

PARENT AND STUDENT GUIDE
FOR COLLEGE-BOUND
STUDENT-ATHLETES



Dear Union Student-Athletes:

This guide has been written to help you with your desire to play college athletics. Gone are the days where a 1000 yard rusher in football or a 20 point per game scorer in basketball or a 90 mile an hour fastball in baseball will get you recruited. These stats will get you noticed but now being recruited means a lot more. I would like to take this opportunity to assist you with your college plans and help you keep the “dream alive.”

This information will not solve your problems. You are not going to be accepted by a college or be offered a scholarship or even be recruited by the school just because you have read this material. You, the student-athlete, must read through the following pages and accept the responsibility. So get yourself to work! Your counselor, your parents and your coach will help you, but the ultimate responsibility rests with you.

Once you have a list of colleges in mind, ask some questions about both sports and academics. Before you approach college coaches concerning their teams and athletic grant-in-aid possibilities, you should know the rules governing the recruitment process. Even if you think you know where you’d like to go, and you think you know the rules of the recruiting game, don’t wait for your favorite school to contact you. It may never happen. You have to make sure it happens.

Unless you are a highly visible superstar in a major sport, you probably will not be recruited. Recruiters want you, but they do not know where you are. You are not visible to them. You may never get the chance to play if you don’t act now. The following info will help you get on your way.

Good luck,

Cale Piland
Athletic Director/Head Football Coach
Union High School

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

- There are 396 high schools in the State of Washington.
- There are 17,346 high schools in the United States.
- There are 10,000,000 participants in high school athletics.
- 2% of these participants are contacted by a college coach.
- 3.5% of these participants actually participate in college sports.
- Less than 1/2 of 1% of athletes receive some form of aid.
- Most high schools never have a full scholarship D-I athlete.
- There are 1,000,000 high school football players and 550,000 basketball players. 150 make it to the NFL and 50 to the NBA.

ESTIMATED PROBABILITY OF COMPETING IN ATHLETICS BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL

<u>Student-Athlete</u>	<u>MBB</u>	<u>WBB</u>	<u>FB</u>	<u>BB</u>
HS Athletes	549,500	456,900	983,600	455,300
HS Seniors	157,000	130,500	281,000	130,100
NCAA Athletes	15,700	14,400	56,500	25,700
NCAA Freshman	4,500	4,100	16,200	7,300
NCAA Seniors	3,500	3,200	12,600	5,700
Drafted Athletes	44	32	250	600
% HS to NCAA	2.9	3.1	5.8	5.6
% NCAA to Professional	1.3	1.0	2.0	10.5

Take a long hard look at these numbers and think about what matters most... your college education! Use your athletic ability to accentuate your college experience and assist in the admissions process!

WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME?

- The importance of grades starting as a freshman.
- The importance of preparing for the ACT's and SAT's.
- Applying for regular college admissions as well as athletic scholarships.
- Look for schools that meet academic, social and personal needs as well as athletic needs.
- Talk to several coaches from different schools to gain perspective.
- Know your coaches and continue to communicate with them during recruitment and after the signing period.
- Visit as many campuses that you can while always looking for the "right" fit.
- Learn time management skills before entering college.
- Develop communication skills as a team member and as a student especially with your assigned roommate.

STUDENT-ATHLETE CHECKLIST

Use the following checklist to remind yourself throughout the year of the tasks you need to perform to find the “right” college experience.

PRE-SEASON

1. Meet with counselor in January/February of the junior year to discuss plans.
2. Take the ACT and/or SAT near the end of junior year.
3. Visit counselor to discuss possible majors and careers.
4. Visit counselor to discuss senior year courses and NCAA eligibility.
5. Review transcript yearly making sure compliance is met.
6. Develop a list of colleges with counselor.
7. Visit a sample of college campuses.

IN-SEASON

1. Apply to at least one college that will meet personal needs if sports are not possible.
2. Maintain good academic standing.
3. If highly recruited, meet with coach to discuss persistent recruiters.

POST-SEASON

1. Meet with coach to assess potential to play in college.
2. Review NCAA recruiting rules.
3. Make college visits.
4. Confirm the right program of study is available at possible colleges.
5. Meet with counselor, coach and parent to make final decision.
6. Discuss proper application procedure with college coaches.

STUDENT-ATHLETE'S HIGH SCHOOL FOUR-YEAR PLAN

Freshman Year

1. Talk to counselor about core class requirements.
2. Get to know all the coaches in your sport.
3. Work on your grades.
4. Attend sport camps.
5. Start thinking about academic and career goals.

Sophomore Year

1. Keep your grades up.
2. Talk with your coaches about your ability and ambitions.
3. Stay out of trouble!
4. Make preliminary inquiries about possible colleges.
5. Take the PLAN and practice PSAT test in October.
6. Attend another sport camp.

Junior Year

1. Talk with counselor about career goals and core course requirements.
2. Talk with coach about a realistic assessment of skills.
3. Take your PSAT/ACT/SAT tests.
4. Refine list of possible colleges. Know their entrance requirements.
5. Start making a sports resume.
6. Send letter to college coaches.
7. Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center and send 6th semester transcript.
8. Last chance for a sport camp.

Senior Year

1. Make sure you have satisfied all graduation and core course requirements.
2. Update NCAA Eligibility Center by sending your final transcript.
3. Attend College and Financial Aid Nights.
4. Final chance for ACT/SAT I and SAT II if needed.
5. Narrow your college choice to the appropriate number.
6. Make sure applications and transcripts are sent to colleges.
7. Make sure rules for campus visits are known.
8. Have your parents send in FAFSA in early January.
9. Make copies of all forms for your records.
10. List pro's and con's of each prospective college.
11. Let coach know when their school is no longer in the running.
12. Make your final decision based on a meaningful college education, career preparation, and a satisfying athletic experience.

WHAT EVERY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT COLLEGE RECRUITING

If you are a high school athlete who wants to play college-level sports, keep two priorities in order. They are:

- #1 College first
- #2 Sports second

This is especially true when talking with recruiters. This way you can avoid situations that might leave you without a degree or even a team to play on.

To start with, learn all you can about the rules governing recruitment before contacting college coaches or players. Depending on which level of competition you're considering, your relationship with a recruiter must abide by the rules set forth by the NCAA, NAIA or NJCAA. Violating any of the regulations might result in your being barred from competition. Refer to the NCAA, NAIA or NJCAA website for a list of rules each athlete should understand.

The NCAA Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete identifies areas that each athlete and parent should be aware of. Such as:

1. Contact periods
2. Campus visits
3. Phone calls
4. Evaluation periods
5. Dead periods
6. Letter of Intent
7. Early commitment/Regular commitment

This guide is available from the following website www.eligibilitycenter.org.

Further information regarding recruiting rules for each sport in Division I, II and III may also be found at www.ncaa.org.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

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.

TIPS FOR MONITORING YOUR INITIAL-ELIGIBILITY CLEARINGHOUSE PROGRESS

5-STEP PROCESS

STEP #1 Obtain Needed Documents

- Obtain your high school's list of NCAA-Approved Core Courses.
- Get your high school transcript (from each school attended).

STEP #2 List Courses, Grades and Credits

- Write the course title.
- Write the grade.
- Write the amount of credit earned.
- Semester unit=.50; Year unit=1.0

STEP #3 Do the Math

- Determine quality points for each course.
- A=4; B=3; C=2; D=1
- Multiply the quality points by the amount of credit earned.
- (A year's unit (1.0) grade of "A" equals 4.0 quality points.)
- Pluses and minuses are not used.

STEP #4 Finalize Your GPA Calculation

- Calculate your core-course grade point average.
- Divide the total amount of quality points by the number of core course units.
- Clearinghouse will do the final calculation from your final transcript.
- 50 quality points and 16 core-courses $50/16 = 3.12$ GPA.

STEP #5 Compare

- Monitor status using the appropriate division standard.
- If you are deficient, meet with counselor and plan to enroll in courses before graduation.
- If you complete more than 16 core-courses, the Eligibility Center will select the highest grades to calculate the GPA.

NCAA INITIAL-ELIGIBILITY

Students entering after 2008 will use a 16 core-course rule. Core courses include: English, Mathematics, Natural/Physical Science, Social Science and World Language. Please note that Computer Science no longer satisfies the core unless the course is listed as a math or science core approved class.

Remember, if the student-athlete is not a heavily recruited D-I or D-II “special talent” athlete, just meeting minimum eligibility requirements alone will not get them admitted to the college.

The key is to let the sport help get applicants into a better college. If applicants meet the colleges’ basic admissions criteria, coaches can help them get admitted. The student-athlete needs to do well academically in high school so coaches can help them. Very few athletes have colleges begging for their services. Student-athletes must put themselves in a position so that their coaches can help them get recruited. In addition, coaches and parents should work closely with the counselor on strategies for college admissions.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

If you want to participate in athletics or receive an athletics scholarship during your first year, you must:

- Graduate from high school
- Complete these 16 core courses:
 - 4 years of English
 - 3 years of math (Algebra 1 or higher)
 - 2 years of natural or physical science (including one year of lab science if offered by your high school)
 - 1 extra year of English, math, or natural or physical science
 - 2 years of social science
 - 4 years of extra core courses (from any category above, or foreign language, non-doctrinal religion or philosophy)
- Earn a minimum required grade-point average in your core courses
- Earn a combined SAT or ACT sum score that matches your core-course grade-point average and test score sliding scale (for example, a 2.400 core-course grade-point average needs an 860 SAT).

Requirement to graduate with your high school class

You must complete the 16 core-course requirement in eight semesters, which begins when you initially started high school with your ninth-grade class. If you graduate from high school in eight semesters with your class, you may use **one** core course completed in the year after graduation (summer or academic year) to meet NCAA Division I eligibility requirements. You may complete the core course at a location other than the high school from which you graduated and may initially enroll full time at a collegiate institution at any time after completion of the core course.

HOW TO GET YOURSELF RECRUITED

Needless to say, being born with god-given talent is very helpful. In many cases these are the “special talent” athletes that high school and college coaches dream about. For them, coaches already know who they are! For the rest of us, hard work and persistence will get us noticed and one step further in realizing our dream of continuing play and doing so at the highest level possible. These athletes must take charge of their recruiting process.

To get recruited you must follow these very simple steps. These are:

- Keep working hard at your sport year after year after year.
- Set yearly goals to get you to the “next step.”
- Have the support of your school coach.
- Further develop your skill by playing in a club program.
- When ready, perform in “college exposure” activities.
- Don’t forget to stay focused in the classroom!
- Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center.
- Identify colleges with compatible athletic/academic programs.
- Send a letter of self-introduction to the college coach.
- Have school and club coach help write/call college coach.
- Send a “sports” resume with game schedule to college coach.
- Fill out all questionnaires sent from the school/team.
- Continue the communication via email.
- Arrange for campus visit if invited to attend.

RECRUITING SERVICES

Recruiting services will not help you if you are not good enough to play in college. If you follow the advice of this packet you may be able get the attention of a college coach especially if you choose to use a recruiting service. No guarantees! These services perform a valuable function. For a nominal fee they can do for you what time will not permit.

It is true that many top D-1 and D-II programs buy names to begin their search. Be careful! Some recruiting services can actually make the student-athlete ineligible by receiving a percentage of the scholarship attained thus acting as an agent.

SAMPLE COVER LETTER TO COACH

Date

James Brown
2600 W. Smith St.
Vancouver, Washington 98683

Dear Coach Sarkisian,

I am a junior running back at Harrison High School in Vancouver, Washington. I am interested in attending the University of Washington after I graduate. As a sophomore I started for our conference championship football team and led the league in rushing. This year, my junior season, I have been elected team captain and currently average 200 yards rushing per game. Our team continues to be successful and will look to repeat as conference champions.

Academically, I have a 3.2 GPA and have earned an 1800 on my PSAT score. I plan to take both the ACT and SAT this spring. In addition, my course load this year includes all core requirements as well as two Advanced Placement courses. I will have my college entrance scores sent directly to the University of Washington and to the NCAA Clearinghouse when completed. My high school will also be sending my 6th semester transcript as it becomes available.

I am very interested in attending the University of Washington because of its academic excellence, social opportunities and outstanding football program. I am particularly impressed with the graduation rate of student-athletes at Washington. I believe that my academic and athletic skills make me qualified to be considered for the Husky program.

Please send me information on the Washington program at your convenience and let me know what information I can provide to be evaluated by the football coaching staff. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you in the future.

Sincerely,

James Brown