



GUIDE FOR THE COLLEGE-BOUND STUDENT-ATHLETE 2026-27

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ELIGIBILITY CENTER

Information

Visit

eligibilitycenter.org
ncaa.org/playcollegesports

Contact

College-Bound Student-Athletes Only
U.S. and Canada (except Quebec):
877-262-1492, Monday-Friday
9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern time

International Students (including Quebec):
on.ncaa.org/intlcontact

Certification Processing

NCAA Eligibility Center
Certification Processing
P.O. Box 7110
Indianapolis, IN 46207-7110

Overnight Delivery

NCAA Eligibility Center
Certification Processing
1802 Alonzo Watford Sr. Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46202

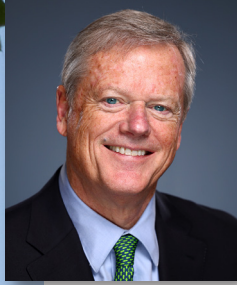
Have a question about NCAA eligibility?

- » Read this guide.
- » **Check out** the Eligibility Center's help section and frequently asked questions.
- » Visit ncaa.org/playcollegesports.
- » **Age-Based Eligibility Questions**
- » **Contact the NCAA Eligibility Center.**

This guide is updated on an annual basis. More recent updates to NCAA rules or policies may be found on ncaa.org.



PLAN. PREPARE. PLAY.
CLICK OR SCAN THE QR CODE TO REGISTER.



On Behalf of the NCAA

Welcome!

Dear college-bound student-athlete,

We are glad you're interested in pursuing your education and sport at an NCAA member school. I believe college sports are the most important human potential development program our nation has. They provide a unique opportunity to compete at a high level while working toward a college degree that will lead to lifelong achievement. The lessons I learned from competing as a student-athlete have shaped me into who I am today.

The NCAA is dedicated to putting the interests of student-athletes first, and our work focuses on the whole student-athlete. No matter what career path you choose, your college degree and your experience as a college athlete will serve you far beyond your final competition.

This guide equips you with information about academic requirements to compete and what to expect as a collegiate student-athlete. At the NCAA national office, staff members want to ensure high school athletes meet standards that will best prepare them to succeed in college. Initial eligibility determines your ability to receive an athletics scholarship and to practice and compete in your first year as a full-time college student. We are committed to supporting students across all three divisions on their road to success.

We encourage you to take an active role in the process of preparing for college. Over 1,000 NCAA schools sponsor tremendous academic and athletics programs. We urge you to work closely with your high school counselors, coaches, parents/guardians and mentors as you make the transition to college.

We hope the information in this guide helps inform you, your family and high school administrators about the initial-eligibility process. If you have any questions, please reach out to us. Our staff in the [NCAA Eligibility Center](#) strives to make your registration and certification experience positive and is always willing to help. I wish you the best of luck as you embark on this important journey and look forward to your future success.

Charlie Baker
NCAA President

What Is the NCAA?



The National Collegiate Athletic Association is an organization dedicated to providing a pathway to opportunity for college athletes. Over 1,000 colleges and universities are members of the NCAA. These schools work together with the NCAA national office and athletics conferences across the country to support more than 500,000 college athletes who make up over 20,000 teams competing in NCAA sports.

The NCAA's diverse members include schools ranging in size from hundreds of students to tens of thousands. The NCAA's current three-division structure was adopted in 1973 to create a fair playing field for teams from similar schools and provide college athletes more opportunities to participate in national championships.

Among the three NCAA divisions, Division I schools generally compete at the highest level of NCAA competition, have the largest athletics budgets and offer the highest number of athletics scholarships. The Division II approach provides growth opportunities through academic achievement, learning through high-level athletics competition, the best access to NCAA Championships® and a focus on service to the community. With nearly 40% of the NCAA's total membership, Division III offers participation in a competitive athletics environment that pushes college athletes to excel on the field and build upon their potential by tackling new challenges across campus.

To learn more about the pathway that's right for you, visit ncaa.org/playcollegesports.

The NCAA membership and national office work together to help the more than 500,000 student-athletes pursue higher education goals and develop leadership, confidence, discipline and teamwork through college sports.

NCAA Sports

The NCAA conducts 94 national championships in 26 sports across Divisions I, II and III, with 49 championships for women, 43 for men and two coed national championships.

The NCAA also supports emerging sports to expand athletics opportunities and help these sports achieve NCAA championship status. If you plan to participate in an emerging sport, you must still register with the NCAA Eligibility Center.

From March Madness® to rowing, rifle and skiing, the NCAA is dedicated to delivering championships that provide a first-class experience for student-athletes, coaches, fans and broadcast audiences worldwide.

Beyond the game, the NCAA emphasizes community impact – hosting youth clinics and fan events that turn each championship into a celebration for everyone involved.

FALL SPORTS		WINTER SPORTS		SPRING SPORTS		EMERGING SPORTS
MEN:	WOMEN:	MEN:	WOMEN:	MEN:	WOMEN:	WOMEN:
Cross Country Football Soccer Tennis (Singles/ Doubles) Water Polo	Cross Country Field Hockey Soccer Tennis (Singles/ Doubles) Volleyball	Basketball Fencing Gymnastics Ice Hockey Indoor Track and Field Rifle Skiing Swimming and Diving Wrestling	Basketball Bowling Fencing Gymnastics Ice Hockey Indoor Track and Field Rifle Skiing Swimming and Diving Wrestling	Baseball Golf Lacrosse Outdoor Track and Field Tennis (Team) Volleyball	Acrobatics and Tumbling Beach Volleyball Golf Lacrosse Outdoor Track and Field Rowing Softball Stunt Tennis (Team) Water Polo	Equestrian (Divisions I and II only) Flag Football Rugby Triathlon

Our 3 Divisions

The NCAA's three divisions were created in 1973 to align like-minded campuses in the areas of fairness, competition and opportunity.

	DIVISION I	DIVISION II	DIVISION III
ACTIVE SCHOOLS	361 (34%)	296 (28%)	416 (39%)
MEDIAN UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT	8,900	2,100	1,600
STUDENT-ATHLETE TO UNDERGRADUATE RATIO	1 in 24 	1 in 9 	1 in 5 
AVERAGE NUMBER OF NCAA TEAMS PER SCHOOL	19	17	20
NCAA STUDENT-ATHLETE PARTICIPATION	199K (36%)	140K (25%)	210K (38%)
ATHLETICS SCHOLARSHIPS	70% of athletes receive athletics aid. Multiyear, cost-of-attendance athletics scholarships available.	77% of athletes receive athletics aid. Partial athletics scholarship model.	No athletics scholarships. 80% of athletes receive nonathletics aid.
DID YOU KNOW?	 Division I schools award over \$3.4 billion in athletics scholarships annually.	 Division II student-athletes graduate at higher rates than their student body peers.	 Division III's largest school has 28,000 undergraduates. The smallest? 300 .

*The number of schools for each division is current as of the 2026-27 academic year. All other figures are based on 2025-26 data. Percentages shown for schools and student-athletes may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Participation figures include NCAA student-athletes in championship and emerging sports and may include student-athletes who participate in more than one sport.



How Is Each Division Governed?

NCAA schools develop and approve legislation for their own divisions. Committees lead each division and conduct their business during regularly scheduled meetings. For more information, visit ncaa.org/governance.

What Are the Eligibility Requirements in Each Division?

Division I and II schools require a student's initial **academic and athletics eligibility** to be certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center. While Division III schools set their own academic standards on campus, the Eligibility Center certifies the amateur status of Division III **international student-athletes** (first-year enrollees and transfers). All other Division III student-athletes are certified on campus.



Academic Eligibility

High School Timeline

9th GRADE

REGISTER



- » If you haven't yet, [register](#) for a Profile Page account at [eligibilitycenter.org](#) for information on NCAA initial-eligibility standards.
- » Meet with your high school counselor to ensure the counselor is aware of your plans to compete in NCAA sports.
- » Find your high school's list of [NCAA-approved core courses](#) to ensure you're taking the right core courses, and earn the best grades possible!
- » Use NCAA research's [interactive map](#) to locate NCAA schools you're interested in attending.
- » [Learn more about period-of-eligibility rules.](#)

10th GRADE

PLAN



- » If you're being [recruited](#) by an NCAA Division I or II school, [transition](#) your Profile Page account to an Academic and Athletics Certification account.
- » Monitor the task list and sign up for text alerts in your [Eligibility Center account](#) for next steps.
- » Research admissions requirements for NCAA schools you're interested in attending.
- » Ask your high school counselor from each school you attended to [upload your official high school transcript](#) at the end of the school year.
- » If you fall behind academically, ask your high school counselor for help finding [NCAA-approved core courses](#).

11th GRADE

STUDY



- » Ensure your [sports participation](#) information is current in your Eligibility Center account.
- » Check with your high school counselor to make sure you're on track to complete the required number of [NCAA-approved core courses](#) and graduate on time.
- » Share your [NCAA ID](#) with NCAA schools recruiting you so each school can place you on its [institutional request list](#).
- » Take [unofficial and official visits](#) to NCAA schools you're interested in attending and start applying early.
- » Ask your high school counselor from each school you attended to upload your official high school transcript at the end of the school year.

12th GRADE

GRADUATE



- » Apply to and be accepted by your chosen NCAA school.
- » Ensure your [sports participation](#) information is correct and [request your final athletics certification](#) beginning April 1 (fall enrollees) or Oct. 1 (winter/spring enrollees) in your Eligibility Center account.
- » Complete your final [NCAA-approved core courses](#) as you prepare for graduation.
- » Ask your high school counselor to [upload your official high school transcript with proof of graduation](#) after you graduate.



Registration Checklist

Plan to compete in NCAA sports? Register with the Eligibility Center at eligibilitycenter.org before ninth grade (year nine of secondary school).

Which Account Type Is Right for You?

- 1. Academic and Athletics Certification Account:** If you plan to compete at a Division I or II school, register for an Academic and Athletics Certification account. This account type (including completed [payment or a processed fee waiver](#)) is needed to go on Division I official visits, sign an athletics aid agreement for a scholarship and compete at a Division I or II school. This account is required for the Eligibility Center to certify your [period of eligibility](#).
- 2. Athletics Certification Account:** If you're an [international student-athlete](#) (first-year enrollee or transfer) enrolling at a Division III school, you must register for an Athletics Certification account (or use your existing Academic and Athletics Certification account) and receive your final athletics certification before you can compete. This account may also be right for students transferring from a non-NCAA college or university to a Division I or II school who may not require an Eligibility Center academic certification. These students should check with the compliance office at the NCAA school they may attend to determine their required account type.
- 3. Profile Page Account:** If you're not yet in high school or secondary school, are not being recruited, are unsure in which division you want to compete or are a [domestic student](#) who plans to compete at a [Division III school](#), register for a Profile Page account. [Transition your account](#) to an Academic and Athletics Certification account once you are [recruited](#) by a Division I or II school.

ELIGIBILITY CENTER ACCOUNT TYPES			
In which division do you plan to compete?	Academic and Athletics Certification Account	Athletics Certification Account	Profile Page Account
Division I or II			
Before recruiting begins or middle school and younger students (domestic or international). Can be transitioned to a certification account when needed.			✓
High school student (domestic or international) enrolling for the first time at a Division I or II school.	✓		
Transferring from a two- or four-year college or university. (Check with the athletics compliance office at the school you plan to attend.)	✓	OR	✓
Division III*			
Domestic high school student enrolling for the first time at a Division III school.			✓
High school student with a permanent residence outside of the U.S.		✓	
High school student who attended secondary or postsecondary school outside of the U.S. for any time (except U.S.-based students who study abroad).		✓	
High school student who was based and competed outside of the U.S. or participated on a sports team that was based and competed outside of the U.S.		✓	
Transferring from a two- or four-year college or university; attended domestic high school(s) only.			✓
Students enrolling at a Division III school who have an existing Academic and Athletics Certification account should use that account and not create a new one.	✓		
Division Undecided/Unknown			
Never enrolled full time at a two- or four-year college or university. Best before recruiting begins or for middle school and younger students. Can be transitioned to a certification account when needed.			✓

*Students should create one and only Eligibility Center account. Having difficulties logging into your already existing account? Click the ["Forgot your password?"](#) link at the top of the Eligibility Center page.

Once you have determined the right account for you, visit eligibilitycenter.org to register. A list of information you will need to complete your account is outlined below. For a Profile Page account, allow 15 minutes to complete. For certification accounts, allow 30-45 minutes to complete. If you need to exit and come back at a later time, you can save and exit but must return and complete your account within 30 days.

Unsure **which account type is right for you?** Start with a Profile Page account, then check with the athletics compliance office at the NCAA school recruiting you. If you need assistance, contact the Eligibility Center at 877-262-1492 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern time Monday-Friday. International students (including Quebec) should use the [International Contact Form](#) to submit questions.

ELIGIBILITY CENTER REGISTRATION ESSENTIALS

Below are some items you should have with you when creating an account at eligibilitycenter.org:

✓ Student Information

Provide your name, gender, date of birth, primary and secondary contact information, and address.

✓ Valid Email

Use an email address you check regularly and will have access to **after** high school. The Eligibility Center uses email to update you about your account throughout the process. **Note:** If a sibling has registered with the Eligibility Center, use a different email address than the one the sibling used.

✓ Education History

List all U.S. and international secondary and high schools and additional programs you attended, even if you did not receive grades or credits. If you attended ninth grade at a junior high school in the same school system in which you later attended high school, the ninth-grade school should not be listed.

✓ Sports Participation History

Select each sport you plan to participate in at an NCAA school. For **certification accounts**, list any teams you have practiced or played with, events in which you participated, expenses, awards and any individuals who advised you or marketed your athletic skills. This helps the Eligibility Center certify your athletics eligibility once you request certification of your athletics eligibility.

✓ Payment

Account registration is complete once your fee is paid (or fee waiver is requested, if eligible). Pay online via debit, credit card or eCheck.

All fees are nonrefundable after 30 days. If you completed a duplicate registration and paid your registration fee twice, complete the [refund form](#).

Do You Need Assistance Registering?

Check out the frequently asked questions section at ncaa.org/eligibility-center/register.



REMEMBER

Walk-on and “preferred” walk-on recruits must register with the Eligibility Center and meet initial-eligibility standards.



Initial Eligibility

Initial-eligibility standards help ensure you're prepared to succeed in college. The initial-eligibility process also protects the fairness and integrity of college sports.

In addition to each NCAA school's admission requirements, Division I and II schools require your initial **academic and athletics eligibility** to be certified by the Eligibility Center. While Division III schools set their own academic standards on campus, the Eligibility Center certifies the amateur status of Division III **international student-athletes** (first-year enrollees and transfers). All other Division III student-athletes are certified on campus.

Throughout the process, the Eligibility Center partners with you, your family, high school administrators, high school and club coaches and NCAA schools to guide you on your journey.



REMEMBER

As a college-bound student-athlete, you're responsible for your eligibility – that means planning ahead, taking high school courses seriously and protecting your athletics-eligibility status. The benefits of being a student-athlete are worth the effort, and the Eligibility Center is here to support you!

NCAA-Approved Core Courses

The NCAA **core-course** requirement ensures you're taking high school courses that prepare you for the academic expectations in college. **Note:** Not all high school courses are NCAA-approved core courses and may not count toward your 16 core-course requirement.

What is a Core Course?

A core course must meet the following requirements to be considered in your academic certification:

Completed at a high school with a "Cleared" or "Extended Evaluation" Eligibility Center account status .	✓
Completed in alignment with your high school's policies related to instruction, pacing, etc.	✓
Meet high school graduation requirements in one or more of the following subject areas: ENGLISH MATH (Algebra I or higher) SCIENCE SOCIAL SCIENCE WORLD LANGUAGE COMPARATIVE RELIGION PHILOSOPHY	✓
Appear on your high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses . High School Search Search for a High School's Course List Search for a high school by six-digit high school code or CEEB/ACT code. If you don't know your high school's code or CEEB/ACT code, search by city, state or high school name. High School Code: OR CEEB/ACT Code: OR State: ALL City: High School Name: Search	✓



PLAN AHEAD

Scan or click the QR code to find your high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses.





Make sure you're taking courses that appear on your school's list of NCAA-approved core courses. Your school manages the list of core courses and may submit course titles for review by the Eligibility Center. Ask your high school counselor if you need help. Review the High School Information section of [your high school's account](#) for additional information.

Core-Course Credits

You may earn credit for a core course only once. If you repeat the same course, or if you enroll in a second core course that duplicates the content of another core course, credit will be awarded for only one of the two courses (the higher grade may count toward your [core-course GPA](#)).

Dual-Enrollment Coursework

Dual-enrollment coursework may be considered in a student's [initial-eligibility certification](#) if it meets all requirements for an NCAA-approved core course. For dual-enrollment coursework completed while still enrolled in high school, the course must appear on the student's official high school transcript with a grade, high school credit and a clear designation as a dual-enrollment course.

If a teacher at your high school instructs and grades the dual-enrollment course, the course must appear on your high school's list of [NCAA-approved core courses](#). If the course is taught by a college or university's faculty, the dual-enrollment course title may not need to appear on your high school's list of approved core courses. However, the course title must still appear on the official high school transcript with a designation that the course was completed through a two- or four-year college or university.

Courses Taken Before High School

High school courses taken before ninth grade may be used to satisfy NCAA core-course requirements if the course appears on your official high school transcript with grade and high school credit and appears on your high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses. For example, if you take a high school course such as Algebra I or Spanish I before high school, the course may count toward your 16 core-course credit requirement as long as the course title is on your official high school transcript with grade and high school credit and appears on your high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses.

Courses Taken After High School

A course taken after high school graduation may be used toward your initial-eligibility certification. For **Division I**, the Eligibility Center may assess up to one additional core-course unit earned after on-time graduation. The course must be completed within the year following the student's on-time graduation date and prior to initial full-time enrollment in higher education, whichever occurs first. The additional unit, when completed from approved sources of credit (and reported on an official academic record), may be a full-unit core course, two half-unit core courses or some other variation that amounts to one unit. The NCAA-approved core course(s), including a college course, may be completed at a location other than the high school from which the student graduated.

- » An additional core-course unit taken after on-time high school graduation cannot replace a course used to meet the **core-course progression (10/7) requirement**, but may replace one of the remaining six core-course units needed.

For **Division II**, the Eligibility Center may assess all core courses completed before initial full-time enrollment in higher education. The core courses, including those completed after high school graduation, must be completed through approved sources of credit and reported on an official academic record.

For both Division I and Division II, when dual-enrollment coursework is completed after high school graduation, an official college transcript is required for review, and the Eligibility Center may award a maximum of 0.5 units for a postgrad college course completed in a core-course subject area. A full unit may be awarded provided the home high school submits an official high school transcript that reflects the grade and full credit for the course.

Transcripts

Ask your high school counselor to **upload your official high school transcripts** after two and three consecutive academic years (four and six semesters). Also ask your high school counselor to upload your final official high school transcripts with proof of graduation once you have completed high school. If you attended more than one high school or took courses from more than one program, the Eligibility Center needs an official transcript from each high school or program you attended.

Except for school districts with unified transcripts, the Eligibility Center does not accept grades from one high school or program transcribed on another high school's transcript. Be sure to keep your Eligibility Center account updated with each high school and/or program you attended. Your high school counselor cannot upload your transcript until you add your school and/or program in the Education section of your Eligibility Center account.

- » **International students:** For information on transcript and academic record submission procedures, [click here](#).
- » **Homeschool students:** For information on proper document submission procedures, [click here](#).

Note: Some approved programs that have a list of NCAA-approved courses are not credit-awarding institutions and, therefore, do not produce official transcripts. If you attended an approved program that does not award credit, a grade report from the program should be submitted.



REMEMBER

If you attended more than one high school or took courses from more than one program, the Eligibility Center needs an official transcript from each high school or program.



Grade-Point Average



The Eligibility Center calculates your **core-course grade-point average** based on the grades you earn in NCAA-approved core courses. Only your best grades from approved courses in the required subject areas will be used. This means that the cumulative GPA listed on your high school transcript could be different from the NCAA core-course GPA used in your certification. [Click here](#) to find your high school's core course list.

Your core-course GPA is calculated on a 4.0 scale. Numeric grades such as 92 or 87 are converted to letter grades, such as A or B, based on the high school's grading scale on file with the Eligibility Center. As part of this calculation, each grade received is assigned "quality points."

The Eligibility Center does not use plus or minus grades when calculating your core-course GPA. For example, grades of B+, B and B- are each worth 3 quality points. Weighted courses may improve your core-course GPA. However, weighted grading scales must be submitted by the high school and approved by the Eligibility Center. (The high school's course-weighting policy must align with acceptable [NCAA course-weight policy](#).)

Note: Your high school may have multiple grading scales on file. For more information, review the High School Grading Scales section of [your high school's account](#).

In "pass/fail" grading situations, the Eligibility Center will assign your high school's lowest passing grade for a course in which you received a "pass" grade. For example, if your high school's lowest passing grade is a D, the Eligibility Center would assign a D as the passing grade.

Test Scores

In January 2023, NCAA Divisions I and II adopted legislation to remove standardized test scores from initial-eligibility requirements. Check with the NCAA school you plan to attend regarding whether standardized test scores are necessary for admissions or scholarship requirements.

Calculating Quality Points

To determine your quality points earned for each course, multiply the quality points for the grade by the amount of credit earned.

Examples

An A grade (4 points)
for a full-year course (1.00 unit):
 $4 \text{ points} \times 1.00 \text{ unit} = 4.00 \text{ quality points}$

An A grade (4 points)
for a semester course (0.50 unit):
 $4 \text{ points} \times 0.50 \text{ unit} = 2.00 \text{ quality points}$

An A grade (4 points)
for a trimester course (0.34 unit):
 $4 \text{ points} \times 0.34 \text{ unit} = 1.36 \text{ quality points}$

Use the [Division I and II Worksheets](#) to help determine your core-course GPA.

QUALITY POINTS

A = 4 points
B = 3 points
C = 2 points
D = 1 point

UNITS OF CREDIT

1 year = 1.00 unit
1 semester unit = 0.50 unit
1 trimester unit = 0.34 unit
1 quarter unit = 0.25 unit

Education-Impacting Disabilities

For academic eligibility purposes, the NCAA defines an education-impacting disability as a current impairment that has a substantial educational impact on a student's academic performance and requires accommodation.

Some of the most common EIDs include:

- » Learning disabilities.
- » Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder.
- » Mental health conditions.
- » Medical conditions.
- » Deafness or being hard of hearing.
- » Autism spectrum disorder.

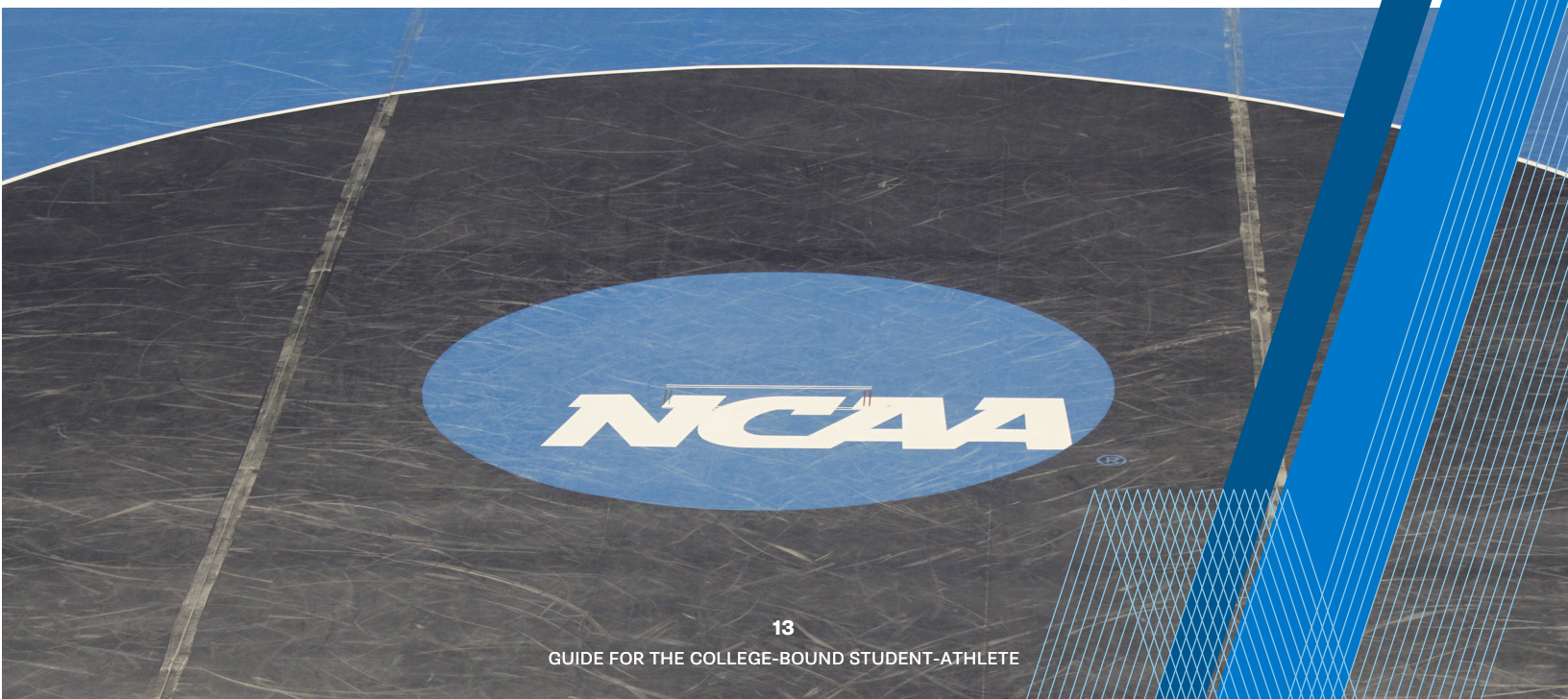
If you have a **documented EID**, you must meet the same initial-eligibility standards as other students but may be provided certain accommodations to help meet those standards. For instance, if you have a documented EID, you may be allowed to take courses designed for students with EIDs if the courses appear on your high school's list of **NCAA-approved core courses**. Courses offered exclusively to students with an EID are indicated by an "=" symbol next to the course's title on the high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses. For more information on how to request EID accommodations, scan the QR code or [click here](#).



If you have a documented EID (physical or mental) and require a medical accommodation for practice or competition, ask your NCAA school about how the school can support you.

Equivalency Tests/Diplomas

A U.S. state high school-equivalency test (e.g., General Educational Development) may be accepted as proof of graduation under certain conditions, but it will not satisfy requirements for core courses or core-course GPA. The equivalency test may be accepted as proof of graduation if taken after the date of graduation of your high school class and before full-time enrollment at any college or university. Contact your **state education agency** to request an official copy of the applicable certificate (along with your state high school-equivalency test scores) be sent to the Eligibility Center. For information on international credentials equivalent to the U.S.-style GED, see the **Guide to International Academic Standards for Athletics Eligibility**.



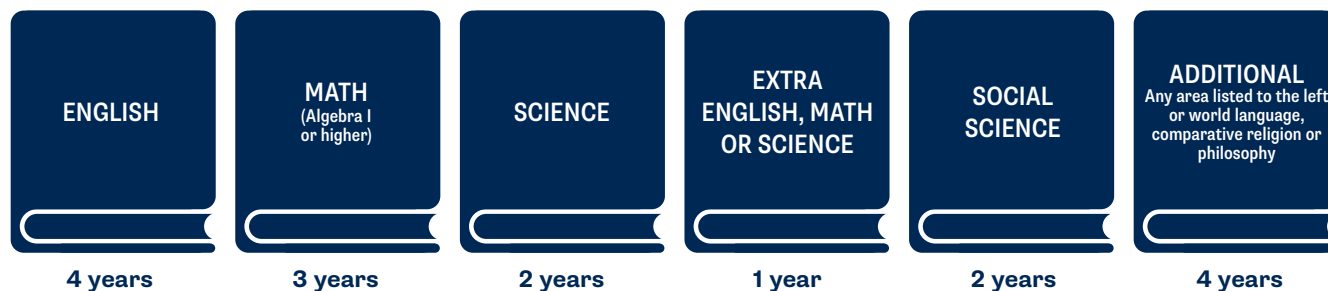
Division I Academic Standards

Division I schools require you to meet **academic standards**. To be eligible to practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship in your first year of full-time enrollment, you must meet the following requirements:

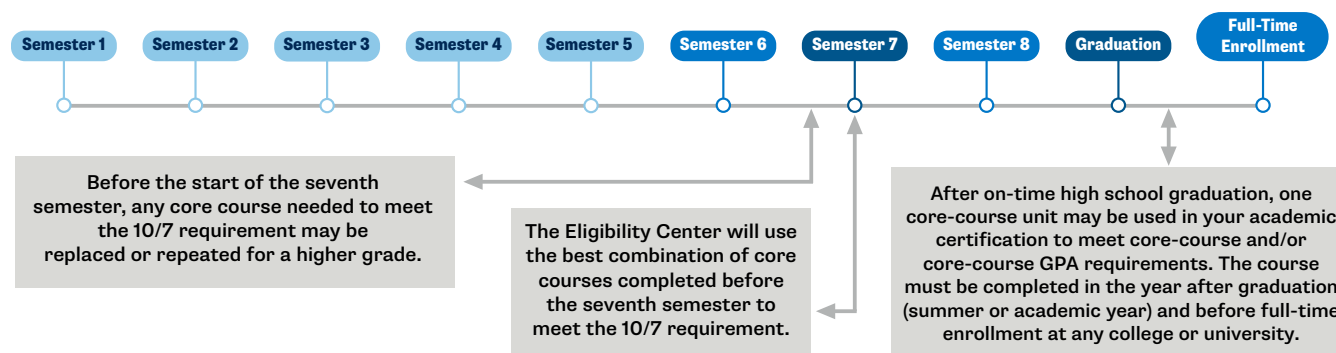


DIVISION I

1. **Register** for an Academic and Athletics Certification account.
2. Earn 16 **NCAA-approved core-course** credits in the following areas:



3. Complete 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits in four consecutive academic years (eight semesters) from your initial start of ninth grade. If you graduate from high school early, you still must meet core-course requirements.
4. Meet the **10/7 requirement** by completing 10 of your 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits, including seven in English, math and science, before the start of the seventh semester.



» Students with solely **international** academic credentials are not required to meet the 10/7 requirement.

5. Earn a minimum 2.3 core-course GPA.
6. Ask your high school counselor to upload your final official high school transcript with proof of graduation to your Eligibility Center account.
7. Receive academic and athletics certifications from the Eligibility Center.

Example Schedule

How To Plan High School Courses
To Meet the 16 Core-Course Requirements

$$4 \times 4 = 16$$

9th GRADE

(1) English
(1) Math
(1) Science
(1) Social science
and/or additional

4 CORE COURSES

10th GRADE

(1) English
(1) Math
(1) Science
(1) Social science
and/or additional

4 CORE COURSES

11th GRADE

(1) English
(1) Math
(1) Science
(1) Social science
and/or additional

4 CORE COURSES

12th GRADE

(1) English
(1) Math
(1) Science
(1) Social science
and/or additional

4 CORE COURSES



What if You Don't Graduate on Time?

For Division I, if you **do not graduate on time**, the Eligibility Center will still use your grades and core courses completed in the first four consecutive academic years (eight semesters) for your certification. You will still need to provide proof of graduation (once you graduate) but may not use any core courses taken after your fourth consecutive academic year (eighth semester).

What if You Don't Meet Division I Standards?

If you have not met all the Division I academic standards, you may not compete in your first year of full-time enrollment at a Division I school. However, if you qualify as an academic redshirt, you may practice during your first regular academic term and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.

Division I Worksheet

Use the **Division I Worksheet** to assist you in monitoring your progress in meeting NCAA initial-eligibility standards. The Eligibility Center will determine your academic status after you graduate. Remember to check your high school's list of **NCAA-approved core courses** for courses you have taken or plan to take.



ACADEMIC CERTIFICATION DECISIONS

Academic certifications are required for all college-bound student-athletes planning to compete at an NCAA Division I school. Listed below are possible academic certification decisions for students planning to enroll at Division I schools:

Early Academic Qualifier

If you meet **specific criteria** after three consecutive academic years (six semesters) of high school, you may be deemed an early academic qualifier for Division I and may practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.

Qualifier

You may practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.

Academic Redshirt

You may practice during your first regular academic term and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment but may NOT compete during your first year of full-time enrollment. You must pass either eight quarter or nine semester hours to practice in the next term.

Nonqualifier

You will not be permitted to practice, compete or receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.

Division II Academic Standards

Division II schools require you to meet **academic standards**. To be eligible to practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship in your first year of full-time enrollment, you must meet the following requirements:



DIVISION II

MAKE IT *YOURS*

1. **Register** for an Academic and Athletics Certification account.
2. Earn 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits in the following areas:

ENGLISH	MATH (Algebra I or higher)	SCIENCE	EXTRA ENGLISH, MATH OR SCIENCE	SOCIAL SCIENCE	ADDITIONAL Any area listed to the left or world language, comparative religion or philosophy
3 years	2 years	2 years	3 years	2 years	4 years

3. Earn a minimum 2.2 core-course GPA.
4. Ask your high school counselor to upload your final official high school transcript with proof of graduation to your Eligibility Center account.
5. Receive academic and athletics certifications from the Eligibility Center.

ACADEMIC CERTIFICATION DECISIONS

Academic certifications are required for all college-bound student-athletes planning to compete at an NCAA Division II school. Listed below are possible academic certification decisions for students planning to enroll at Division II schools:

Early Academic Qualifier

If you meet **specific criteria** after three consecutive academic years (six semesters) of high school, you may be deemed an early academic qualifier for Division II and may practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.

Qualifier

You may practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.

Partial Qualifier

You may practice and receive an athletics scholarship but may NOT compete during your first year of full-time enrollment.

What if You Don't Meet Division II Standards?

If you have not met all the Division II academic standards, you may not compete in your first year of full-time enrollment at a Division II school. However, you will be deemed a partial qualifier. All Division II partial qualifiers may practice and receive an athletics scholarship but may NOT compete during their first year of full-time enrollment.

Division II Worksheet

Use the **Division II Worksheet** to assist you in monitoring your progress in meeting NCAA initial-eligibility standards. The Eligibility Center will determine your academic status after you graduate. Remember to check your high school's list of **NCAA-approved core courses** for courses you have taken or plan to take.



International Students



In Divisions I and II, **international student-athletes** are those who have attended school abroad at any point from the initial start of ninth grade through secondary school graduation and the school was not under U.S. sponsorship (such as American schools overseas and Department of Defense Dependent Schools) and did not offer the standard U.S. curriculum. If you are an international student, the following academic records and documents must be submitted by your school or other appropriate educational entity:

- » Transcripts for years nine and up in the native language.
- » Proof of graduation in the native language, which may include certificates, diplomas and/or final leaving exams.
- » Certified line-by-line English translations of these documents if they are issued in a language other than English.

In Division III, international student-athletes are those who attended high school outside of the U.S. or U.S. territories, who competed individually or as part of a team based outside of the U.S. or U.S. territories, or whose permanent residence is outside of the U.S. These students should monitor their task list to determine if any academic documentation is needed to certify their amateur status.

In certain situations, the Eligibility Center may request additional documentation to clarify that your academic information is complete, valid and accurate. The task list within your Eligibility Center account is used to communicate these requests, so be sure to check your task list and email for updates.

- » For information on how to submit international documentation, visit on.ncaa.org/intldocs.

Note: All documents submitted to the Eligibility Center become the property of the Eligibility Center and cannot be returned. This includes any mailed original documents.

Failure to include any of these items will delay the review of your records, so be sure to understand the documents required for the country in which you attended school by reviewing the [Guide to International Academic Standards for Athletics Eligibility](#). Wondering what to expect when attending an NCAA school? Check out the [International Student-Athlete Handbook](#).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For country-specific information, visit the [NCAA International Student Eligibility Requirements webpage](#).



Homeschooled Students

Learning at home is not necessarily the same as being homeschooled. Because of ongoing growth in online and virtual education, a student may be able to learn at home through an online school with online teachers, which would not be considered a parent-directed tutor.

Homeschooled courses are those in which a parent or parent-directed tutor:

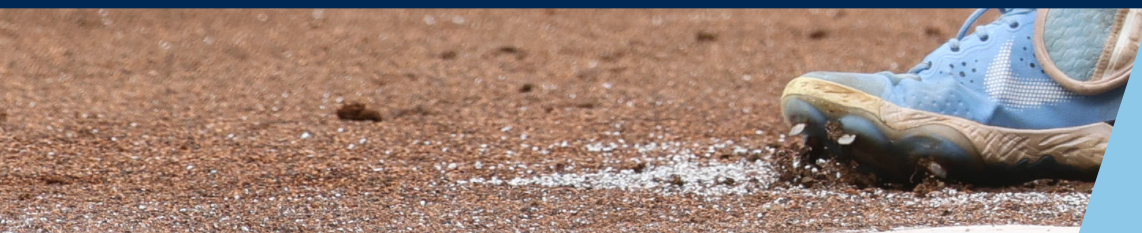
- » Plans and delivers actual instructional activities such as lectures, discussions, tutorials, feedback or assistance.
- » Determines the student's comprehension of the material by grading and evaluating student performance and achievement on assignments and assessments and providing appropriate reteaching and feedback.
- » Determines the overall grade the student achieved in the course.
- » Places grades on a transcript or grade report, or reports grades to a [homeschool umbrella program](#).

How To Register

Homeschooled students who plan to compete at a Division I or II school must **register** with the Eligibility Center and meet initial-eligibility standards.



Athletics Eligibility





Athletics Eligibility

When you [register](#) for an NCAA Eligibility Center certification account, you will be asked a series of questions about your sports participation to determine your athletics eligibility. In some instances, the Eligibility Center may need additional information to evaluate your status.

Circumstances Reviewed as Part of the Certification Process

- » Delaying your full-time enrollment and participating in organized competition.
- » Playing with professionals.
- » Signing a contract with a professional team.
- » Participating in tryouts or practices with a professional team.
- » Receiving payment or preferential treatment/benefits for playing sports.
- » Receiving prize money.
- » Entering a written agreement with an agent.

Requesting Final Athletics Certification

Students initially enrolling full-time for the first time at an NCAA Division I or II school and [international student-athletes](#) enrolling for the first time at a Division III school must [request final athletics certification](#) to initiate the athletics certification review process. (This includes [transfers](#) from two-year colleges, National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics schools, international schools or transfers from a Division I, II or III school to a school in a different division. [Click here](#) to determine the right Eligibility Center account for you.)

Students must request final athletics certification within their certification account and must do so for each sport they plan to participate in at their NCAA school. A final athletics certification decision will not be entered before a student makes this request. The date students can request certification of their athletics eligibility depends on the NCAA enrollment date selected in the student's account:

Fall Enrollment: If you're enrolling at an NCAA school for the fall semester, you may request your final athletics certification on or after April 1 before enrollment.

Winter/Spring Enrollment: If you're enrolling at an NCAA school for the spring semester, you may request your final athletics certification on or after Oct. 1 before enrollment.

Note: Students may request final athletics certification even when other tasks are incomplete. Students are encouraged to make the final athletics certification request at the earliest opportunity to ensure timely athletics certification decisions before enrolling and to also continue responding to remaining tasks.

Delayed Enrollment

After you graduate from high school, you have a certain amount of time – called a “grace period” – to continue to participate in your sport before you are expected to enroll full time at a college or university. If you do not enroll within your division- and sport-specific grace period (as shown below) and continue to participate in organized competition, you risk losing up to one season of NCAA eligibility for each consecutive 12-month period you continue to compete. Your delay period starts on Oct. 1 or March 1, whichever occurs first (immediately) after the end of your grace period. (This does not apply to Division I men’s ice hockey and Division I men’s and women’s skiing.)

Note: Students planning to enroll at Division I and II schools must review additional details about [age-based eligibility rules](#).

A Division III student-athlete can use a 12-month grace period in all sports after high school graduation. However, continuing to participate in the following activities (listed immediately below) after your delay period may result in the loss of one or more season(s) of participation.

Your delay period starts on Oct. 1 or March 1, whichever occurs first (immediately) after the end of your grace period.

- » Team or individual competition or training in which payment above actual and necessary expenses is received.
- » Individual competition or training in which payment above actual and necessary expenses is received based on place finish.
- » Any competition pursuant to the signing of a contract with a professional team or entering a professional draft.
- » Any competition funded by a college booster that is not open to all participants.

M&W TENNIS		MEN’S ICE HOCKEY		M&W SKIING		ALL OTHER SPORTS		
DI		DI		DI		DI	DII	DIII
Grace Period*	Up to	Up to	Grace Period*	Up to	Grace Period*	Grace Period*	Grace Period*	Grace Period*
6	20th	21st	3	21st	3	12	12	12
MONTHS	BIRTHDAY***	BIRTHDAY	YEARS	BIRTHDAY	YEARS**	MONTHS	MONTHS	MONTHS

- » *Continued participation on or after the next Oct. 1 or March 1 once your grace period ends may result in the loss of one season for each consecutive 12-month period before full-time enrollment.
- » **Competition must be sanctioned by the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association or its international counterparts.
- » ***Students eligible under the six-month rule may still be subject to athletics conditions if participation continues after the 20th birthday and before enrollment at a Division I school.
- » Students who believe they may be impacted by these rules should contact the athletics compliance office at their NCAA school for further support.



Frequently Asked Questions

- » [NCAA Eligibility Center Questions and Resources](#)
- » [What is my period of eligibility?](#)

Division III Amateurism Certification



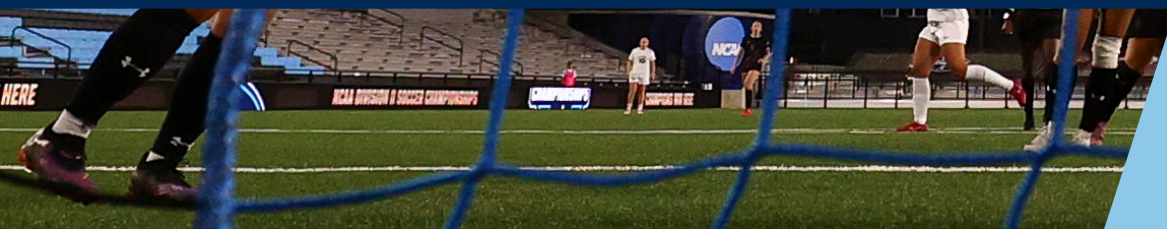
DIVISION III
DISCOVER | DEVELOP | DEDICATE

Division III schools provide an integrated environment focusing on academic success while offering a competitive athletics environment. Division III rules minimize potential conflicts between athletics and academics and focus on regional in-season and conference play to maximize academic, cocurricular and extracurricular opportunities.

While Division III schools set their own academic standards on campus, the Eligibility Center certifies the amateur status of Division III [international student-athletes](#) (first-year enrollees and transfers). All other Division III student-athletes will have their amateur status reviewed and certified by the athletics department. For additional support, please contact the athletics department at the Division III school you plan to attend for additional information.



Recruiting



Are You Being Recruited?

The items below are considered recruiting activities. College coaches typically are the ones who recruit for their school. If you're being **recruited** by an NCAA Division I or II school, **transition your** Profile Page account to an Academic and Athletics Certification account.



Calls



Texts



Emails



**Messages via
Social Media**



**Visits to Your
High School**



**Expense-Paid
Campus Visit**



**Athletics Aid
Offer**



**Financial Aid
Offer**

Best Practices

The recruiting process can begin as early as ninth grade (year nine of secondary school), although in most cases the recruiting process starts in 11th grade (summer after year 10). Some recruiting best practices include:

- » Create an **Eligibility Center account** that is right for you. Students who are considering enrollment at NCAA Division I or II schools should create the Academic and Athletics Certification Account.
- » Use this **interactive map** to locate NCAA schools and research admissions requirements and academic programs.
- » Work as hard in the classroom as you do in your sport! Earn the best core-course GPA possible.
- » Check your email and Certification Account for newly assigned tasks.
- » Take **official and unofficial visits** to NCAA schools you're interested in attending.
 - If you're unable to visit campus, review school websites and take virtual campus tours to learn more about NCAA schools you're interested in attending.
- » **Conduct yourself in a positive manner at school, practices and games, at home, in your community and online.**
- » Research when your **division- and sport-specific recruiting activity periods** are throughout each year.
- » Discuss your goals with your support system to determine your **ideal competition level** and next steps.
- » Email college coaches with your achievements, highlight videos and interest in their program.
 - Include your name, position, **NCAA ID** and high school graduation year.
 - Depending on your sport and grade level, Division I coaches may not be permitted to write you back.
- » If possible, compete on elite teams and attend camps or showcases to gain exposure and build connections.

Questions To Ask

College Admissions

NCAA certification does NOT include acceptance to the NCAA school recruiting you. In addition to receiving your academic and athletics certification from the Eligibility Center, you also must also apply and be admitted to your NCAA school before you can compete on campus. As you begin applying for admissions to NCAA schools, you may consider researching or asking college admissions staff about these topics:

- » Access to any extracurricular activities.
- » Admissions requirements.
- » Cost of attendance.
- » Degree programs.
- » Financial aid.
- » On-campus housing.
- » Schedule planning.
- » Student-athlete graduation rates compared with those of other students.
- » Study abroad/internships.

NCAA Coaches

Similar to choosing the right college or university, finding the right team and coach is also important. Topics you may want to ask coaches about may include:

- » Academic resources.
- » Additional team responsibilities.
- » Athletic training and medical expenses.
- » Coaching philosophy and style.
- » Degree completion support.
- » Injuries and rehabilitation.
- » Mental health resources.
- » **Name, image and likeness.**
- » Playing time.
- » Scholarship renewals.
- » Team time demands.

[Click here](#) for more information about your recruitment.



Only about 2% of high school athletes are offered athletics scholarships, and of those playing college sports, less than 2% may play professionally after college. No matter your pathway, the degree(s) you earn and your experience as a college athlete will prepare you for your future.

Scholarships

NCAA Division I and II schools annually provide more than \$4.3 billion in athletics scholarships (often referred to as athletics aid) to nearly 210,000 student-athletes. (**Division III schools** do not offer athletics scholarships.) When an athletics scholarship is offered, it is important to review the details, terms and conditions that are included to determine what may be covered and what costs you may be responsible for upon enrollment at that school.

POSSIBLE ELEMENTS OF A SCHOLARSHIP	DIVISION I	DIVISION II
Tuition and fees	✓	✓
Food and housing	✓	✓
Books	✓	✓
Course-related books and supplies	✓	✓
Multiyear scholarship options	✓	✗
One-year scholarship options	✓	✓

In many cases, the head coach determines which student is offered an athletics scholarship and whether it may be renewed. If an NCAA school plans to reduce, not renew or cancel the athletics scholarship, the school must provide written notification to the student by July 1 and provide details about appealing this decision on campus.

Many student-athletes also benefit from academic scholarships, NCAA financial aid programs and need-based aid such as [federal Pell Grants](#). You must report all financial aid you receive to your NCAA school's financial aid office. If you have questions about financial aid, contact your NCAA school's financial aid or compliance office.

Athletics Aid Agreement

When a student is offered an [athletics aid agreement](#) by a Division I or II school, it is imperative to read through the details and understand the terms and conditions outlined in the agreement. Upon signing the agreement and returning it to the NCAA school:

- » Athletics staff will confirm in your Eligibility Center certification account that you have signed the agreement.
- » A task will be assigned to your certification account to confirm which school confirmed this and the date the agreement was signed.
- » An email notice will be sent to you, the signing school and any other NCAA school that activated your account to the [institutional request list](#) verifying these details.

Upon entering this information, athletics staff at other NCAA schools that offer athletics scholarships must cease communication with the student (and other individuals associated with the student, such as family members and advisors).

Note: Students may not sign with more than one school. Due to the contact prohibition, students who wish to talk with another school must be released by the signing school before contact with another school may occur. For more information on athletics aid agreements, visit the [NCAA Eligibility Center Questions and Resources page](#).

Recruiting Guidelines

NCAA [recruiting guidelines](#) promote your well-being and ensure fairness by defining when recruitment may or may not occur. Certain recruiting activities, such as calls, visits to your high school and face-to-face contact, may have division- and sport-specific restrictions before certain grade levels in high school.



Note: Division I uses recruiting calendars while Division II follows recruiting reminders. Division III does not use recruiting calendars or reminders.

Division, Sport and Grade Level Determine Recruiting Activities					
	CONTACT PERIOD	EVALUATION PERIOD	QUIET PERIOD	DEAD PERIOD	RECRUITING SHUTDOWN
	Divisions I and II	Division I	Division I	Divisions I and II	Division I
College coaches may call, write, text or email you and your family.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
College coaches may watch you compete.	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
College coaches may visit your high school.	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
College coaches may have face-to-face contact with you or your family.	Yes	Yes, but only on the college's campus.	Yes, but only on the college's campus.	No	No

Official vs. Unofficial Visits



Official Visit

An **official visit** is any visit to a college campus paid for by the NCAA school hosting you. Before a Division I or II official visit:

- » You must **register** with the Eligibility Center.
- » The NCAA school must activate your account to the **institutional request list**.
- » Ensure the NCAA school has copies of your high school transcripts.

Note: After the first permissible date in your division and sport, you may take official visits to as many different NCAA schools as you'd like. However, each NCAA school may extend only one official visit to you. In Divisions I and II, if there has been a head coaching change since your official visit, a second official visit may be allowed.

What Can an NCAA School Pay for During an Official Visit?

DIVISION I	DIVISION II	DIVISION III
Transportation to and from the NCAA school hosting you for you and up to two family members.	Transportation to and from the NCAA school hosting you.	Transportation to and from the NCAA school hosting you.
Lodging.	Lodging.	Lodging.
Up to three meals per day for you and up to four family members.	Meals for you and those accompanying you.	Up to three meals per day for you and those accompanying you.
Up to \$60 per person of reasonable entertainment expenses for you and up to four family members (including five tickets to a home sports event).	Up to \$50 per person of reasonable entertainment expenses for you and those accompanying you (including tickets to a home sports event).	Up to \$40 per person of reasonable entertainment expenses for you and those accompanying you (including tickets to home sports events).

Unofficial Visit

An **unofficial visit** is any visit to a college campus paid for by you or your family. You may take an unlimited number of unofficial visits. However, in Divisions I and II, each visit must occur after the first permissible date for your sport.

What Can an NCAA School Pay for During an Unofficial Visit?

DIVISION I	DIVISION II	DIVISION III
No complimentary meals.	One meal for you and those accompanying you.	One meal for you and those accompanying you at the on-campus dining facility.
Up to three tickets to a home sports event for you and those accompanying you.	Complimentary admission to a home sports event for you and those accompanying you.	Complimentary admission to a home sports event for you and those accompanying you.

Important Terms

Celebratory Signing Form (Used By Division III Schools): A standard NCAA-provided, nonbinding form to use after you have been accepted for enrollment at a Division III school.

Contact: Any time a college coach says more than “Hello” while face-to-face with you or your family off the college’s campus.

Contact Period: Period of time when it is permissible for authorized athletics department staff members to make in-person, off-campus recruiting contacts and evaluations.

Core Course: Course that meets NCAA legislation and core-course criteria in the [High School Review Committee’s Policies and Procedures](#) and appears on your high school’s list of [NCAA-approved core courses](#).

Dead Period: Period of time when it is not permissible to make in-person recruiting contacts or evaluations on or off the college’s campus or to permit official or unofficial visits to the college’s campus.

Dual-Enrollment Coursework: College coursework completed while you’re enrolled in high school.

Education-Impacting Disability: Current impairment that has a substantial educational impact on a student’s academic performance and requires accommodation. For more information, [click here](#).

Emerging Sport: NCAA-recognized women’s sport intended to expand athletics opportunities for women and sport-sponsorship options for NCAA schools, as well as help that sport achieve NCAA championship status. For more information, [click here](#).

Enrollment Period: Season (fall or winter/spring) and year you plan to enroll full time at any NCAA school for the first time.

Evaluation: When a college coach observes you practicing or competing.

Evaluation Period: Period of time when it is permissible for authorized athletics department staff members to be involved in off-campus activities designed to assess academic qualifications and playing ability. No in-person, off-campus recruiting contacts may be made during an evaluation period.

Financial Aid: Funds provided to you from various sources to pay or assist in paying your cost of education at an NCAA school.

Full-time Enrollment: Each school determines what full-time status means. Typically, you’re a full-time student if you’re enrolled for at least 12 credit hours in a term.

Institutional Request List: A list of college-bound student-athletes who an NCAA school is interested in recruiting. This informs the Eligibility Center of the school’s interest in having an academic and/or athletics certification decision for you.

International Student: In Divisions I and II, an [international student-athlete](#) is any student who attended school abroad at any point from the initial start of school year nine through secondary school graduation and the school was not under U.S. sponsorship (such as American schools overseas and Department

of Defense Dependents Schools) and did not offer the standard U.S. curriculum. In Division III, an international student-athlete is any student who attended high school outside of the U.S. or U.S. territories, who competed individually or as part of a team based outside of the U.S. or U.S. territories, or whose permanent residence is outside of the U.S. This does not apply to U.S.-based students who study abroad unless they also compete while living abroad.

NCAA ID: Ten-digit identification number that an NCAA school recruiting you uses to place you on its [institutional request list](#). Your NCAA ID is located in the top right of your Eligibility Center account.

Official Commitment: When you sign an athletics aid agreement for a scholarship with a Division I or II school.

Official Visit: Any visit to a college campus paid for by the NCAA school hosting you.

Preferred Walk-On: “Preferred walk-on” status means a college coach wants you on the team but doesn’t have a scholarship for you. You are guaranteed a spot on the roster.

Quiet Period: Period of time when it is permissible to make in-person recruiting contacts only on the college’s campus. No in-person, off-campus recruiting contacts or evaluations may be made during the quiet period.

Recruited: When a college coach contacts you off campus, pays your expenses to visit the campus, or (in Divisions I and II) issues you a written offer of financial aid, scholarship or athletics aid.

Recruiting Calendar/Reminder: Division I recruiting calendars and Division II recruiting reminders [outline certain periods throughout the year](#) in which recruiting may or may not occur in a particular sport.

Recruiting Shutdown: Period of time when no form of recruiting is permissible.

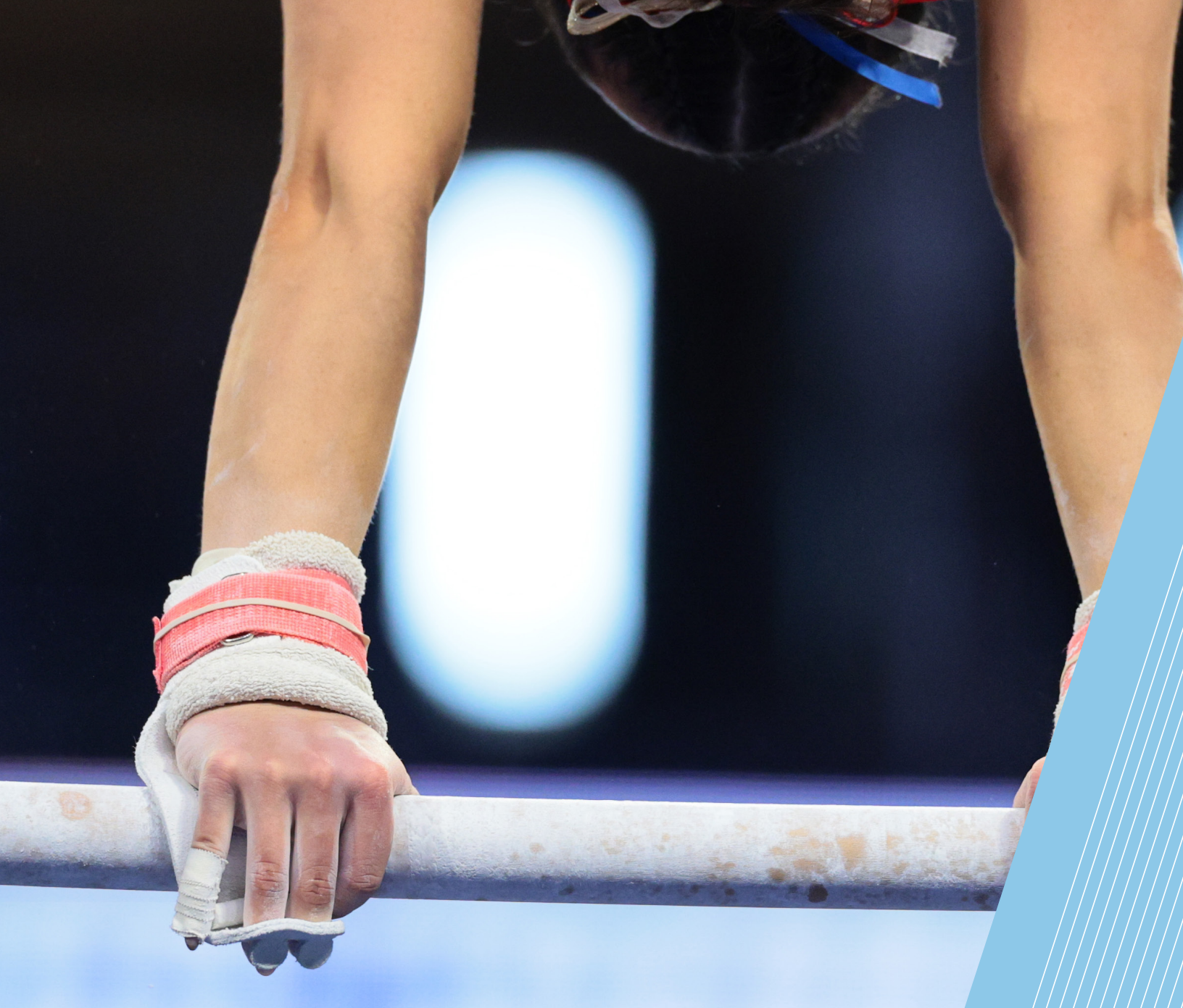
Signing Date Dead Period (Used by Division II Schools): Period of time when it is not permissible to make in-person recruiting contacts or evaluations on or off the college’s campus or to permit official or unofficial visits to the college’s campus.

Two-Year College: Any school from which students can earn an Associate of Arts, Associate of Science or Associate of Applied Science within two years. Often referred to as community college.

Unofficial Visit: Any visit to a college campus paid for by you or your family.

Verbal Commitment: When you verbally agree to play sports for a college before you sign or are eligible to sign an athletics aid agreement. The commitment is not binding on you or the school.

Walk-On: Someone who is not typically recruited by a school to participate in sports and does not receive a scholarship from the school but who becomes a member of one of the school’s athletics teams.



Student-Athlete Experience



Celebrating Student-Athlete Success

The NCAA applauds three core components that make up the student-athlete experience: well-being, academic success and competitive fairness.

A Gallup study from 2020 revealed that former NCAA student-athletes are more likely than other college graduates to be thriving in areas such as purpose and community, social and physical well-being.

Student-athletes are continuing to graduate at record rates, with a Graduation Success Rate of 90% in Division I and Academic Success Rates of 77% in Division II and 88% in Division III. To learn more about NCAA graduation and academic success rates, visit on.ncaa.com/graduationrates.

Over 90% of NCAA student-athletes say college sports helped them grow in personal responsibility, work ethic and teamwork, according to the [2025 NCAA GOALS study](#).



Time Management

What Student-Athletes Should Expect

Time management is critical for any college student, but especially for those playing college sports. With courses, competition, practice and other activities, the student-athlete stays busy year-round. Know what awaits before you enroll in college.

Hours Spent on Activities Per Week (168 Hours Total)

Division I

85 Other (e.g., sleep, job, extracurriculars)	15.5 Socializing	33.5 Academics	34 Athletics
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Division II

85 Other (e.g., sleep, job, extracurriculars)	17.5 Socializing	33.5 Academics	32 Athletics
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Division III

85 Other (e.g., sleep, job, extracurriculars)	17.5 Socializing	36.5 Academics	29 Athletics
---	----------------------------	--------------------------	------------------------

*Medians collected from the 2025 NCAA GOALS study.

Percentage of student-athletes who reported spending the same amount of time, or more, on athletics during the offseason as they do during their competitive season.

65%
of Division I student-athletes

64%
of Division II student-athletes

47%
of Division III student-athletes

*Based on the 2025 NCAA GOALS study.

What Takes Up Division I and II Student-Athletes' Time?

These are considered countable athletically related activities. NCAA rules limit the time student-athletes can spend on these activities each week. Check with the compliance office at the NCAA school you may attend for more information.



Supplemental workouts



Practices



Competition



Strength and conditioning



Film review

Division I

The activities listed below do not count toward a team or student-athlete's countable athletically related activities limit.

- » Academic meetings.
- » College-bound student-athlete host duties.
- » Community service.
- » Compliance meetings.
- » Injury treatment/prevention.
- » Media activities.
- » Nutritionist sessions.
- » Sports psychologist sessions.
- » Team fundraising.

Game Day

During a typical day of competition, **Division I** student-athletes report spending anywhere from four to nine hours on their sport.

*Based on the April 2026 SNAP survey of Division I student-athletes.



Division II

The activities listed below do not count toward a team or student-athlete's countable athletically related activities limit.

- » Academic meetings.
- » College-bound student-athlete host duties.
- » Community engagement.
- » Compliance meetings.
- » Injury treatment/prevention.
- » Professional development.
- » Social activities.
- » Study hall.
- » Team fundraising.

Participation

One in every 9 **Division II** student-athletes will participate in an NCAA championship during their college experience.

A third of **Division II** student-athletes work nine hours per week on average during the academic year.

*Based on the 2025 NCAA GOALS study.



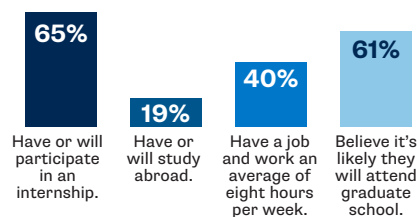
Division III

NCAA rules allow athletically related activities to occur only during your sport's declared playing season. Check with the compliance office at the NCAA school you may attend for more information. The Division III experience includes:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| » Academics. | » Leadership. |
| » Competition. | » Practice. |
| » Compliance meetings. | » Strength and conditioning. |
| » Film review. | » Team fundraising. |
| » Injury treatment/prevention. | » Teamwork. |
| » Internship/externship. | » Time management. |
| | » Work. |

Experience

Division III student-athletes are highly committed to their athletic and academic pursuits, and many report engaging in cocurriculars, as well.



*Based on the 2025 NCAA GOALS study.

Insurance

The NCAA provides catastrophic insurance for athletics-related injuries to student-athletes while they are playing an NCAA recognized sport and post-eligibility insurance for athletics-related injuries to student-athletes once they separate from their NCAA school or withdraw from their sport. Both programs are in addition to the student-athlete's and the NCAA school's primary coverage. This insurance is provided at no cost to the student-athletes. [Click here](#) to learn more about student-athlete insurance and medical coverage.

Name, Image and Likeness

Student-athletes may receive compensation from third parties for use of their name, image and likeness, such as social media posts, brand appearances or promoting products and services.

All three NCAA divisions support opportunities for student-athletes to pursue NIL consistent with rules that protect fair competition.

Check with your high school's state athletic association regarding its NIL policies. [Click here](#) for more information on NIL.



NCAA Sport Science Institute



SPORT SCIENCE
INSTITUTE™

The **NCAA Sport Science Institute** works collaboratively with the **NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports**, medical and research experts, sports medicine groups and other medical organizations to develop consensus-based guidance and educational resources to assist schools in promoting student-athlete health, safety and performance.

The consensus-based guidance and educational resources advance the Association's health, safety and performance priorities.



NCAA Health, Safety and Performance Priorities

As endorsed by the NCAA Board of Governors in 2023:

- » Mental and physical health.
- » Sport-related illness and injury.
- » Training and performance.
- » Education and policy.

Resources

The NCAA provides schools with consensus-based guidance, best practices and educational resources to support student-athlete health, safety and performance.

- » **Mental Health.** Recognizing mental health as an important dimension of overall health, the NCAA's commitment to student-athlete mental health and

well-being is codified in the NCAA constitution.

The **NCAA Mental Health Best Practices** provide consensus-based recommendations to schools for supporting and promoting student-athlete mental health.

- » **NCAA Drug-Testing.** The NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports oversees the NCAA Drug-Testing Program and offers **educational resources on banned substances**, drug-testing policies and nutritional/dietary supplement safety.

To learn more about these and other topics, including nutrition, hydration, sleep and injury prevention, visit the **NCAA Health, Safety and Performance website**.



Transfer Students

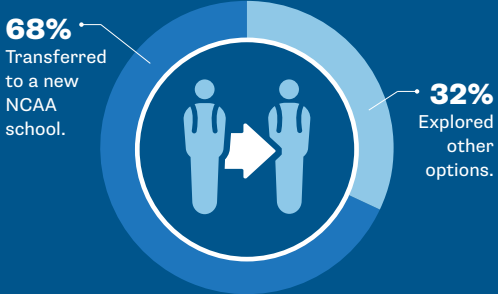
The decision to transfer to another school involves important and sometimes difficult choices. Make sure you understand the rules, options and potential consequences of your decision. You do not want to risk your education or your chance to play NCAA sports.

If you're transferring from an NCAA school, another NCAA school cannot recruit you (directly or indirectly) until you follow the division-specific steps regarding [notification of transfer](#). Once it's permissible to have recruiting contact with another NCAA school, check with the compliance office at the NCAA school you plan to attend so they can review your transfer eligibility.

Students who are interested in transferring to an NCAA school should first review current [transfer-related resources](#).

- » Student-athletes transferring from a four-year school should review the [Guide for Four-Year Transfers](#).
- » Student-athletes transferring from a two-year school (community college) to a four-year school should review the [Guide for Two-Year Transfers](#).

Division I Student-Athlete Transfer Portal Outcomes



Of the Division I student-athletes who asked to be entered into the Transfer Portal in 2024-25, 68% were reported to have transferred to a new NCAA school. The remaining 32% may have left their sport or transferred to a non-NCAA school. (Those who entered and were withdrawn are not included in this chart.)

*Based on 2026 Transfer Portal Data: Division I Student-Athletes Transfer Trends.

Thinking of Going Pro?

There are more than 500,000 NCAA student-athletes, and less than 2% will go pro in their sport.

	Baseball	Men's Basketball	Women's Basketball	Football	Men's Ice Hockey	Women's Ice Hockey	Men's Lacrosse
High School Student-Athletes	472,598	540,704	356,240	1,029,588	32,253	9,589	113,696
NCAA Student-Athletes	41,580	19,617	16,823	83,794	4,558	3,074	16,691
Drafted NCAA Student-Athletes	452	43	30	257	76	43	31
Percentage High School to NCAA	8.8%	3.6%	4.7%	8.1%	14.1%	32.1%	14.7%
*Percentage NCAA to Major Professional	4.9%	1.0%	0.8%	1.4%	7.5%	6.3%	0.8%

Note: High school and college participation data are from the 2024-25 academic year.

*The percentage of NCAA student-athletes moving on to major professional leagues is based on the number of draft picks in the 2025 MLB, NBA, WNBA, NFL, NHL, PWHL and PLL. WSL and WPF were previously included, but the leagues have since discontinued their drafts.

Regardless of which path you take, the experiences of college athletics and the life lessons learned along the way will help you pursue careers in business, education, athletics administration, communications, law, medicine and many other fields. Education is a vital part of the college athletics experience, and student-athletes treat it that way.

Overall, student-athletes graduate at rates similar to or higher than their peers in the student body, and those rates have risen considerably over the last three decades. [Click here](#) for more information on graduation rates.



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HERE!
MORE THAN 500,000
STUDENT-ATHLETES
26 SPORTS | OVER 1,000 SCHOOLS**



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