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So, you want to be a college athlete. That's great! Now, you have to learn the process to actually be a college athlete. The National College Athletic Association (NCAA) has developed a process that ensures that all participating colleges and universities and their student-athletes are competing on a "level playing field," and that all prospective athletes are academically eligible to participate.

## WHAT EVERY HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT RECRUITING

When a high school athlete daydreams about playing sports at college, does he see himself sitting humbly on the bench waiting for the coach to send him in? Probably not. Instead he sees himself acknowledging the cheers of the fans, granting an interview in the locker room after the game, and weighing the merits of an attractive offer to go professional. In short, he has the same fantasies that thousands of other young men and women have: that college will be the springboard to fortune and the big leagues.

Here are some things to consider:

- ♦ Only two out of every 100 college basketball players make it to the pros.
- ♦ The professionals for any major sport are usually drawn from big institutions, which are treasure troves of first-rate athletes playing on outstanding teams.
- ♦ The average pro football career lasts only three years.

These realities indicate that the college-bound athlete must think ahead to when the cheering stops. Careers in sports can end abruptly. Starting spots can evaporate after only one year. More often, college athletes have problems with eligibility. Practice schedules are hard on grades. Some players spend more than four years trying to graduate and eventually their eligibility expires.

If you are a high school athlete who wants to play college-level sports, keep two priorities in mind: ***COLLEGE FIRST, SPORTS SECOND***. Avoid situations that might leave you without a degree or even a team to play on.

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## STUDENT-ATHLETE'S HIGH SCHOOL PLAN

### **Freshman Year**

- ❑ Talk to your counselor about NCAA core class requirements
- ❑ Keep your grades high and work on your study habits
- ❑ Take the PSAT
- ❑ Get to know all the coaches in your sport
- ❑ Attend sports camps
- ❑ Realistically analyze your ability
- ❑ Start thinking about academic and career goals

### **Sophomore Year**

- ❑ Keep up your grades
- ❑ Take the PSAT test
- ❑ Talk to your coaches about your ability and ambitions
- ❑ Make preliminary inquiries to colleges that interest you (a brief letter to the college coach might be appropriate)

### **Junior Year**

- ❑ Talk with your counselor about career goals and, again, about the NCAA core course requirements
- ❑ Talk with your coach about a realistic assessment of which college level you can play
- ❑ Take the PSAT, ACT, and SAT
- ❑ Refine your list of prospective colleges; attend college fairs. Know their admission requirements
- ❑ Create a sports resume
- ❑ Write letters to college coaches expressing your interest
- ❑ Apply for eligibility to the NCAA Clearinghouse at the latest by the end of junior year
- ❑ Attend sports camps in the summer, if appropriate

### **Senior Year**

- ❑ Meet again with your counselor to ensure that you are meeting all graduation and NCAA requirements
- ❑ Attend college fairs and financial aid workshops
- ❑ Retake the ACT and/or SAT, if appropriate
- ❑ Refine your college list and apply for admission
- ❑ Be aware of recruiting rules regarding campus visits
- ❑ Complete Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) after January 1
- ❑ Sit down with your parents and coach to list the pros and cons of each school you are considering
- ❑ Be sure of your final choice before signing any papers
- ❑ Let coaches know when their school is no longer in the running. Thank them!
- ❑ Make your final college decision based on a meaningful education, excellent career preparation, and a satisfying athletic experience—IN THAT ORDER!

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## **QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR RECRUITER**

- ♦ What is the recruiter's relationship to the school? Is he or she the head coach, assistant coach, an alumnus, or an admission representative? (Assurances carry different weight depending on who they come from.)
- ♦ Keep your education foremost in your mind by asking about academic programs that interest you. A good recruiter is as informed about programs as an admissions person is. Fire away with specific questions about majors and courses in your field.
- ♦ At what level does your sport compete? NCAA Division I schools offer athletic grants in aid; most Division II schools offer scholarships and athletic grants in aid; no Division III schools offer athletic grants in aid but do offer academic, leadership, service scholarships.
- ♦ Ask for details about athletic grants—any strings? Typically, athletic grants are for one year, renewable at the coach's discretion. If you get benched, do you start paying your own way from then on?
- ♦ How many athletes were kept on scholarship after their eligibility had expired? What is the college's graduation rate for athletes? Because of heavy demands on their time, some college athletes take five years to graduate. By their final year, they are usually ineligible to play, unless they didn't play their first year.
- ♦ Is tutoring or counseling available? Beware of remarks like, "Don't worry. We haven't lost a player yet because of academics," which could imply that your education will be allowed to suffer before your value to the team will.
- ♦ What will happen if you are placed on academic probation? Do you lose part or all of your benefits?
- ♦ Ask the coach what he expects of his players: time commitment, behavior, appearance, etc., and decide whether you can work with her or him.
- ♦ What is expected of players during the off-season?
- ♦ Has drug use been an issue at your school or in your athletic program?
- ♦ Most importantly, ask yourself if the school would be right for you even if you weren't competing in athletics.

## **QUESTIONS TO ASK OF OTHER PLAYERS AT THE SCHOOL:**

- ♦ What does your typical daily schedule look like? In-season? Off-season?
- ♦ How rigorous is your travel schedule?
- ♦ Approximately how many hours a night do you study?
- ♦ How do you like the living arrangements?
- ♦ What assistance is available if you have academic problems?
- ♦ Were changes made to any promises once you committed/enrolled? Is the program what you expected based on your recruiting experience?

## QUESTIONS TO ASK SCHOOL OFFICIALS/ADMISSION OFFICERS:

- ♦ What are the different graduation rates for athletes? In your sport?
- ♦ How long does it take someone in your sport to earn a degree from this school?
- ♦ What is the placement rate and average starting salary for graduates in your field of study?
- ♦ What financial aid is available?

## CHECKLIST FOR HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETES MAKING INITIAL CONTACTS WITH COLLEGE COACHES

**STEP 1** Research the colleges that fit your academic and athletic needs. College reference books and search engines on the Internet can assist you. The NCAA Clearinghouse is a wonderful resource for the most updated information. Establish a tentative list of colleges that you'd like to contact. Make sure you are academically eligible for admission to each school on the list. Also make sure that your grades, ACT/SAT scores, and class % will allow you to be eligible athletically, as well. Your high school counselor can help you complete a worksheet if you are not sure.

**STEP 2** Show your list to your coach and ask for feedback on how realistic your chances would be for each school. Ask if he/she would be willing to make/receive contacts on your behalf. If the answer is yes, provide your coach with the following information:

- ♦ A list of the colleges you plan to contact with each college's coach, phone number, e-mail address, and mailing address
- ♦ Copies of the documents you're sending to each college
- ♦ A copy of your current high school transcript and resume

Optional:

- ♦ A copy of your college/career goal statement

These documents will allow your high school coach to advocate for you knowledgeably. It is important to have his/her support.

**STEP 3** Send an introduction letter—either from yourself or your coach—and your athletic resume to each college coach. (The samples that follow are designed to serve as guides. You will need to provide statistics that are appropriate to your sport.) Spring of junior year or fall of senior year can be good times to send these. You can also send a skills tape and game tape with this initial information, or you can offer to send them "upon request."

**STEP 4** Make sure to take the ACT and/or SAT in the spring of your junior year, if not earlier. Most college coaches will insist on knowing your scores before considering you.

**STEP 5** If you are pursuing NCAA Division I or II programs, file a completed NCAA Clearinghouse release form by the end of your junior year or beginning of senior year. You can find the release form at [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org).

**STEP 6** Colleges will often respond by asking you or your coach to complete an athletic questionnaire. If you receive a questionnaire from a random school, take the time to fill it out! You never know when an unexpected opportunity might come your way.

**STEP 7** Keep in mind that summer sports camps and tournaments provide excellent opportunities for networking with college coaches. Just be sure that you are familiar with the rules that regulate such contact. Your coaches or counselors can provide information booklets from the various athletic associations to assist you. Not knowing the rules will not be an excuse for a recruiting violation.

## **SAMPLE LETTER FROM HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETE TO COLLEGE COACH**

Date

Coach's Name

College/University

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear Coach Smith:

I would like to introduce myself. I am currently a senior at Chaminade-Julienne Catholic High School. I have played high school volleyball for four years, starting as a setter for the last three. I am 5'8" and weigh 145 pounds. I have been All-Conference for the past two years and All-State this year. I was also selected for the North All Star Team this year.

My coach's name is Mary Jones. Her contact information is included on the attached information page. She has indicated to me that she would welcome your calls. E-mail is a reliable way to reach her as well.

I am in the top 10% in my class of 799 students. My cumulative GPA is a 3.7 on a 4.0 scale. My ACT composite was a 24. I intend to retake it in October. I am interested in pursuing a four-year degree in biology. I also hope to continue playing volleyball on the college level. Your program especially interests me. I have followed your team's season in the *Dayton Daily News* and have attended two games.

I have included a skills tape and a game tape. My jersey number is #1 in the light-colored uniforms. Also included is a schedule of our 2007-08 volleyball season. Please let me know if there is additional information that my coach or I can provide.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Athlete's Name

## SAMPLE STUDENT-ATHLETE RESUME

**AMY ATHLETE**  
**Volleyball Information**

*1225 Any Street      Any Town, Any State 81234*  
*Telephone: (500) 111-1111 or (500) 222-2222*  
*Aathlete@aol.com*

**Coach:** Mary Jones  
1010 Training Avenue  
Any Town, Any State 45405  
Telephone: (500) 111-1212  
E-mail: [mjones@cjeagles.org](mailto:mjones@cjeagles.org)

**High School:** Chaminade-Julienne Catholic High School  
505 South Ludlow Street  
Dayton, OH 45402  
(937) 461-3740 ext. 233 (Athletics Office)

**Volleyball Division:** Division I

**Position:** Setter

**Jersey:** #1 Dark/#10 Light

**Offense Used:** 5-1 Offense

**Years Starting Varsity:** 3 years

**Awards/Honors:** Best Setter (2005, 2006, 2007)  
Most Valuable Player (2007)  
All Conference (2006, 2007)  
All State (2007)  
North All Star Team (2007)

**Experience:** AAU Volleyball (2005, 2006)  
OSU Volleyball Camp (2005, 2006)  
UD Summer Camp (2007)

**Height:** 5'8"  
**Weight:** 145 lbs.  
**Vertical:** 23"  
**GPA & Rank:** 3.74 on 4.0 scale  
78 of 799 (top 10%)

**Graduation Date:** May 2008

## NCAA WEBSITE GUIDE

### **For general information on:**

- ♦ Academic Eligibility for Divisions I, II, and III
- ♦ Recruiting Policies for Divisions I, II, and III
- ♦ Information on Approved Core Courses
- ♦ Information on Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse
- ♦ And much more!

1. Go to [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org)
2. Click on "General Information"
3. Click on "Guide for the College-Bound Student Athlete" in left-hand column
4. Click on "View Online"
5. Click on "Information and Resources for the College-Bound Student Athlete" We recommend that you print out the Guide for future reference.

### **For the most up-to-date list of Chaminade Julienne High School's Approved Core Courses:**

- ♦ Go to [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org)
- ♦ Click on "General Information"
- ♦ Click on "List of Approved Core Courses in left-hand column"
- ♦ Enter CJHS's 6-digit code of "361795" in box and click on "Submit" below
- ♦ You may select a specific core area or "All Subject Areas" and click on "Submit" below. (Courses are listed by subject area: English, Social Science, Mathematics, Natural/Physical Science, and Additional Core Courses, which includes Foreign Language, Computer Science, and select Social Studies courses.)

### **To find information on what schools sponsor your sport, as well as access athletic contacts at individual schools:**

1. Go to [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org)
2. Click on GENERAL INFORMATION and then go to "Schools Sponsoring NCAA Sports" in left-hand column
3. You may choose from the following options:
  - ♦ Schools sponsoring each sport sorted by *division*
  - ♦ Schools sponsoring each sport sorted by *sport*



### **TO APPLY FOR NCAA ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY:**

1. Go to [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org)
2. Click on appropriate box
3. Complete the online form. Be prepared for the following:
  - ♦ You must have a Social Security Number.
  - ♦ You will need to create a Personal Identification Number (PIN).
  - ♦ Our school code is "361795".
  - ♦ You have the option to receive communication from the NCAA Clearinghouse either by the email/web option, which requires a valid email address, or the paper option, which can delay notification up to two weeks.
  - ♦ You will need a MasterCard or Visa debit or credit card or check to pay the processing fee. Do not send cash.
  - ♦ If you qualify for a fee waiver, please see your counselor on how to send the necessary form to the NCAA Clearinghouse. **You must have used and ACT or SAT waiver to qualify.**
  - ♦ Both student and parent (if student is less than 18 years old) must check box certifying that they have read and understood NCAA agreement.
  - ♦ **IMPORTANT! After you have submitted your form, be sure to print out the necessary forms. Sign and bring these forms to the CJHS Guidance Center and complete a Transcript Request Form. We will send your transcript to the NCAA Clearinghouse upon receipt of the release.**

## RECENT CHANGES TO NCAA ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Students who wish to participate in collegiate athletics at the Division I or II level must apply for certification with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Clearinghouse after their junior year in high school. All Chaminade-Julienne Catholic High School counselors can assist students in completing the paperwork necessary in this process.

**To be certified by the Clearinghouse, you must:**

- ♦ **Graduate from high school.**  
You should apply for certification after your junior year in high school if you are sure you wish to participate in intercollegiate athletics as a freshman at a Division I or II institution. The Clearinghouse will issue a preliminary certification report after you have had all your materials submitted. After you graduate, if your eligibility status is requested by a member institution, the Clearinghouse will review your final transcript to make a final certification decision according to NCAA standards.
- ♦ **Complete the 16 core courses listed below.**

### Core Units Required for NCAA Certification

	<b>Division I</b>	<b>Division II</b>
<b>English Core</b>	4 years	3 years
<b>Mathematics Core</b> (Algebra I or higher)	3 years	2 years
<b>Science Core</b> (including at least 1 year of lab science)	2 years	2 years
<b>Social Science Core</b>	2 years	2 years
<b>Additional English, math, or science</b>	1 year	2 years
<b>Additional Core</b> (from any area above or foreign language, nondoctrinal religion/philosophy, computer science*)	4 years	3 years
<b>TOTAL CORE UNITS REQUIRED</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>

- ♦ **Present a minimum required grade point average in your core courses.** Only courses that are on Chaminade-Julienne High School's "List of NCAA Approved Core Courses" (see page 7 on how to access this list) can be used to calculate your NCAA g.p.a. No weighted grades are considered. Straight 4.0.
- ♦ **Achieve a combined SAT or ACT sum score that matches your core-course grade point average in the index listed on the following page.**

\*Computer science courses will no longer be able to be used for initial-eligibility purposes. This rule is effective August 1, 2005, for students first entering a collegiate institution on or after August 1, 2005. Computer science courses (such as programming) that are taught through the mathematics or natural/physical science departments and receive either math or science credit may be used after the August 1, 2005 date.

**Division I For the Class of 2008 and Later:**

**New Core GPA/Test Score Index  
(to be used with 16 core courses)**

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

## **PARTIAL QUALIFIER STATUS**

A "partial qualifier" is eligible to practice with a team at its home facility and receive an athletics scholarship during his or her first year at a Division II school, and then has four seasons of competition remaining.

In order to be classified a "partial qualifier," you have not met the requirements for a qualifier, but you are required to graduate from high school and meet one of the following requirements:

- ♦ Specified minimum SAT (820) or ACT score (68), or
- ♦ Successful completion of a required core curriculum consisting of 14 core courses and a 2.000 GPA in the core curriculum.

## **WALK-ON ATHLETES**

A high school athlete who has not received a scholarship but wants to play a sport in college may be given the opportunity to "walk on" at one or more schools. "Walking on" means that he or she becomes an unscholarshipped member of the team, is allowed to try to earn a position on the team, and is given the opportunity to earn a scholarship at some time in the future. Walking on can be an excellent opportunity for a good athlete who is serious about his or her sport, but it requires careful planning with your counselor and your coach. If you are interested in walking on, follow this advice:

### **With your counselor:**

- ♦ Be sure you satisfy the eligibility requirements of the NCAA. Walk-on athletes are subject to the same rules and regulations as scholarshiped athletes.
- ♦ Do all the preliminary planning needed to identify a possible career. You may not settle on one, but look into it anyway. The experience is helpful.
- ♦ Find the colleges that provide programs in your area of interest. Develop a list of them. If you are undecided, identify schools that provide a broad range of programs.
- ♦ Discuss the list with your counselor and parents.
- ♦ Select your top three or four schools from the list.

### **With your high school coach:**

- ♦ Discuss your ability to participate on the college level. Be open-minded during this meeting. Remember that your coach has only your best interests in mind.
- ♦ Identify any additional schools at which you may have the chance to play. Be sure they, too, satisfy your career and educational goals.
- ♦ Contact the school(s) to secure the college coach's permission to "walk on."
- ♦ Mail applications, being sure to follow the admission procedures specified by the college coach.

## HOW TO CONTACT THE NCAA CLEARINGHOUSE

NCAA Eligibility Center  
P.O. Box 7136  
Indianapolis, IN 46207  
FAX: (317) 968-5100  
[www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org)

Clearinghouse Customer Service: Representatives will be available from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., CST, Monday through Friday by calling (877) 262-1492.

24-Hour Voice Response System is available to check the status of your file using a touch-tone phone by calling (877) 861-3003. To access this system, you must give your PIN, which you created when completing your Student Release Form online.

### HOW TO COMPLETE THE ELIGIBILITY WORKSHEETS

Worksheets are available in Guidance or on the clearinghouse web site to assist you with monitoring your progress in meeting the NCAA initial-eligibility standards. You may want to consult with your parents, guardians, and counselor if you have questions. NOTE: These worksheets are for your personal use and should not be sent to the clearinghouse.

**STEP 1** Obtain Chaminade Julianne High School's List of NCAA-Approved Core Courses (see page 7 for instructions on downloading our list from the Internet) and a copy of your unofficial high school transcript.

**STEP 2** Using CJ's List of NCAA-Approved Core Courses and your transcript, write the course title, amount of credit earned and grade in the spaces provided on the worksheet. Only include courses on the list of approved core courses. Generally, you will receive the same credit from the clearinghouse as you received from your high school.

**STEP 3** Determine the quality points for each course. Multiply the quality points for the grade by the amount of credit earned. Use the following grading scale:

**A - 4 points**                      **C - 2 points**

**B - 3 points**                      **D - 1 point**

**Example:** 1 semester with an "A" equals 2.00 quality points (.50 units x 4 quality points)  
1 year with an "A" equals 4.00 quality points (1.0 unit x 4 quality points)

**STEP 4** To calculate your estimated core-course grade point average, simply divide the total number of quality points for all core courses by the total number of core course units completed.

**NOTE:** This is for your personal use. The clearinghouse will calculate your actual core course grade point average once it has received your final transcript(s).

**Example:** 42 quality points and 14 core-course units  
 $42/14 = 3.000$  core-course GPA

28 quality points and 12.5 core-course units  
 $28/12.5 = 2.24$  core-course GPA

**STEP 5** Refer to pages 11 in this booklet to determine if your core-course GPA and test scores meet the NCAA eligibility requirements.

**STEP 6** To monitor your current eligibility status, use the appropriate standards for Division I or II to determine if you are projected to meet the NCAA initial-eligibility requirements for grade point average and core-course units.

**NOTE:** If you are deficient in meeting all core-course units, which is probable if you have not completed high school, plan to enroll and complete core courses in the areas where you are deficient.

**NOTE:** In the event you complete more core-course units, the clearinghouse will select the highest grades that satisfy the initial-eligibility requirements to calculate your core-course grade point average. Please note that it is still necessary to complete the required number of core-course units in each discipline.

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