, regional, and national conferences. He conducted programs for Spike Lee's Forty Acres and A Mule, Inc., and developed programs for the "Boyz From The Hood" foundation for the NBA.

We thank Mrs. Anne Horton, Columbus Academy Assistant Director of Athletics, for her ideas and contributions to this guide. We also thank Mrs. Lynne Evans, Columbus Academy Middle School teacher, for her editorial help with proofreading and offering helpful suggestions.

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What I wish someone would have told me about being a college athlete:

- Get good grades from Grade Nine on.
- Prepare well for the SAT and ACT.
- Apply for regular admission as well as for athletic admission.
- Set long-range goals for ten years after high school.
- Consider colleges that meet academic needs as well as athletic needs.
- Talk to several coaches from different colleges.
- Visit campuses of colleges that you are considering.
- Learn time management skills well before starting college.
- Develop communications skills as a team member and as a student.
- Attend sports camps early on (i.e. after Grade Nine), especially those at colleges that interest you.
- Check with your coach about how many Columbus Academy athletes actually continue playing their sport once enrolled in college (many stop playing or transfer).
- Keep your coach informed of your interests and contacts.
- Keep a record of all contacts with coaches or colleges.
- Know that the recruiting timetable varies with different sports because of their seasons.

Student-Athlete's High School Four-Year Plan

GRADE 9

Check the NCAA website or literature for information about core class requirements.
Check with the counselor if you need clarification.
Keep your grades up.
Attend sports camps.
Start thinking about a realistic analysis of your ability in your sport(s).
Start thinking about your academic and career goals.

GRADE 10

Keep your grades up.
Talk to your coaches about your ability and ambitions.
Stay out of trouble!
Make preliminary inquiries about colleges that might interest you.
Send a very brief letter to the coach at a college or two that really interests you.
Take the PSAT in October.

GRADE 11

In your Junior Interview, talk with your counselor about career goals and course requirements.
Talk with your coach about a realistic assessment of which college level you can play.
Take the PSAT in October.
Take the ACT in December or February, and the SAT in January or March.
Prepare a sports resume.
After your Junior Interview, refine your list of prospective college options.
Know the entrance requirements at the colleges that interest you.
Write brief letters to college coaches.
Ask your coach and one or two teachers to prepare letters of recommendation.
Attend sports camps.
In June, register with the NCAA Clearinghouse.

GRADE 12

Make sure you will meet all class core requirements for graduation and for the NCAA.
Make sure you are registered with the NCAA Clearinghouse.
Attend college-related events, meetings, and fairs at school and in the community.
Compare your SAT and ACT scores with those of freshmen averages at your colleges.
In collaboration with your counselor and coach, narrow your college choices down to a reasonable and realistic number.
Discuss Early Decision options with the college coach who is recruiting you heavily.
Send your applications for admission well in advance of deadlines.
Ensure that supporting documents are sent from the counseling office in timely fashion.
Make sure you are aware of recruiting rules regarding campus visits.
Send in federal financial aid forms as soon as feasible.
Make copies of all forms and communications with colleges and agencies.
Sit down with your parents and coach to list the pros and cons of each college.
Make your final decision based on a meaningful academic education, excellent career preparation, and satisfying athletic experience.
Be absolutely sure of your final choice before signing any papers.
Let coaches know when their college no longer is in the running, and thank them!

Student-Athlete Checklist

Use this checklist to remind yourself through the sophomore, junior and senior years of tasks you need to perform to find a good college match.

During the PRE-SEASON, did I:

- ___ meet with my counselor in the spring of the junior year to discuss college plans?
- ___ meet with my coach to discuss college and plans and athletic goals?
- ___ take the SAT or ACT in the winter or spring of the junior year?
- ___ take an interest inventory to help me consider potential college majors?
- ___ meet with my counselor to make sure my senior classes comply with NCAA rules?
- ___ check my transcript by May of Grade Eleven for compliance with bylaw 14.3?
- ___ develop a list of prospective colleges with my counselor's input?
- ___ visit a representative sample of college campuses?

During the IN-SEASON, did I:

- ___ apply to at least one college that will meet my needs if I don't play a sport?
- ___ double check with my counselor to assure compliance with NCAA rules?
- ___ maintain good academic standing?
- ___ meet with my coach (if highly recruited) to deal with persistent recruiters?
- ___ prepare a recruiting video to send to colleges that interest me?

During the POST-SEASON, did I:

- ___ meet with my coach to assess my potential to play in college?
- ___ meet with my coach to deal with persistent recruiters?
- ___ review NCAA rules regarding recruiting?
- ___ make college visits?
- ___ ensure the right program of study exists in colleges that are interested in me?
- ___ discuss the proper application procedure with college coaches?

Parent of Student-Athlete Checklist

Use the following checklist to remind yourself through your child's sophomore, junior and senior years if you have met your child's college-related athletic needs.

During the PRE-SEASON, did I:

- meet with the counselor in the spring of junior year to discuss the college search process?
- meet with the coach to discuss college goals and athletic plans.
- develop a calendar with my child to ensure completion of an interest inventory?
- discuss senior classes with the counselor to ensure NCAA compliance?
- discuss with my child the list of prospective colleges assembled in the junior year?
- visit campuses of prospective colleges?

During the IN-SEASON, did I:

- see that my child gains admission to at least one college in case the sports aspect fails to materialize?
- check with the counselor to ensure compliance with NCAA regulations?
- stay in touch with teachers about my child's academic progress?
- meet with the coach, as necessary, to deal with persistent recruiters?

During the POST-SEASON, did I:

- revise the list of colleges that reflect possible scholarship offers?
- meet with the coach to assess my child's athletic potential and to determine the kinds of questions we should be asking of recruiters?
- meet with the coach to deal with persistent recruiters?
- accompany my child on all college visits?
- maintain contact with the counselor and coach as needed?

What every athlete should know about recruiting

When you as a high school athlete daydream about playing sports at college, do you see yourself humbly sitting on a bench waiting for the coach to send you in? Probably not. Instead, you see yourself acknowledging the cheers of fans, granting an interview in the locker room after the game, and weighing the merits of an attractive offer to go professional. In short, you have the same fantasies that thousands of other young women and men have—that college will be the springboard to fortune and the big leagues. The reality is this:

- Only two out of every 100 college basketball players make it to the pros.
- The professionals for any major sport usually are drawn from big universities, which are the treasure troves of first-rate athletes playing on outstanding teams.
- The average pro football career last only three years.

What this indicates is that you, as a college-bound athlete, must think ahead to when the cheering stops. Careers in sports can end abruptly. Sometimes starting spots evaporate after only one year. But more often, college athletes have problems with eligibility. Practice schedules are hard on grades. In addition, some athletes spend more than four years trying to graduate and eventually their eligibility expires.

If you're a high school athlete who wants to play college-level sports, keep two priorities in order: college first, sports second (especially when talking with recruiters). This way, you can avoid situations that might leave you without a degree or even a team to play on.

To start with, learn all you can about the rules governing recruitment before contacting college coaches, players, or alumni. Depending on which level of competition you're considering, your relationship with a recruiter must abide by rules established by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), and the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA). Violating any of the regulations might result in your being barred from competition or having the college itself placed on probation.

An excellent book to have on hand, one that deals not only with recruitment but also with pressures and choices collegiate players face, is *The Athlete's Game Plan for College and Career* by Stephen and Howard Figler (Peterson's Guides). Or you can write to the different associations yourself directly for information.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association
700 W. Washington Street
P.O. Box 6222
Indianapolis, IN 46206-6222
Tel. # 317 917-6222
<http://www.ncaa.org/wps/portal>

National Association for Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA)
23500 W. 105th Street
Olathe, KS 66061
Tel. # 913 791-9555
<http://naia.cstv.com>

NCAA Recruiting Highlights

Important things you need to know:

1. No alumni, boosters, or representatives of a college's athletic interests can be involved with your recruiting.
2. A contact is any face-to-face meeting between a college coach and you or your parents, during which any of you say more than "Hello."
3. Phone calls from faculty members or coaches are not permitted until on or after July 1, after completion of your junior year. (Football date is August 15. Division III is anytime after your junior year.)
4. In sports other than football, a coach is limited to one telephone call per week. However, unlimited calls may be made under certain circumstances.
5. Enrolled student-athletes may not make recruiting telephone calls to you.
6. Coaches may not accept collect calls from you until on or after July 1, after the completion of your junior year.
7. You or your parents may telephone a coach at your own expense as often as you wish.
8. Letters from coaches are not permitted until September 1, at the beginning of your junior year.
9. In all sports other than football, coaches may contact you off the college campus three times. In football, the contact number is seven times.
10. An evaluation is any off-campus activity used to assess your academic qualification or athletic ability. This may include visiting your high school (during which no contact occurs) or watching you practice or compete.
11. In all sports other than football and basketball, coaches may not evaluate you more than four times each academic year. In football and basketball, coaches may evaluate you no more than two times.
12. Know the specific contact and evaluation periods for football and basketball.
13. There is a dead period when coaches may not contact or evaluate you on or off the college campus—48 hours before and 48 hours after 8:00 a.m. on the first National Letter of Intent signing date.

14. Know the National Letter of Intent signing dates (early, late, and regular) for your sport.
15. You may not try out for a college athletic team in Division I and III. In Division II, you may have a tryout after completion of high school eligibility. You must have the Athletic Director's permission and may compete in sports other than football, hockey, lacrosse, soccer, and wrestling.
16. You may visit a college campus any time at your expense, even during your junior year.
17. During your senior year, you may have one 48-hour expense-paid (official) visit to a particular campus. You may receive no more than five such visits (even if you are being recruited in more than one sport). Before you visit, the college must have your academic transcript (Division I), and the ACT, SAT, or PSAT scores in advance.
18. During your official visit, you may receive round-trip transportation, room and board (at on-campus facilities if available), and complimentary admissions to campus athletic events. A student host may be given \$20 a day to cover costs of entertaining you.
19. There is no limit to the number of Division III schools you may visit.
20. NAIA schools may have on-campus tryouts.
21. Make sure your correct year in school is shown on all programs, letters, and information your coach and counselor are using.
22. Know the limits on what the college can provide a prospective student in terms of printed information.
23. Schools are permitted to ask prospects to undergo a medical exam during the visit.

For specific details on rules and regulations governing recruitment, go to the NCAA Clearinghouse's website at: www.ncaa.org.

Questions to ask a recruiter

Be prepared to ask a recruiter the following questions. If you don't think you can remember them, write them down and bring the sheet of paper with you to the appointment or interview.

1. What's the recruiter's relationship to the school? Is he or she the head coach, assistant coach, an alum, or an admissions representative? Assurances carry different weight depending on who gives them.
2. Keep your education foremost in mind by asking about academic programs that interest you. A good recruiter is as informed about programs as an admissions person. Fire away with specific questions about majors and courses in your field of interest.
3. At which level does your sport compete? NCAA Division I colleges offer athletic scholarships while some Division II colleges do not. As a matter of policy, no Division III colleges offer athletic scholarships.
4. Ask for details about athletic scholarships—any strings attached? Typically, athletic scholarships (or grants, as they're sometimes called) are for one year, renewable at the coach's discretion. If you get benched, do you start paying your own way from then on?
5. How many athletes were kept on scholarship after their eligibility had expired? Because of heavy demands on their time, some college athletes take five years to graduate. By their final year, they're usually ineligible to play.
6. Will tutoring or counseling be available? Beware of remarks like, "Don't worry. We haven't lost a player yet because of academics," which could imply that your education will be allowed to suffer before your value to the team will.
7. What will happen if you're placed on academic probation? Do you lose part of your benefits? All of them?
8. Ask the coach what she/he expects of her/his players—time commitment, behavior, appearance, etc.—and then decide if you can work with those expectations.
9. What advice would your potential teammates have for someone like yourself? Talk to them, find out what their experiences have been, and ask them to give you some tips.

If you keep digging until you get the answers to these questions, you'll go a long way towards avoiding misunderstandings between yourself and the college or university you come to represent as an athlete. If you still have questions, you can obtain a free copy of "Your Rights and Responsibilities as a Student-Athlete in Higher Education" by contacting:

National Association of Student Personnel Administrators
1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW. Ste. 418
Washington, DC 20009
Tel. # 202 265-7500
www.naspa.org

Sample letter to a coach

When writing to a coach, what do you say, what does s/he want to know about you, and how do you say it? Here is an example to help you craft your own letters.

Bill E. Smith
123 Anywhere Street
Columbus, OH 43210

March 1, 2006

Mr. John Doe
Head Men's Basketball Coach
Dunkem University
987 Somewhere Avenue
Hoopsville, PA 54321

Dear Coach Doe,

I am a 6'4" junior forward at Tallman High School in Columbus, Ohio, and I am interested in attending Dunkem University after I graduate. As a sophomore, I started for our conference champion basketball team and averaged 8 assists, 8 rebounds, and 12 points per game. This year, our team continues to be successful, and I have been a leader on the court as well as in the classroom. I presently have a 3.2/4.0 grade point average and earned scores of 194 on the PSAT, a 1990 on the SAT, and a 25 on the ACT. During the first semester, I earned Bs and B+s in all my classes, and I plan to retake the SAT in June. I will have my scores from that test sent directly to the NCAA Clearinghouse. I will also ask my school to send the Clearinghouse my transcript showing grades and credits earned through the junior year.

I am very interested in attending Dunkem University because of its academic excellence, social opportunities, and outstanding basketball program. I am particularly impressed with the graduation rate of student-athletes at Dunkem, as well as the national reputation of the Business Program which is my intended major. I believe that my athletic and academic talents make me qualified to be considered for your program. Coach Don Dribble, my varsity basketball coach, has volunteered to discuss my athletic and academic talents with you. I have enclosed his address and telephone number.

Please send me information on the Dunkem basketball program at your convenience. Let me know what information I can provide that will be helpful in my evaluation by the Dunkem Basketball staff.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Sincerely,

Bill E. Smith

Suggestions for a Resume

A resume is a brief description of yourself that highlights your salient characteristics. In preparing one to provide to coaches, here are some tips that will serve you well in the process.

Include actions photos of yourself. These can include other sports, not just the one you intend to play in college. However, highlight your primary sport on the front page.

Provide your cumulative Grade Point Average.

Include PSAT, SAT, ACT, and AP scores (if available). You will be asked for them anyway.

Include quotes from any newspaper articles about the team or about your play in particular.

List camps in which you have taken part.

List academic awards received or other honors.

Include high school coach's name and daytime phone number.

Provide your Social Security Number.

What scouts look for in prospects

What do college coaches and scouts look for in a high school prospect? There are so many qualities, so let's categorize them in no specific order.

SIZE – Everybody loves size in sports. It doesn't make any difference if it is basketball or tennis; size counts. Big people will be recruited more heavily even though they may be weaker or have fewer skills than smaller people. Why? College coaches hope big players can develop skills during their college careers. So, if you do not have a big physical build, you will have to work a little harder than the big athletes.

ATHLETIC TYPE PLAYERS – Speed, quickness, jumping ability, and strength have really become prominent in sports today. Coaches are always asking scouts, "How quick is that person?" "Are they agile?" "Is that a strong player?" "How big do they play?" All sports are faster than they were twenty years ago, and quickness is something that coaches are always looking for in a player. Kids who are slow and cannot move quickly will have a great deal of difficulty competing with athletic players in college today. It is a plain and simple fact, especially if you are short, that if you are basically slow you will get overlooked for the collegiate level.

ATTITUDE – High school coaches' jobs are tough; they teach all day, practice after school, get home late every evening, and have family responsibilities. One thing a coach at any level does not need is a player who has an attitude problem. It can be a problem and cause lots of problems for the team. At the college level, coaches cannot justify recruiting players who have poor attitudes. The athletic program at every college and university reflects directly on the school itself. If a team has an attitude problem, it impacts every sport at that college. If a coach is watching you play while you are in high school, she or he wants to see how composed you are when things are going wrong. Everyone can be a good sport when they are winning, but how do you behave when you are losing? Remember that the college coach's job is coaching the sport. She or he can't afford to have someone on the team who might embarrass the college.

INTELLIGENCE – This is an attribute that can help you overcome other obstacles. Many coaches tell their players to "play smart." Players who make intelligent decisions on the court or field will come ahead the majority of the time. Coaches are looking for players who can "out-think" their opponent. This intelligence, combined with athletic skills, can carry most people to a higher level in their sport. College coaches are looking for high school players who make great decisions under pressure.

INTENSITY – Did you ever hear the word "coast?" The majority of people in society tend to "coast" while they are at work, study, or practice. Then when it is "game time," they are disappointed because they cannot do the things they think they can do. It goes along with the saying, "You will play at the same level as you practice." College coaches are looking for intensity. They are looking for a player who works hard in practice, in the weight room, or in a game. College sports are more intense than high school. Players need to show the coach that they can "raise the bar."

FUNDAMENTALS AND HARD WORK – Nothing is more pleasing for a scout than seeing players who are fundamentally sound. Sports have many skills that require hard work in order to become a complete player. Players have tendencies to work on their strengths and ignore their weaknesses. It is boring jumping rope for half an hour every day, but it is important for some to become quicker. It is easier to sit and watch TV than it is to work out in the weight room. It comes down to how much you want it. Being an athlete at the collegiate level requires discipline, dedication, and sacrifice. Players who work hard, are fundamentally sound, and strive to become complete players have a better chance of playing in college.

Playing a sport in college requires a great deal of dedication. You do not want to overlook the primary purpose of going to college—**ACQUIRING A COLLEGE EDUCATION LEADING TO A COLLEGE DEGREE AND A PROFESSION WHERE YOU CAN BE A PRODUCTIVE CITIZEN**. Sports in general tend to push aside the importance of a college education for some players. It's easy to get caught up in the excitement of the sport. Sometimes letting classes slide can cost a student-athlete eligibility, while other times just a minor injury can end a student-athlete's four-year collegiate athletic career. If you cannot play anymore, what is left? Guess what? Your college degree is the thing you have to fall back on, and no one can take it away.

Believe this. Your playing career will end some day, and that is certain. The question is whether or not you will be smart enough to have a plan "B" for when that day arrives.

NCAA Rules Education

Freshman Initial Eligibility Standards

Division I

In order to compete in intercollegiate athletics as a freshman at a Division I institution, a student-athlete must meet specific academic initial eligibility requirements:

1. Graduate from high school.
2. Successfully complete 14 core courses (class of '07) or 16 core classes (classes of '08 and after).
3. Earn minimum required core grade point average (not overall GPA).
4. Earn minimum required score on ACT (sum scores) or SAT.
5. See the included NCAA Division I Freshman Eligibility Standards for additional information.

Division II

In order to compete in intercollegiate athletics as a freshman at a Division II institution, a student-athlete must meet specific academic initial eligibility requirements:

1. Graduate from high school.
2. Earn a GPA of a 2.0 or higher in 14 core academic courses.
3. Achieve a qualifying score on the ACT or SAT (see the sliding scale on page 14).

Divisions I and II

If you meet the initial eligibility requirements (Qualifier):

1. You may practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year.
2. You may participate in four seasons of competition.

If you fail to meet qualifier requirements, but meet core course grade point average and ACT/SAT test score based on the partial qualifier index (Partial Qualifier**):

1. You may practice at your home facility and receive athletic scholarships during your first year in residence.
2. You may earn a fourth season if you graduate by the beginning of fifth year.

If you fail to meet initial eligibility requirements (Nonqualifier):

1. You cannot practice, compete or receive athletic scholarships during your first year.
2. You may participate in three seasons of competition (Division I).
3. You may earn a fourth season of competition if you graduate by the beginning of your fifth year (Division I).

NOTE: Initial eligibility requirements for Division III institutions are determined based upon institutional policy and conference requirements.

Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse – Divisions I and II

In order to compete in intercollegiate athletics as a freshman at a **Division I** or **Division II** institution, a student-athlete must register with and be certified by the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse.

1. Register after your junior year. (www.ncaaclearinghouse.net)
2. Take standardized tests (ACT/SAT).
3. After high school graduation, a final transcript needs to be sent to the clearinghouse.
4. Questions? Call toll-free 877.262.1492; or visit www.ncaaclearinghouse.net.

Two-Year College Transfer Eligibility

Division I

If a men's or women's basketball prospect was a qualifier at the time of high school graduation, and wants to transfer to a four-year institution from a two-year institution, he/she may compete immediately at the four-year institution if (at the time of transfer) he/she has:

1. Spent at least one full time semester or one full time quarter in residence at the two-year college.
2. Earned a minimum GPA of 2.0.
3. Satisfactorily completed an average of at least 12 semester or quarter hours of transferable degree credit for each full time academic term or attendance at the two-year college.

A basketball prospect who was a partial qualifier or nonqualifier shall be eligible for competition, athletics aid and practice if (at the time of transfer) the prospect has:

1. Graduated from the two-year college.
2. Satisfactorily completed a minimum of 48 semester or 72 quarter hours of transferable degree credits, with not more than 18 semester or 27 quarter hours earned during the summer and not more than 9 semester or 13.5 quarter hours earned during the summer immediately before the transfer.
3. Earned a minimum GPA of 2.0.
4. Attended the two-year college as a full time student for at least three semesters or four quarters (excluding summer terms).

NOTE: There are also initial eligibility requirements for transfers from a two-year college to a Division II or Division III institution. Please call toll-free 800.638.3731 to receive a copy of the NCAA Transfer Guide.

Eligibility Clock

Division I

1. Must complete all seasons of competition within five (5) calendar years of initial full time enrollment.
2. Clock runs regardless of participation and does not stop except for active military duty or official church missions.

Division II and Division III

1. Must complete all seasons of competition within the first 10 semesters or 15 quarters of full time enrollment.

Athletics Scholarships

1. Awarded only on a year-to-year basis.
2. No such thing as a four-year athletic scholarship.
3. A scholarship can be *reduced* or *cancelled* after the one-year period for any reason.

National Letter of Intent (NLI)

The National Letter of Intent (NLI) is an agreement by a participating institution to provide athletics aid to an eligible prospective student-athlete in exchange for a commitment to enroll at the institution for one academic year.

1. Administered by Collegiate Commissioners Association (not the NCAA).
2. Some conferences do not subscribe to NLI.
3. Not required to sign an NLI in order to receive athletics aid.
4. If you sign an NLI, there is a 2 year/2 season penalty for failure to attend institution for one full academic year.
5. NLI cannot be hand-delivered by or signed in the presence of institutional staff member.
6. Certain circumstances will render NLI unenforceable (e.g. academic ineligibility, recruiting violations).
7. Questions? Call 205.458.3013 or visit www.national-letter.org.

Telephone Contacts

Division I - Permissible Telephone Calls (Men) – Initiated by the College

1. 1 call during March of junior year (varies with sport; check NCAA website).
2. Another call after June 21 following junior year.
3. 3 calls in the month of July following junior year. EXCEPTION: No calls from the start until the conclusion of participation in an event.
4. 1 call per week thereafter.

Division I – Permissible Telephone Calls (Women) – Initiated by the College

1. 1 call on or after June 21 following junior year.
2. 3 calls in the month of July following junior year. EXCEPTION: No calls from the start until the conclusion of participation in an event.
3. 1 call per week thereafter.

Division I– Permissible Telephone Calls (Men and Women) - Initiated by the Prospect

1. Unlimited number of calls permitted.
2. Calls may occur at any time.

Official and Unofficial Visits – Division I

An official visit is a visit financed in whole or part by the college:

1. One visit per college.
2. Maximum number of official visits is 5 per student-athlete.
3. Must present high school transcript and valid PSAT/SAT/ACT test score.
4. Visit cannot exceed 48 hours.
5. MEN – Visit can occur no earlier than January 1 of junior year.
6. WOMEN – Visit can occur no earlier than opening day of classes for senior year.

An unofficial visit is a visit made at the prospect's own expense:

1. Unlimited number permitted and may be taken at any time. EXCEPTION (MEN): No unofficial visits during the July evaluation period.
2. College may provide no more than 3 complimentary admissions to an *on-campus* athletics event.
3. Prospect must pay all expenses (i.e. lodging, travel, meals, etc.).
4. College may only provide transportation to view off-campus practice/competition sites and other facilities located within 30 miles of main campus.

What's the difference between Divisions I, II and III?

Division I -- Division I member institutions have to sponsor at least seven sports for men and seven for women (or six for men and eight for women) with two team sports for each gender. Each playing season has to be represented by each gender as well. There are contest and participant minimums for each sport, as well as scheduling criteria. For sports other than football and basketball, Division I schools must play 100 percent of the minimum number of contests against Division I opponents -- anything over the minimum number of games has to be 50 percent Division I. Men's and women's basketball teams have to play all but two games against Division I teams; for men, they must play one-third of all their contests in the home arena. Schools that have football are classified as Division I-A or I-AA. I-A football schools are usually fairly elaborate programs. Division I-A teams have to meet minimum attendance requirements (average 15,000 people in actual or paid attendance per home game), which must be met once in a rolling two-year period. Division I-AA teams do not need to meet minimum attendance requirements. Division I schools must meet minimum financial aid awards for their athletics program, and there are maximum financial aid awards for each sport that a Division I school cannot exceed.

Division II -- Division II institutions have to sponsor at least four sports for men and four for women, with two team sports for each gender, and each playing season represented by each gender. There are contest and participant minimums for each sport, as well as scheduling criteria -- football and men's and women's basketball teams must play at least 50% of their games against Division II or I-A or I-AA opponents. For sports other than football and basketball there are no scheduling requirements. There are not attendance requirements for football, or arena game requirements for basketball. There are maximum financial aid awards for each sport that a Division II school must not exceed. Division II teams usually feature a number of local or in-state student-athletes. Many Division II student-athletes pay for school through a combination of scholarship money, grants, student loans and employment earnings. Division II athletics programs are financed in the institution's budget like other academic departments on campus. Traditional rivalries with regional institutions dominate schedules of many Division II athletics programs.

Division III -- Division III institutions have to sponsor at least five sports for men and five for women, with two team sports for each gender, and each playing season represented by each gender. There are minimum contest and participant minimums for each sport. Division III athletics features student-athletes who receive no financial aid related to their athletic ability and athletic departments are staffed and funded like any other department in the university. Division III athletics departments place special importance on the impact of athletics on the participants rather than on the spectators. The student-athlete's experience is of paramount concern. Division III athletics encourages participation by maximizing the number and variety of athletics opportunities available to students, placing primary emphasis on regional in-season and conference competition.

(This information is from the NCAA's website at www.ncaa.org)

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding NCAA

When should a student register with the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse?

Students should register with the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse after the completion of their junior year in high school. At this time, a transcript that includes six semesters of grades should be sent to the clearinghouse from the high school. Additionally, students should request that their SAT or ACT test scores be forwarded directly to the Clearinghouse by entering code “9999” as a reporting selection when they register for the exam.

How are students prioritized for processing at the Clearinghouse?

Students who have their status requested by an NCAA institution are prioritized by the Clearinghouse for processing. Students with disabilities and students who individually request a preliminary status report will also be prioritized. If a student’s eligibility status is not prioritized in one of these three ways, the Clearinghouse may not process the student’s file.

How is the NCAA core grade point average different from a student’s overall grade point average?

The NCAA core course grade point average is calculated using only NCAA-approved core courses in the required core academic areas. High school grade point averages generally include the grades from most or all courses attempted in grades 9 through 12.

May weighted grades for honors or advanced placement courses be factored into the calculation of the student’s core grade point average?

A school’s normal practice of weighting honors or advanced courses may be used as long as the weighting is used for computing grade point averages. Weighting cannot be used if the high school weights grades solely for the purpose of determining class rank. Additionally, in no instance may the student receive greater than 1,000 additional quality points for purposes of calculating the grade point average for initial eligibility.

What options are available to students who do not meet the NCAA initial eligibility standards?

Students who do not meet the initial eligibility standards may be granted a waiver of their deficiency through the NCAA initial eligibility waiver process. NCAA academic committees are vested with the authority to authorize waivers of the initial eligibility requirements based on objective evidence that demonstrates circumstances in which a student’s overall academic record warrants a waiver of the normal application of the legislation. The waiver must be filed by an NCAA institution (college or university) on behalf of the students. However, students with a diagnosed disability may file a waiver on their own behalf.

May courses taken in the eighth grade that are high school core courses (e.g., Algebra 1, Spanish 1, and Freshman Composition) be used to meet the 13 core course requirements?

Courses taken in the eighth grade may not be used to satisfy the core curriculum requirements regardless of the course content or level. However, in the rare event that students need to have courses taken in the eighth grade considered for eligibility purposes, the initial eligibility waiver process is available (see previous question). Note: Courses taken after eighth grade graduation,

but prior to the first regular ninth grade term (i.e. the summer after eighth grade but prior to the fall term of ninth grade) may not be used to satisfy the core curriculum requirements.

May students use courses taken after high school graduation?

Generally, students who enroll in a NCAA Division I institution may use only courses completed in grades 9 through 12 to meet the NCAA core curriculum requirements. As a result, courses completed during the summer after high school graduation may not be used to meet the core curriculum requirements. Students who return after graduation to the high school from which they graduated may either complete additional core courses or repeat core courses during the postgraduate term or year in order to meet the core course requirements. These students cannot enroll in college and participate in intercollegiate athletics until the subsequent fall. Students who enroll in Division II institutions and students with disabilities (enrolling in either Division I or Division II) may use core courses taken after high school graduation to meet the NCAA core curriculum requirements, provided the courses are completed prior to full-time enrollment in a college or university.

Are vocational courses acceptable?

Traditional vocational courses are not acceptable. These include courses such as agriculture, auto mechanics, accounting, and health. However, courses taught using applied approaches to teaching may very well meet the NCAA standard for a core course. The core course requirements explain in detail the NCAA's requirements for a core course.

May courses be taken by a high school student at a local college to be used to meet the 13 core course requirements?

College courses may be used to satisfy core curriculum requirements if the courses are accepted and awarded credit by the high school for any student and meet all other requirements for core courses. For NCAA Division I only, such courses must be placed on the student's high school transcript. Courses taken at a college will **NOT** appear on the high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses. The high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses will include only those courses taught/offered by the high school.

What documentation does the NCAA require to enable a student with a disability to use a nonstandard ACT/SAT and/or courses designated for students with disabilities?

The following documentation is required: (a) a current signed copy of a professional evaluation report that states the diagnosis of the student's disability; and (b) a copy of the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Individual Transition Plan (ITP), or Section 504 Plan or statement that relates to accommodations received by the student with the disability. The NCAA national office, not the Clearinghouse, processes the information.

May students with a diagnosed disability use courses that are designated for students with a disability to meet NCAA core course requirements?

Students with appropriately diagnosed disabilities may use courses for students with disabilities for the purpose of meeting NCAA core course requirements. Courses for students with disabilities must appear on the high school list of NCAA-approved core courses in order for a student to receive NCAA credit for the course. In order to use such courses toward a student's

core course requirements, students must document their disability with the NCAA by submitting the required documentation (see previous question).

May a nonstandard ACT/SAT be used for initial eligibility?

Only students with a diagnosed disability may use nonstandard test scores. Please note that students with disabilities must have required documentation sent to the NCAA for review.

Does the prohibition against special education, remedial or compensatory courses apply to students with disabilities?

No. In order for courses designated for students with disabilities to be approved, the course must be substantially comparable, qualitatively and quantitatively, to an NCAA-approved core course offered in that academic area.

What if a student's final high school transcript contains an error or the student has grade changes that are not included on the final transcript mailed to the Clearinghouse?

Once the Clearinghouse has received all required documentation, including a final high school transcript, for a student, they are able to produce a final certification report. If a high school forwards a revised final transcript to the clearinghouse, the clearinghouse will **NOT** be able to use the changes to issue a revised final certification report. Instead, any changes to a student's final high school transcript must be approved through the initial eligibility waiver process.

May courses taken at high school "A" be accepted if they appear on the transcript of high school "B"?

No. High school "B" may provide the Clearinghouse with an official copy of the transcript of high school "A", but courses from one high school cannot be accepted on another high school's transcript.

May courses taught via nontraditional methods (i.e. independent study, Web-based, and correspondence courses) be used to meet the 14 core course requirements?

Students may use courses taught via nontraditional methods to satisfy the core curriculum requirements provided certain criteria are met. If approved, these courses appear on the high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses. The core course requirements will explain in detail the NCAA's requirements for nontraditionally taught courses.

How is my core course grade point average calculated?

Your core course grade point average may be calculated using your 14 best grades from courses that meet the core course distribution requirements. Core courses beyond the required 14 may be used to meet the core course grade point average if the distribution requirements are met.

How are courses taken over two years counted?

A one year course that is spread over a longer period of time (i.e. two years, or three semesters) is considered as one course and would receive a maximum of one core course credit.

Where can I find a list of my high school's approved core courses?

Each high school's list of approved core courses may be found by linking to the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse page of the NCAA web site at www.ncaa.org.

NOTE: This is not a complete list of NCAA regulations regarding initial eligibility. Please call or write to the NCAA or access the NCAA web site if you have specific questions.

**NCAA
Membership Services
P.O. Box 6222
Indianapolis, IN 46206
(Phone) 317.917.6222 or NCAA Hotline: 800.638.3731
www.ncaa.org**

General Suggestions

Pick the college that is best for you first, then consider the athletic program. Research choices, keeping in mind that you will be recruited as a “student-athlete” and not just an athlete.

Don’t aim too high or too low. Your coach and counselor can help you with selections.

Ask your coach where you fit in with the recruiting class, where you fit on different college coaches’ depth charts, what academic support is available (if you may need some), what financial assistance you might expect, and how she or he can help with the college coaches.

Understand that you may hear different things from a coach and an admissions officer at the same college. Whatever positive vibes you may get from a coach, remember that it is the admissions office that makes the final decision on your admission.

Get advice from former teammates who currently are playing in college.

Talk with your parents early about how finances may play a role in where you apply or attend.

Promote yourself. Don’t sit back and wait for things to happen.

Send an initial letter of interest along with your resume.

Send these items directly to the coach. Find out his or her name (coaches can have influence with their admissions offices).

If sent a questionnaire by the coach, complete it fully and accurately, then send it back soon.

Keep a copy of all items sent to or by the coach.

It is helpful to decide what Division you want to play, i.e. I, II, or III.

Apply to a few of each if you do not have a preference.

You may get much communication from different colleges, so stay organized, especially in regards to the colleges that most interest you.

Write thank you notes when you receive any information.

Let college coaches know if and when you will play in a high caliber post conference or special event (i.e. Futures, Festival, State or District championships, etc.).

You can contact coaches as you wish, but they are limited to one call a week starting July 1 after your junior year.

Keep your own coach and counselor informed as the process develops.