

# Questions to Ask as You Consider Colleges

You may want to ask your prospective college coaches the following questions as you consider colleges.

## Athletics

- 1. What positions will I play on your team?**  
It is not always obvious. Most coaches want to be flexible, so you might not receive a definite answer.
- 2. What other players may be competing at the same position?** The response could give you an idea of when you can expect to be a starter.
- 3. Will I be redshirted my first year?** The school's policy on redshirting may impact you both athletically and academically.
- 4. What expectations do you have for training and conditioning?** This will reveal the institution's commitment to a training and conditioning program.
- 5. How would you best describe your coaching style?** Every coach has a particular style that involves different motivational techniques and discipline. You need to know if a coach's teaching style matches your learning style.
- 6. When does the head coach's contract end? How long does the coach intend to stay?** The answer could be helpful. Do not make any assumptions about how long a coach will be at a school. If the coach leaves, does this change your mind about the school/program?
- 7. What are preferred, invited and uninvited walk-on situations? How many do you expect to compete? How many earn a scholarship?**  
Situations vary from school to school.
- 8. Who else are you recruiting for my position?** Coaches may consider other student-athletes for every position.
- 9. Is medical insurance required for my participation? Is it provided by the**

**college?** You may be required to provide proof of insurance.

- 10. If I am seriously injured while competing, who is responsible for my medical expenses?** Different colleges have different policies.
- 11. What happens if I want to transfer to another school?** You may not transfer without the permission of your current school's athletics administration. Ask how often coaches grant this privilege and ask for an example of a situation in which permission was not granted.
- 12. What other factors should I consider when choosing a college?** Be realistic about your athletics ability and the type of athletics experience you would enjoy. Some student-athletes want to be part of a particular athletics program, even if that means little or no playing time. Other considerations include coaching staff and style. Of course, the ideal is to choose a college or university that will provide you with both the educational and athletics opportunities you want.

## Academics

- 1. How good is the department in my major? How many students are in the department? What credentials do faculty members hold? What are graduates of the program doing after school?**
- 2. What percentage of players on scholarship graduate?** The response will suggest the school's commitment to academics. You might want to ask two follow-up questions:
  - 1) What percentage of incoming students eventually graduate?
  - 2) What is the current team's grade-point average?
- 3. What academic support programs are available to student-athletes?** Look for a college that will help you become a better student.
- 4. If I have a diagnosed and documented disability, what kind of academic services are available?** Special academic services may help you achieve your academic goals.

5. **How many credit hours should I take in season and out of season?** It is important to determine how many credit hours are required for your degree and what pace you will follow to obtain that degree.
6. **Are there restrictions in scheduling classes around practice?** NCAA rules prevent you from missing class for practice.
7. **Is summer school available? If I need to take summer school, will it be paid for by the college?** You may need to take summer school to meet academic and/or graduation requirements.

### College Life

1. **What is a typical day for a student-athlete?** The answer will give you a good idea of how much time is spent in class, practice, study and travel. It also will give you a good indication of what coaches expect.
2. **What are the residence halls like?** The response should give you a hint of how comfortable you would be in your room, in study areas, in community bathrooms and at the laundry facilities. Also ask about the number of students in a room, co-ed dorms and the rules governing life in the residence halls.
3. **Must student-athletes live on campus?** If "yes," ask about exceptions.

### Financial Aid

1. **How much financial aid is available for both the academic year and summer school? What does your scholarship cover?**
2. **How long does my scholarship last?** Most people think a "full ride" is good for four years, but athletics financial aid is available on a one-year, renewable basis.
3. **What are my opportunities for employment while I am a student?** Find out if you can be employed in season, out of season or during vacation periods.
4. **Exactly how much will the athletics scholarship be? What will and will not be covered?** It is important to understand what college expenses your

family is responsible for so you can arrange to pay those. Educational expenses can be paid with student loans and government grants, but it takes time to apply for these. Find out early so you can get something lined up.

5. **Am I eligible for additional financial aid? Are there any restrictions?** Sometimes a student-athlete cannot accept a certain type of scholarship because of NCAA limitations. If you will be receiving other scholarships, let the coach and financial aid officer know so they can determine if you may accept additional dollars.
6. **Who is financially responsible if I am injured while competing?** You need to understand your financial obligations if you suffer an injury while participating in athletics.
7. **Under what circumstances would my scholarship be reduced or canceled?** Coaches should be able to give you some idea of how players are evaluated from year to year and how these decisions are made. The institution may have a policy governing renewal of athletics aid. Ask if such a policy exists and read it.
8. **Are there academic criteria tied to maintaining the scholarship?** Some institutions add academic requirements to scholarships (e.g., minimum grade-point average).
9. **What scholarship money is available after eligibility is exhausted to help me complete my degree?** It may take longer than four years to complete a college degree program. Some colleges assist student-athletes financially as they complete their degrees. Ask how such aid is awarded. You may have to work with the team or in the athletics department to qualify for this aid.
10. **What scholarship money is available if I suffer an athletics career-ending injury?** Not every institution continues to provide an athletics scholarship to a student-athlete who can no longer compete because of a career-ending injury.
11. **Will my scholarship be maintained if there is a change in coaches?** A coach

may not be able to answer this, but the athletics director may.

## **Information for Parents and Guardians**

If you are the parent or legal guardian of a potential student-athlete, please pay special attention to the amateurism and academic eligibility and clearinghouse sections.

### **Amateurism and Academic Eligibility**

If your child plans to compete, practice or receive an athletics scholarship at a Division I or II college, he or she must meet the eligibility requirements on pages 5 - 11 of this guide.

### **Clearinghouse Registration: Transcript and Test-Score Submissions**

It is best for your son or daughter to register with the clearinghouse after completion of his or her junior year. Once registered, your son or daughter must ask the high school counselor or registrar to send his or her academic transcripts to the clearinghouse. ACT or SAT test score(s) also must be submitted to the clearinghouse. Your son or daughter must list the clearinghouse as a separate recipient of his or her ACT or SAT scores when he or she takes the test. The test scores must come directly from SAT or ACT. The clearinghouse will not accept test scores reported on the high school transcript.

The clearinghouse will typically review your son's or daughter's high school record and send a preliminary report to him or her, with notification of any missing requirements. A final report may be issued once your son's or daughter's high school submits a final transcript showing high school graduation. Please call the clearinghouse at 877/262-1492 if you have any questions.

### **How to Monitor Your Son's or Daughter's Eligibility**

You may check the clearinghouse Web site at [www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net) to make sure your son or daughter is taking approved courses. A list of core courses should have been submitted to the clearinghouse by your son's or daughter's high school. Check your son's or daughter's schedule before each year in high school to make certain that he or she is taking the required courses.

NCAA colleges may obtain information from the clearinghouse about your son's or daughter's status and progress only if his or her information is specifically requested by that college.

### **Financial Aid**

If your son or daughter is academically eligible to participate in intercollegiate athletics and is accepted as a full-time student at a Division I or II school, he or she may receive athletics-based financial aid from the school. Division I or II financial aid may include tuition and fees, room and board, and books.

Division III institutions do not award financial aid based on athletics ability. A Division III

college may award need-based or academically related financial aid.

A nonqualifier may receive only need-based financial aid (aid unrelated to athletics). A nonqualifier also may receive nonathletics aid from private sources or government programs (such as Pell grants). The college financial aid office can provide further information.

It is important to understand several points about athletics scholarships from Divisions I and II schools:

- All athletics scholarships awarded by NCAA institutions are limited to one year and are renewable annually. **There is no such award as a four-year athletics scholarship.**
- Athletics scholarships may be renewed annually for a maximum of five years within a six-year period of continuous college attendance. **Athletics aid may be canceled or reduced at the end of each year.**
- Athletics scholarships are awarded in a variety of amounts, ranging from full scholarships (including tuition, fees, room and board, and books) to very small scholarships (e.g., books only).
- The total amount of financial aid a student-athlete may receive and the total amount of athletics aid a team may receive can be limited. These limits can affect whether a student-athlete may accept additional financial aid from other sources. Ask financial aid officials at the college or university about any other financial aid your son or daughter might be eligible to receive, and how this aid impacts his or her athletics aid limit. **You must inform the college financial aid office about scholarships received from all sources, such as local civic or booster clubs.**

An athletics scholarship is a tremendous benefit to most families, but you should also have a plan to pay for college costs that are not covered by a scholarship (such as travel between home and school). You should also consider how you will finance your son's or

daughter's education if the athletics scholarship is reduced or canceled.

### **National Letter of Intent**

The National Letter of Intent (NLI) is a voluntary program administered by the Collegiate Commissioners Association, not by the NCAA. By signing an NLI, your son or daughter agrees to attend the institution for one academic year. In exchange, that institution must provide athletics financial aid for one academic year.

Restrictions are contained in the NLI itself. Read them carefully. These restrictions may affect your son's or daughter's eligibility.

If you have questions about the National Letter of Intent, visit the NLI Web site at [www.national-letter.org](http://www.national-letter.org) or call 205/458-3013.

### **Agents**

During high school, your son or daughter might be contacted by an agent who is interested in representing your son or daughter in contract negotiations or for commercial endorsements. Some agents may not identify themselves as agents, but may simply say they are interested in your son's or daughter's general welfare and athletics career. They may offer gifts or other benefits to you and your family.

NCAA rules do not prevent meetings or discussions with an agent. However, your son or daughter will jeopardize his or her eligibility in a sport if he or she agrees, verbally or in writing, to be represented by an agent while attending high school or college, regardless of whether the agreement becomes effective immediately or after his or her last season of college eligibility.

Your son or daughter will also endanger his or her college athletics eligibility if he or she, or your family, accepts benefits or gifts from an agent. If an individual contacts your son or daughter about marketing his or her athletics ability, be careful. If you have concerns, contact your high school coach, director of athletics or the NCAA.

### **Recruiting**

See page 28 for a summary of recruiting rules and terms.

### **Scouting/Recruiting Services**

During high school, your family might be contacted by a scouting/ recruiting service. The NCAA does not sanction or endorse any of these services. Remember, a scouting/recruiting service cannot base its fee on the amount of a student's college scholarship. For example, it is impermissible for a recruiting/scouting service to offer a money-back guarantee. If you have any questions, please call the NCAA.

### **All-Star Contests—Basketball and Football**

After your son or daughter completes high school eligibility, but before graduating, he or she may participate in two high school all-star football or basketball contests in each sport. If you have any questions, please call the NCAA.

### **Transfer Students**

If your son or daughter transfers from a two-year or four-year college to an NCAA school, he or she must meet certain requirements before being eligible for practice, competition or financial aid at that college. Order the NCAA Transfer Guide by calling 888/388-9748 or download it from the NCAA Web site at [www.NCAA.org](http://www.NCAA.org). Call the NCAA if you have questions about transfer requirements.

### **Home School**

Home-schooled students who plan to enroll in a Division I or Division II college must register with the clearinghouse, and must meet the same requirements as all other students.

After registering, the home-schooled student must send the following information to the clearinghouse:

- Standardized test score(s) must be on an official transcript from a traditional high school OR be sent directly from the testing agency;
- Transcript listing credits earned and grades (home-school transcript and any other

official transcript from other high schools, community colleges, etc.);

- Proof of high school graduation;
- Evidence that home schooling was conducted in accordance with state law; and
- List of texts used throughout home schooling (including text titles, publisher and in which courses the text was used).

# Recruiting Regulations

## Introduction

College coaches must follow the rules outlined in this section. You are expected to follow these rules as well.

## Recruiting Terms

**Contact.** A contact occurs any time a coach has any face-to-face contact with you or your parents off the college's campus and says more than hello. A contact also occurs if a coach has any contact with you or your parents at your high school or any location where you are competing or practicing.

**Contact period.** During this time, a college coach may have in-person contact with you and/or your parents on or off the college's campus. The coach may also watch you play or visit your high school. You and your parents may visit a college campus and the coach may write and telephone you during this period.

**Dead period.** The college coach may not have any in-person contact with you or your parents at any time in the dead period. The coach may write and telephone you or your parents during this time.

**Evaluation.** An evaluation is an activity by a coach to evaluate your academic or athletics ability. This would include visiting your high school or watching you practice or compete.

**Evaluation period.** The college coach may watch you play or visit your high school, but cannot have any in-person conversations with you or your parents off the college's campus. You and your parents can visit a college campus during this period. A coach may write and telephone you or your parents during this time.

**Official visit.** Any visit to a college campus by you and your parents paid for by the college. The college may pay the following expenses:

- Your transportation to and from the college;
- Room and meals (three per day) while you are visiting the college; and
- Reasonable entertainment expenses, including three complimentary admissions to a home athletics contest.
- Before a college may invite you on an official visit, you will have to provide the college with a copy of your high school transcript (Division I only) and SAT, ACT or PLAN score.

**Prospective student-athlete.** You become a "prospective student-athlete" when:

- You start ninth-grade classes; or
- Before your ninth-grade year, a college gives you, your relatives or your friends any financial aid or other benefits that the college does not provide to students generally.

**Quiet period.** The college coach may not have any in-person contact with you or your parents off the college's campus. The coach may not watch you play or visit your high school during this period. You and your parents may visit a college campus during this time. A coach may write or telephone you or your parents during this time.

**Unofficial visit.** Any visit by you and your parents to a college campus paid for by you or your parents. The only expense you may receive from the college is three complimentary admissions to a home athletics contest. You may make as many unofficial visits as you like and may take those visits at any time. The only time you cannot talk with a coach during an unofficial visit is during a dead period.

## **Recruiting Calendars**

To look at recruiting calendars for all sports, go to [www.NCAA.org](http://www.NCAA.org).