

NCAA INFORMATION

Are you a student-athlete? Ever thought about continuing athletics while pursuing a college degree? Then you need to know about the NCAA & the NCAA Eligibility Center.

What is the NCAA?

The NCAA, or National Collegiate Athletic Association, is a governing organization controlling college sports for men & women. The NCAA functions as a general legislative & administrative authority, formulating & enforcing rules of play for various sports & eligibility criteria for athletes. Established in 1906, it has about 1,200 member schools & conducts about 80 national championships in a total of about 20 sports. The NCAA was established to provide the student-athlete with competition that is fair, safe, and inclusive & promotes good sportsmanship.

The NCAA membership includes Division I, Division II & Division III members. One of the differences among the divisions is that colleges & universities in Divisions I & II may offer athletic scholarships, while Division III colleges & universities may not.

Can't I just try out for my sport at college?

Not necessarily. NCAA regulations are set by NCAA colleges & universities and require all incoming student-athletes to meet a prescribed level of academic performance while maintaining their amateur status before entering college. To assist with this process, the NCAA established the Eligibility Center to partner with high schools, high school coaches & college-bound athletes.

What is the NCAA Eligibility Center?

The Eligibility Center certifies the academic and amateur credentials of all college-bound student-athletes who wish to compete in NCAA Division I or II athletics. The Eligibility Center will collect data from high schools, home schools, on-line schooling and sport sanctioning bodies, and most importantly, from the student-athlete themselves in order to make eligibility decisions. Ultimately, the individual student-athlete is responsible for achieving and protecting his or her eligibility status.

How do I find the answers to my questions?

There are two primary NCAA websites. The NAA's website is: www.ncaaclearinghouse.net, which is different than the Eligibility Center's website, which is: www.ncaa.org. You will find answers to your questions from either one (or both) of these two resources. In addition, there is a student-oriented website: www.ncaastudent.org; which contains the same information, but is presented via flash web technology to reach the student population where they live.

One important feature to point out on the ncaa.org site is a valuable informational booklet. (Or if you are on the clearinghouse site, there is a link. Click on "Information for College-Bound Student Athletes" on left-hand side of the page, and this will direct you to the NCA.org site.) Once at the ncaa.org site, you will find the "2008-09 guide

for the college-Bound Student-Athlete”. This is a downloadable booklet full of information, and also includes a worksheet for student-athletes to use all throughout high school.

If you have additional questions, you can contact the Eligibility Center at the address & phone number below. (In addition, use this address if you are sending transcripts or additional information to the center.)

NCAA Eligibility Center
Certification Processing
P.O. Box 7136
Indianapolis, IN 46207-7136
Phone: Toll Free 1-877-262-1492 (Customer Services M-F 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. EST)

When do I call the NCAA (& not the Eligibility Center)?

Call the NCAA when you have questions like:

What are the rules & regulations related to initial eligibility?
What are the rules & regulations related to amateurism?
What are the regulations about transferring from one college to another?
What are the rules about athletics scholarships?

The NCAA contact information is:

NCAA
P.O. Box 6222
Indianapolis, IN 46206-6222
Phone: 1-317-917-6222 (Customer Service M-F; noon – 4 P.M., EST.)

When do I need to start addressing the NCAA rules?

If you are a student-athlete today, then begin your research now. The NCAA had guidelines beginning from 9th grade all through 12th. Use the resources above to check your course of study against the NCAA’s approved core course list; make sure you maintain your amateur status all through high school; and be sure to ask questions if your schooling includes any unique attributes (i.e. classes taken outside of Skyline). Be aware of the steps necessary (i.e. registration costs & deadlines), make yourself a worksheet and calendar to follow all the way through to certification. Preparedness wards off unpleasant surprises.