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ATHLETICS

**NCAA GUIDE
FOR
THE COLLEGE-BOUND ATHLETE**

Table of Contents

- 1. Academic and athletic planning**
- 2. Academic eligibility and the registration process**
- 3. The game plan for college admission**
- 4. Contacting college coaches**
- 5. Sample letters and resume**
- 6. Division I & Division II worksheets**
- 7. The table of when contacts can be made**
- 8. NCAA update**

ACADEMIC AND ATHLETIC PLANNING

The most important aspect of college selection is to select a college where scholar-athletes can be successful academically and compete athletically. Guidance counselors and teachers are persons who know the scholar-athlete's academic work best and can help scholar-athletes decide which schools are academically appropriate.

Importance of Academic and Athletic Success

College admissions counselors evaluate candidates according to high school average; class rank; difficulty level of courses taken; qualifying examinations, such as the SAT and ACT; counselors' and teachers' recommendations; and interviews with prospective candidates. It should be emphasized that different schools use different methods to select students. For specific information concerning a school, please refer to the college's catalog.

It is important that all scholar-athletes take a strong academic course load in high school. This will insure that they will be prepared for college work and a graduation will meet the NCAA and the NAIA requirements for competing in college sports. Also, scholar-athletes should take advantage of any study skill courses offered by the high school and any tutorial opportunities that are available. **The importance of taking a strong academic course load beginning in the ninth grade, the time when the scholar-athlete's permanent record actually begins, cannot be emphasized enough.** College admissions personnel will review the candidate's entire high school record to determine if the scholar-athlete is academically prepared for college-level work. A guidance counselor will be monitoring the academic progress to be sure the scholar-athlete is progressing satisfactorily.

By the end of the sophomore year, scholar-athletes should have a good idea how the athletic skills compare to those of their teammates. Student-athletes can determine this by observation and by feedback from coaches and other knowledgeable persons. It may be beneficial to attend summer camps in order to determine how scholar-athletes compare to other athletes outside the school, league and county. Not only can they observe the other athletes, but high school and college coaches can observe scholar-athletes. Scholar-athletes will also have the opportunity to improve their skills. However, one or two weeks of camp will only be helpful in improving skills if they practice what is learned.

College Athletics

The most competitive level of college athletic competition is in Division I schools of the NCAA. Colleges that compete in Division I usually offer athletic scholarships. The number of scholarships allowed is determined by the NCAA and will vary from sport to sport. Much more emphasis is placed on sports at the Division I level. With this emphasis, it is important that coaches recruit athletes who are “blue chippers” (the best athlete) who can help build or sustain a winning program.

Division II colleges may also offer athletic scholarships; however, the level of competition and the number of scholarships granted are usually a step below those of the Division I schools.

Division III schools do not give out athletic scholarships but may be very competitive programs.

It is possible for a college to compete in all three divisions. For example, Fairleigh Dickinson University in New Jersey competes in Division I in Men’s Basketball and Division II Football.

The amount of time devoted to sports varies widely from school to school and sport to sport. Generally Division I athletes, especially scholarship recipients, spend much more time on the sport than their Division II or Division III counterparts. In many cases the off-season time requirement is just as demanding as during the regular season. At the Division II level the time commitment can also be very demanding. An athletic scholarship requires earning it and keeping it. By contrast, Division III colleges normally do not place the same amount of emphasis on sports programs. The amount of time devoted to a sport at this level is generally less during the season and considerably less in the off season. Many academically competitive Division III colleges place a much stronger emphasis on academic programs than on athletic success.

In addition to the athletic differences, it is important for the student-athlete to understand major differences among the three divisions in terms of academic, time commitments to the sport and financial aid. **The choice of a college should be considered first on the basis of academic merit.** Ideally, of course, the student-athlete will be looking for a school that offers a first-rate education and an athletic program in which the student-athlete can compete.

Academic Eligibility – General Requirements

A central clearinghouse will certify all student-athletes’ eligibility for Division I and II. If student-athletes intend to participate in Division I or II athletics as freshmen, they must register and be certified by the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse. The clearinghouse will send you eligibility status to any Division I or Division II college that requests it, provided you have given permission on your student-release form for the college to receive that information.

It is recommended that student-athletes register with Clearinghouse in the fall of their senior year.

Registration Process

Your Guidance Counselor is the NCAA clearinghouse liaison. In order to be registered with the NCAA Clearinghouse you must complete the student-release form and mail the top white copy to the clearinghouse along with a 50 dollar check, money order or on your credit card. IN the summer your final transcript will be sent to the clearinghouse.

If you have attended more than one high school, you must send your official transcript from each high school to the clearinghouse. You should give a copy of that transcript to your current guidance counselor. You also will have to make copies of this form and send them to counselors at the other schools that you have attended.

The NCAA has specific eligibility requirements. Student-athletes and their parents must familiarize themselves with these requirements as the student enters their high school career. This is contained in the **NCAA Guide for College-Bound Student-Athlete.** Your guidance office will have this information available to all student-athletes. Student/Athletes will be able to register on line at: www.ncaaclearinghouse.net then follow the prompts.

Test Scores

To be certified, you must submit your ACT or SAT scores to the clearinghouse. You may either have your scores sent directly from the test agency to the clearinghouse or have your test scores reported on your official high school transcript. You can have your scores sent directly to the clearinghouse by marking code 9999 as one of the institutions to receive your scores on you ACT or SAT registration form or by submitting a request for an “Addition Score Report” tot he appropriate testing agency.

NCAA Clearinghouse Eligibility Requirements

If you are planning to enroll in college as a freshman and you wish to participate in Division I or II inter collegiate athletics, your initial-eligibility status must normally be determined by the NCAA Initial-eligibility Clearinghouse. Students should apply for the certification after their junior year and only after an informed judgement has been made as to the prospect’s potential at the Division I or II level.

At the end of senior year, all players must release their final grades with their guidance counselors. Their final grade will then be sent to the Clearinghouse. Failure to do so will result in ineligibility freshman year at college.

Your guidance counselor is the contact for the NCAA Clearinghouse. Any questions should be directed to them. The cost is now \$50.00 and student-athletes can now register online at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net. Click on Perspective Student-Athlete, the Domestic Student Release form and follow the directions given.

Preliminary requirements to be certified by the Clearinghouse are as follows: A student must:

1. Graduate from high school (more specific details on form)
2. Earn a grade point average of at least 2.0 (on a 4.00 scale) in core curriculum of at least 13 academic course that were successfully completed during grades 9 through 12. Only courses listed as approved on your high school’s “List of NCAA Approved Core Courses” can be sued to calculate your NCAA GPA. (Additional details on form).
3. Earn a sum of scores of at least 68 on the ACT or a combined score of at lease 820 on the recentered SAT on a national test date. (See form for more details)

A nonqualifier is not eligible for regular-season competition and practice during the first academic year in residence and then has four seasons of competition. A nonqualifier may not receive athletics-related aid as a freshman, but may receive regular need-based financial aid if the school certifies that aid was granted without regard to athletics ability.

Details of these general requirements are contained in the following sections.

Definitions of a Core Course

To meet the “core-course” requirement:

- The core course must be defined as a recognized academic course and qualify for high-school graduation credit in one or a combination of the following areas: English, Mathematics, Natural/Physical Science, Social Science, Foreign Language, Computer Science, or nondoctrinal Religion/Philosophy;
- The course must be considered college preparatory by the high school. College preparatory is defined for these purposes as any course that prepares a student academically to enter a four-year collegiate institution upon graduation from high school.
- The course must be taught by a qualified instructor as defined by the appropriate academic authority (e.g. high school, school district or state agency with authority of such matters) and at or above the high school’s regular academic level (i.e. remedial, special education or compensatory courses shall be not considered core courses)>

Division III

These requirements currently do not apply to Division III colleges, where eligibility for financial aid, practice and competition is governed by institutional, conference and other NCAA regulations.

THE GAME PLAN FOR COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

The academic and athletic tasks for student-athletes to compete for each grade level are listed below:

Freshman and Sophomore Years

Academics

1. Take a strong academic course load so that the student-athlete will be prepared for college level work and will meet the NCAA or NAIA requirements for competing in college sports.
2. Take advantage of any study skills courses and any tutorial opportunities that are available.

Athletics

1. Begin to develop a record of athletic accomplishments
2. Addend summer camps for exposure, to improve skills, to experience independent living and to compare their skills with those of their peers: i.e. sports will have showcases, talk to your coach for more information.

Junior Year

Academics

1. Continue to take rigorous academic courses.
2. Work with the guidance counselor to develop a list of possible schools based on academic achievement and athletic ability.
3. Register for and take standardized tests.
 - A. Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test – The PSAT is given in October only. It helps to prepare for the SAT and is used for National Scholarship Qualifying. It is very important for junior to take the exam.
 - B. Scholastic Aptitude Test – The SAT is given in the fall and is a three-hour objective test, which measure how well students have developed in verbal and mathematical skills necessary for success in college work.
 - C. Entrance Examination Board – These tests are directed at measuring knowledge in specific subject areas. Most colleges specify which subject tests are required, if any. Each subject test is one hour in length. Up to three subject tests may be taken during any one testing date.
 - D. The American College Test (ACT) – This test is given at various times throughout the year and is required by certain southern and mid-western colleges. Please check the college catalog to see what tests are required at the school of one's choice.
 - E. Check with the guidance counselor to see if the schools under consideration require this test.
4. Attend the high school's college fair or fairs held at the high schools in October
5. Send for college catalogs and financial aid information.

6. Develop an extra curricular activity sheet and resume.
7. Visit college campuses.
8. Review with parents, college-planning guides.
9. Cultivate a working relationship with the guidance counselor. The counselor will help the student-athlete gather information about colleges, which are appropriate academically. The counselor will also inform the student-athlete of which standardized tests are required for admission for those colleges.
10. Devote time and energy to academics. It is not a good idea to shorten the academic day by working. Being a student-athlete is a full-time job. It is important for student-athletes to do the best they can in both studies and sports.

Athletics

1. Develop an athletic resume.
2. Ask the coach to evaluate the student-athlete's athletic skills thoroughly and to recommend the appropriate level of collegiate competition.
3. Keep the coach informed about contacts with colleges. The coach can assist the student-athlete by responding to questionnaires sent by recruiting coaches and by calling or writing college coaches.
4. Attend summer camps or showcases.
5. Write initial letters of interest to college coaches.
6. Develop a list of questions to ask recruiting coaches.
7. Answer letters and questionnaires from recruiting coaches.
8. Talk with other student-athletes who have graduated from your high school or area schools, who are currently playing sports in college. Find out what they like and do not like about college sports.

Athletic Resume

If participation in college athletics is a priority, it is a must that a document outlining athletic accomplishments be produced at this time. The resume should also list selected academic information and the names of coaches that would be willing to write letters of recommendation for the student. Any press clippings and pictures that have appeared in newspapers should be attached to the resume.

High School Coach

Another important person with whom student-athletes should be working is the high school coach. It is most beneficial to speak openly and honestly with the coach about the appropriate collegiate competition for the individual.

College Visits

Take advantage of college nights or college fairs that are offered. At college night in October information about these are available in the guidance offices. This fair gives student-athletes an excellent opportunity to research college academics and athletic programs. If the student-athlete is interested in a particular college, it is a good idea to visit the campus. Before the student-athlete visits, a call to the admissions office should be placed to arrange for a tour of the campus and an interview with the admissions person. In addition, an appointment with the coach should be made. Student should continue to research specific colleges through catalogs and visits to campuses.

Extracurricular Activity Sheet

Student-athletes should also begin to put together an extracurricular activity sheet. This is a list of high school achievements. This form can be found in the guidance office and guidance counselors will be able to assist with its completion.

Senior Year

Academics

1. See the guidance counselor to discuss:
 - A. College research so far.
 - B. Colleges the counselor recommends.
 - C. All suitable outside sources of financial aid.
2. Send for college applications early in the fall. Student-athletes may get the addresses of colleges in the guidance office.
3. Register for and take ACT and SATI in the fall.
4. Update the extracurricular sheet/resume and include them with each application.

Athletics

1. Update the student-athlete's college resume.
2. Continue to participate and work hard in athletics.
3. Continue to keep the coach informed of all college plans.
4. Register with NCAA Clearinghouse. With either the booklet or on line at: www.ncaaclearinghouse.net then follow the prompts.

CONTACT WITH COLLEGES

Recruited and Non-Recruited Athletes

College coaches actively recruit few athletes. The recruitment process usually begins prior to each school year. Usually in the spring, college coaches will send questionnaires to high school coaches asking for names of potential players. They will request the following details:

1. Academic Information – PSAT, SAT or Act scores, class rank, grade point averages and if the athlete is taking college prep course.
2. Athletic Information – Height, weight, speed in the 40-yard dash, vertical jump (if tested) and any honor or achievements received during the past season.
3. Statistical Information - if available.

In addition to receiving information from high school coaches, the college recruitment staff 1) receives lists from their area scouts, 2) consults articles in newspapers, 3) receives tips from alumni and boosters, 4) makes notes of underclassmen they have seen on film while evaluating other athletes, 5) reviews lists published by national scouting groups that rate top high school players.

If the student-athlete is not contacted through the above procedures, then it is best to begin with the following steps:

1. Contact the coach for an opinion of athletic ability and the level of competition the student-athlete should consider.
2. Ask the coach to write a letter of recommendation and to make a personal contact with the school on the student-athlete's behalf.
3. Check the catalogs and the computer listings in the guidance office and make a list of possibilities that serve the student's academic and athletic interests.
4. Write to the colleges listed and request an application and a sports guide.

Initial Contact from the College Coach

College coaches who are recruiting send out hundreds of letters to potential candidates. This is in no way an indication that the student-athlete will be offered an athletic scholarship. The student-athlete's coach may be asked to send a film or video tape for review and evaluation. This is the primary method by which athletic ability can be measured. More decisions are made by this means than through any other recruiting factor. If the college coach is impressed with the student-athlete's performance, the student-athlete or the coach will be contacted and the active process of recruiting will begin.

Visiting Colleges

Your best source of information about a college is a visit to the campus. From the time of arrival at the college until the time of departure, the student-athlete should make a list of the positive and the negative aspects of the visit. It is best to visit while classes are in session. Such visits will give the student-athlete a better idea of what is going on. Consider the following factors while visiting the college:

1. Rural. Suburban or urban campus.
2. Size of enrollment, coeducational, etc.
3. Distance from home; travel expenses, opportunity for family visits to games.
4. Degrees and course offered, faculty, size of classes.
5. Estimated total cost for each year.
6. Room size, library, student union, and cafeteria.
7. Campus activities, entertainment, places to visit.
8. Types of people there, not just the athletes. Will the student-athlete fit in?
9. Caliber of the athletes there, and the chances of competing on that level.
10. Do most of the athletes graduate with a degree of their choice?
11. Type of program offered to athletes, schedules, athletic facilities, size of coaching staff.
12. Is this the type of school with which the student-athlete wishes to identify for years after graduation?

The student-athlete should record what aspects left the most and the least impression. It is good to take notes and compare them later. Remember that college is more than large stadiums, basketball courts or soccer fields.

SAMPLE LETTER

Student's Name
Student's Address
Date

Name of Coach
Athletic Department
University/College
Town, State, Zip Code

Dear Coach _____

May I take a moment of your time to introduce myself? My name is _____ and I am a senior at _____ High School in _____, Connecticut.

I have been thinking very much about colleges and I have spent much time with my counselor _____ in trying to decide what colleges would be good for me academically and athletically. After speaking to one of your representatives at our college night, I am very interested in your college and would like to receive more information about your school and your athletic program.

I have been in the starting lineup of the varsity _____ and varsity _____ teams since my _____ year and have started on the varsity _____ team since my _____ year. I was voted All-League as a _____ in my _____ and was selected to the _____ All Star team since _____ and a varsity _____ summer team since _____. This past summer I was named to the _____ All-Star team.

As much as I enjoy _____ and _____, I would like to concentrate on _____ in college. I have enclosed a more detailed resume of my high school sports involvement as well as letters from my coaches and teachers.

Academically, I am taking a strong math and science program and I am presently taking Advances Placement _____ as well as Honors _____. I plan to graduate in June with a _____ Average, and I am ranked in the top ____ % of my class of _____ students.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you,

Very truly yours,

Student's name

SAMPLE LETTER

Date

_____ College/University
Head Coach
Address
City, State

Dear Coach _____,

My name is _____ and this fall I will be entering my senior year at _____ High School in _____ Connecticut and plan to graduate in June of _____. At the present time I am _____ tall, weigh _____ lbs. My GPA is _____ and my SAT score is _____.

I am writing to express my sincere interest in _____ University. I feel I could make a contribution to your program and hope to hear from you in the near future.

It would be appreciated if you could send me information about you University (application and brochure), _____ program (copy of your last year's schedule), and the financial aid and scholarships available to students and student-athletes. I have enclosed general information about my academic and athletic background.

Presently I am playing for the _____ in their _____ season program. This is an All-Star team from _____ different town, which make up the _____.

Should you require additional information, please feel free to contact the following people and me:

Guidance Dept. (Name of Counselor)
High School name
Address
City, State, Zip Code

Varsity Coach (Name of Coach)
High School name
Address
City, State, Zip Code
School Code:

Camp Information

Honors: All-League, All-Section, Player of the Year

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to meeting with you,

Sincerely,

Division I Worksheet

English (4 years required)			
Course Title	Credit	Grade	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
Example: English 9	.5	A	(.5 x 4) = 2
Total English Units			Total Quality Points

Mathematics (2 years required)			
Course Title	Credit	Grade	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
Example: Algebra I	1.0	B	(1.0 x 3) = 3
Total Mathematics Units			Total Quality Points

Natural/Physical Science (2 years required)			
Course Title	Credit	Grade	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
Total Natural/Physical Units			Total Quality Points

Additional Year in English, Mathematics, or Natural Science (1 year required)			
Course Title	Credit	Grade	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
Total "Additional" Units			Total Quality Points

Social Science (2 years required)			
Course Title	Credit	Grade	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
Total Social Sciences Units			Total Quality Points

Additional Academic Courses (2 years required)			
Course Title	Credit	Grade	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
Total Additional Units			Total Quality Points

Core-Course GPA (13 credits required)		
Total Quality Points	Total Number of Credits	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)

Division II Worksheet

English (3 years required)			
Course Title	Credit	Grade	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
Example: English 9	.5	A	(.5 x 4) = 2
Total English Units			Total Quality Points

Mathematics (2 years required)			
Course Title	Credit	Grade	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
Example: Algebra I	1.0	B	(1.0 x 3) = 3
Total Mathematics Units			Total Quality Points

Natural/Physical Science (2 years required)			
Course Title	Credit	Grade	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
Total Natural/Physical Units			Total Quality Points

Additional Year in English, Mathematics, or Natural Science (2 year required)			
Course Title	Credit	Grade	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
Total "Additional" Units			Total Quality Points

Social Science (2 years required)			
Course Title	Credit	Grade	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
Total Social Sciences Units			Total Quality Points

Additional Academic Courses (2 years required)			
Course Title	Credit	Grade	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
Total Additional Units			Total Quality Points

Core-Course GPA (13 credits required)		
Total Quality Points	Total Number of Credits	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)

TELEPHONE CALLS

In all sports other than football and basketball, phone calls from faculty members and coaches (but not boosters) are not permitted until after July 1 after completion of your junior years. After this, in sports other than football, a college coach or faculty member is limited to one phone call per week to you (or your parents or legal guardians), except that unlimited calls to you (or your parents or legal guardians) may be made under the following circumstances:

- During the five days immediately before your official visit by the college you will be visiting;
- On the day of a coach's off-campus contact with you by that coach: and
- On the initial date for signing the National Letter of Intent in your sport through two days after the signing date.

In Division's I-A and I-AA football, an institution's coaches may telephone you once during the month of

May of your junior year in high school and then not again until September 1 of your senior year in high school. Also, institution's football coaches can telephone you as often as they wish during the period 48 hours before and 48 hours after 7 a.m. on the initial signing date for the National Letter of Intent and during a contact period. Outside of a contact period, a football coach may only telephone you once per week.

In Division I basketball, an institution's coaches may telephone a prospect on or after June 21 of the prospect's junior year in high school. In addition, only three telephone calls may be made to prospects during the month of July after the prospect's junior year in high school, with no more than one telephone call per week.

You (or your parents or legal guardians) may telephone a coach at your expense as often as you wish.

Coaches also may accept collect calls from you and may use a toll-free (1-800) number to receive Telephone calls from you on or after July 1 of completion of your junior year.

CONTACTS

A college coach may contact you in person off the college campus only on or after July 1 after completion of your junior year. Any face-to-face meeting between a college coach and your parents or legal guardians during which any of you say more than "hello" is a contact. Also, any face-to-face meeting that is prearranged or that occurs at your high school or competition or practice site is a contact, regardless of the conversation. These contacts are not permissible "bumps".

Currently in all sports other than football and basketball, coaches have seven recruiting opportunities (contacts and evaluations) during the academic year and not more than three of the seven opportunities may be in person, off-campus contacts. However, a college coach may visit your high school only with the approval of your high school principal.

Division I football coaches may contact you off the college campus six times. However, no more than one contact per week may occur during a contact period, regardless of where the contact occurs. Also, a college football coach may visit your high school (with approval of your high school principal) only once a week during a contact period.

APPENDIX

Your guidance counselor has more in depth packages of information regarding the clearing house and for students with a learning disability. If you need more information please contact them.

THE NEW RULE:

- **INCREASES** the number of core courses from 14 to 16. The additional core courses must come from the following areas: English, mathematics, natural/physical science, social science, foreign language, nondoctrinal religion/philosophy, or computer science. The break down of core course requirements is listed below.

DIVISION I 2005 THROUGH 2007 DIVISION II 2005 AND LATER

PRESENT RULE

14 Core Courses:

4 years of English

2 years of mathematics (Algebra I or Higher)

2 years of natural/physical science (1 year of lab if offered by high school)

1 year of additional English, mathematics or natural/physical science

2 years of social science

3 years of additional courses (from any area above or foreign language, nondoctrinal religion/philosophy, computer science*)

DIVISION I 2008 AND LATER

NEW RULE

16 Core Courses:

4 years of English

3 years of mathematics (Algebra I or higher)

2 years of natural/physical science (1 year of lab if offered by high school)

1 year of additional English, mathematics or natural/science

2 years of social science

4 years of additional courses (from any area above or foreign language, nondoctrinal religion/philosophy, computer science*)