

NCAA Rules & Recruitment 101: What Every Prospective Student-Athlete Needs to Know

Topics to be covered:

1. **Lesson 1:** How to Communicate with College Coaches
2. **Lesson 2:** How to Show Off Your Assets
3. **Lesson 3:** Knowing the NCAA Recruiting Rules & Tips on Navigating the Recruitment Process
4. **Lesson 4:** What Every Prospective Student-Athlete Should Know About NCAA Eligibility (NCAA GPA/Test Score Sliding Scale for 2016 and Beyond)
5. **Lesson 5:** Helpful Resources



Lesson 1: How to Communicate with College Coaches

Tip for Reaching Out:

- ✓ BE PROACTIVE! Most high school athletes must initiate contact with college coaches.
- ✓ Before reaching out to coaches, prepare a resume, cover letter (used in the body of your email) and possibly a highlight video.
- ✓ Obtain coaches' contact information from college athletics website or contact the athletics department directly.
- ✓ When drafting emails to college coaches, keep them brief and to the point. Always tell a coach what grade you are in (NCAA rules only allow coaches to respond to prospective student-athletes of certain ages). Also, include ALL important information in that email - you may only get one shot at them reading your email! It's always a good idea to attach the following to your emails to college coaches: academic and athletic resume, highlight video (if available), unofficial high school transcripts, screenshot of your SAT/ACT scores, current soccer schedule.

Questions to Ask College Coaches:

1. How many new players are you looking for? What is the roster size?
2. What position(s) do you see me playing in? Are you recruiting for my position? How many students are you recruiting for my position?
3. How many scholarships do you have available? What are terms for keeping a scholarship? Are there opportunities to walk-on?
4. What is the average GPA of the team? What academic support is provided to the student-athletes?
5. What are the practice demands/expectations during the year? How heavy is the travel schedule – how often will I miss class?
6. How is the program funded (i.e., Are meals provided during the season? How much equipment is provided? How often is it updated/maintained? Does an athletic trainer travel with the team?)
7. How much flexibility does admissions allow for prospective student-athletes in meeting academic admissions requirements?

SAMPLE PROSPECTIVE STUDENT-ATHLETE COVER LETTER (EMAIL)

DATE

John Doe
100 First Street
Anywhere, CA 00000

(555) 555-5555
JDoe@gmail.com

Coach Smith
Men's Soccer Team
Anywhere University
100 State Street
Anywhere, CA 00000

Dear Coach Smith:

My name is John Doe and I am a junior at City High School in Anywhere, CA. I'm interested in receiving more information about Anywhere University's Men's Soccer program. I currently play both high school and club soccer and I'm very interested in the possibility of playing at Anywhere University.

I have *(enclosed a video and) attached a resume of my academic and athletic achievements as well as copies of my most current transcripts and test scores. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Sincerely,

John Doe

Additional Information you *may* include:

- I plan to visit Anywhere University this spring and would enjoy meeting you. When my travel plans are finalized I will contact you to see if that is possible.
- I plan to attend your upcoming prospect camp on DATES. I look forward to meeting you at that time.

*optional

Lesson 2: How to Show Off Your Assets

Tips for Putting your Best Foot Forward:

- ✓ Research colleges before reaching out to coaches. Look for specific sport and division of play (The NCAA is organized into 3 divisions.) What is offered by the college in regards to academics, location, size, student environment,

selectivity, etc.? Is this a college you would be happy at if you didn't play soccer?

- ✓ Meet with your current club or high school coach and ask them what your level of ability is. Use this conversation when drafting your prospective student-athlete resume and developing a list of colleges to contact.
- ✓ Complete an online questionnaire on the college's athletics website or when sent by a coach.
- ✓ Ask your club or high school coach to provide a recommendation.

How to Use Videos & Recruiting Services:

- ✓ Per NCAA rules, coaches can respond to your emails starting September 1 of Junior Year. Send your videos around this time!
- ✓ Coaches viewing time is limited – keep it to around 5 minutes plus some real-time game footage. Make sure the video is good quality.
- ✓ Either send the coach your jersey number with the video or somehow make it easy for the coach to identify you in the video.
- ✓ Send your competition schedule along with your video – the point of a highlight video is to entice the coach to come see you in-person.
- ✓ Coaches are permitted to use recruiting services. However, contacting coaches yourself is usually better than paying a recruiting service to do so. The focus of the recruiting service is usually just the athletic aspect and not other parts of the college experience that are important to the student (i.e., class sizes, majors offered, location, etc.)

Sample Prospective Student-Athlete Resume

NAME
ADDRESS
CITY, STATE, ZIP
PHONE NUMBER
EMAIL ADDRESS

SPORT
HEIGHT & WEIGHT
DATE OF BIRTH
NCAA ELIGIBILITY CENTER ID#
ANTICIPATED HIGH SCHOOL GRAD DATE

ACADEMIC INFORMATION:

Name of High School
Address of High School
City, State, Zip

Current Cumulative GPA
PSAT, SAT and ACT Scores
Current Year Courses

Academic Awards and Honors
Academic Interests in College

ATHLETIC INFORMATION:

Position(s) Played
Number of Years and Level(s) of Play on High School Team
Number of Years and Level(s) of Play on Club Team
Jersey Numbers for Each Team

Athletic Statistics and Awards (may also include team statistics)

COACH CONTACT INFORMATION/ REFERENCES:

Name of High School Coach
Phone Number
Email Address

Name of Club Coach
Phone Number
Email Address

Lesson 3: Knowing the NCAA Recruiting Rules

What do I need to know about contacting coaches?

- ✓ Prospective student-athletes can contact a coach at any time, however, the coach cannot respond or initiate contact (via email, text or telephone) with a prospective student-athlete until **September 1 of junior year**. After that, the amount of communication is unlimited.
- ✓ Prior to this date, coaches can only send questionnaires and camp information.
- ✓ Coaches can only make off-campus in-person contact with prospective student-athletes beginning **July 1 following junior year**. Prior to this, you may see coaches attend your games but they cannot speak with you or your parents.

What do I need to know about visiting colleges?

- ✓ Prospective student-athletes are permitted to make **5 official visits** (paid for entirely or in-part by the college) during their **senior year**. Only one official visit is permitted per college.
- ✓ Prospective student-athletes can make **unofficial visits** (paid for by the student) to a college anytime. It's advisable to take multiple unofficial visits to each college during different times of the year.
- ✓ Coaches are permitted to provide you with up to **3 complimentary admissions** to their home games!
- ✓ Set up an appointment with the coach ahead of time. All coaches must abide by an NCAA recruiting calendar and are not permitted to have in-person contact with prospects certain times of the year.
- ✓ Schedule an Admissions tour in addition to meeting with the coach. This will allow you to find out what majors are offered and how rigorous the courses will be.
- ✓ Arrange a meeting or informational session with the Admissions office – clarify any issues about how applications are handled and confirm a timeline for applications. Ask about academic requirements for admissions and FAFSA requirements for financial aid.
- ✓ Coaches of the college putting on a camp are permitted to have recruiting conversations with you during camp; however, they cannot extend written offers for athletic scholarships during this time.

What do I need to know about commitments?

- ✓ **Verbal Commitment:** stating publicly one's intentions to attend a certain college is a non-binding, oral agreement between the prospective student-athlete and the college.
- ✓ **National Letter of Intent (NLI):** a binding agreement between the prospective student-athlete and a college. Prospective student-athlete is agreeing to attend the college for at least one academic year and the college is agreeing to provide athletics financial aid for at least one academic year. Once the NLI is signed, a recruiting ban is put into place and other colleges must cease contact with the prospective student-athlete.
- ✓ **Being recruited and admitted are not the same thing!** You **MUST** apply to the college to be admitted.

Lesson 4: What You Should Know About NCAA Eligibility

The initial-eligibility standards help to prepare you to succeed in the college classroom based on your high school academic record. The eligibility process also protects the fairness and integrity of college sports by ensuring student-athletes are truly amateurs.

If you want to practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year at a Division I or II school, you must be certified as eligible by the NCAA Eligibility Center. Throughout the process, staff members of the NCAA Eligibility Center partner with students and their families as well as high school administrators and coaches.

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As a college-bound student-athlete, you are responsible for achieving and protecting your eligibility – that means planning ahead, taking high school classes seriously and protecting your amateur status. It can be a difficult first step, but the ultimate benefits of being an NCAA student-athlete are well worth the effort.

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Get Ready. Get Set. Go!

PLAN ☐ Grade 9

Start planning now: take the right courses and work hard to earn the best grades possible.

Ask your counselor for a list of your high school's NCAA-approved core courses to make sure you take the right classes. Or, find your high school's list of NCAA-approved courses at eligibilitycenter.org.

REGISTER ☐ Grade 10

Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center at eligibilitycenter.org.

If you fall behind on courses, do not take shortcuts to catch up. Ask your counselor for help with finding approved

Amateurism

When you register with the NCAA Eligibility Center, you will be asked a series of questions about your sports participation to determine your amateur status. More than 90 percent of student-athletes who register are automatically certified. In some instances, the NCAA Eligibility Center staff may need to gather additional information to evaluate your amateur status.

The following activities may impact your amateur status:

- Signing a contract with a professional team;
- Playing with professionals;
- Participating in tryouts or practices with a professional team;
- Accepting payments or preferential benefits for playing sports;
- Accepting prize money above your expenses;
- Accepting benefits from an agent or prospective agent;
- Agreeing to be represented by an agent; or
- Delaying your full-time college enrollment to play in organized sports competitions.

Requesting Final Amateurism Certification

If you are enrolling at a Division I or II school for the fall semester, you may request an amateurism certification decision from the NCAA Eligibility Center on or after April 1, before your enrollment in college. If you are enrolling in college in the spring semester, you may request a final amateurism decision on or after October 1, before your enrollment in college.

Delayed Enrollment

After you graduate high school, you have a certain amount of time – called a grace period – to enroll full time at an NCAA school. If you do not enroll at the first opportunity following your grace period, you will use one season of competition for each calendar year during which you continue to compete in organized competition. Please see the chart on the next page for specific time frames per sport in Divisions I and II.

In most sports, you may delay full-time college enrollment for one year after your expected high school graduation without impacting your eligibility. In Division I tennis, you must enroll full time at a college or university during the first regular academic term of college, which occurs following the six-month period after you graduate high school. In Division I men's ice hockey or skiing, you may be required to enroll full time in college before you turn 21 to avoid impacting your eligibility.

What are the NCAA Initial Eligibility Standards?

How to plan your high school courses to meet the 16 core-course requirement:

$$4 \times 4 = 16$$

4 English courses (one per year)
 + 4 math courses (one per year)
 + 4 science courses (one per year)
 + 4 social science (and/or additional) courses (one per year)

 16 NCAA core courses

QUALIFIER

You may practice, compete and receive athletics scholarships during your first year of enrollment at an NCAA Division I school.

ACADEMIC REDSHIRT

For those enrolling at a Division I school on or after August 1, 2016. You may receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of enrollment and may practice during your first regular academic term but may NOT compete during your first year of enrollment. You must pass either eight quarter or nine semester hours in order to practice in the next term.

NONQUALIFIER

You will not be able to practice, receive an athletics scholarship or compete during your first year of enrollment at a Division I school.

EARLY ACADEMIC QUALIFIER

If you meet specific criteria after six semesters, you may be deemed an early academic qualifier for Division I.

Minimum SAT combined score (math and critical reading) of 900 OR minimum ACT sum score of 75; and a core-course GPA of 3.000 or higher in a minimum of 14 core courses:

1. Three years of English;
2. Two years of math;
3. Two years of science;
4. Two additional years of English, math or science; and
5. Five additional core courses in any area.

A final high school transcript is required to be submitted to the NCAA Eligibility Center after high school graduation for all early academic qualifiers.

Taken from 2015-16 NCAA Guide for the College Bound Student-Athlete

Sliding Scale for Division I beginning August 1, 2016

Core GPA	SAT	ACT
3.550 & above	400	37
3.525	410	38
3.500	420	39
3.475	430	40
3.450	440	41
3.425	450	41
3.400	460	42
3.375	470	42
3.350	480	43
3.325	490	44
3.300	500	44
3.275	510	45
3.250	520	46
3.225	530	46
3.200	540	47
3.175	550	47
3.150	560	48
3.125	570	49
3.100	580	49
3.075	590	50
3.050	600	50
3.025	610	51
3.000	620	52
2.975	630	52
2.950	640	53
2.925	650	53
2.900	660	54
2.875	670	55
2.850	680	56
2.825	690	56
2.800	700	57
2.775	710	58
2.750	720	59
2.725	730	60
2.700	740	61
2.675	750	61
2.650	760	62
2.625	770	63
2.600	780	64
2.575	790	65
2.550	800	66
2.525	810	67
2.500	820	68
2.475	830	69
2.450	840	70
2.425	850	70
2.400	860	71
2.375	870	72
2.350	880	73
2.325	890	74
2.300	900	75
2.299	910	76
2.275	910	76
2.250	920	77
2.225	930	78
2.200	940	79
2.175	950	80
2.150	960	81
2.125	970	82
2.100	980	83
2.075	990	84
2.050	1000	85
2.025	1010	86
2.000	1020	86

ACADEMIC REDSHIRT

Lesson 5: Use Your Resources!

- ✓ www.NCAA.org
- ✓ www.eligibilitycenter.org
- ✓ www.national-letter.org
- ✓ www.FAFSA.gov

