

Duquesne University Cheerleading Policies

Introduction

This statement is intended to inform cheerleaders (parents, relatives, other interested parties and prospective cheerleaders) of various policies (e.g., travel, appearances, alcoholic beverages, and nutrition) of the Duquesne University cheerleading program. In all policy and program matters, members of the cheer squad shall be good, law-abiding citizens. These policies are as follows:

I. PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES

The Duquesne University cheerleading program is a student activity. As a student activity, its first and foremost responsibility to the student is to support and not to compromise the student's academic career. Secondly, the program should aid in developing the student participant into a responsible, mature and independent adult. Cheerleading is an activity where the student (1) provide leadership training; (2) develop the ability to make decisions; (3) enhance the ability to respond to life's situations, e.g., conflict/frustration, control of heat, anger and hate, win/loss, react without too much emotion; (4) will contribute to social development, e.g., awareness of one's self, development of self-confidence, development of interpersonal relationships; and (5) generally will maximize the opportunity for student growth, change and maturity.

The primary purpose of the cheerleader is to be a member of the team, which has as its goal to support intercollegiate athletics and Duquesne University. That support is directed into three major areas, as follows: (1) to lead the cheers; to raise the level of fan support for intercollegiate athletics; to lead in positive vocal support for the team; to solicit that support from Duquesne fans and to project that support to the University and its teams; (2) participate in the athletic activity known as cheerleading by performing gymnastics, partner stunts, motions, pyramids, dance movements; to perfect this athletic activity for keeping the crowd attention/direction focused on the field/floor where the intercollegiate activity is taking place, and for entertainment and competitive purposes; and (3) serve as public relations ambassadors of intercollegiate athletics and the Duquesne University; to uphold, reflect and project the goals and ideals of the University; to appear at University activities, functions and programs, at charitable and public causes to promote intercollegiate athletics and the University.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Duquesne University's cheer program will have two squads consisting of 12 members each (Male and Female members). The squads will be divided into to "teams" Red and Blue. Both squads will cheer at home football games and have 24 members present at each game. During the basketball season the squads will rotate games so that each squad gets an equal time to cheer during games. An example this rotational system, Game 1 Red, Game 2 Blue and so on throughout the entire Men's and Women's season.

Cheerleading at Duquesne University is a student activity but is a part of the Athletics Marketing Division. The Cheer Coaches report to the Director for marketing and promotions. The Cheer Program is budgeted in Athletics and performs primarily at events of the Athletic Department.

III. TRAVEL EXPECTATIONS

The primary emphasis of this policy focuses on the behavior of cheerleaders when they travel as representatives of the University. At all times, cheerleaders' behavior shall be exemplary. Behavior which is loud, boisterous, rude, unrestrained, rough, rowdy, offensively harsh or discordant, unruly, etc., shall subject a cheerleader to discipline. All violations result in the following penalty: the guilty party must repay there part of the trip.

IV. INVOLVEMENT AT FUNCTIONS/EVENTS

In addition to football and basketball games, practices and pep rallies, cheerleaders may attend a number of public relations and/or charitable events each year.

All appearances by the cheerleaders and/or Duke Mascot shall be approved in advance by the marketing Department.

The cheerleaders shall appear only at events/activities, which will reflect positively on them as individuals, and as representatives of the Athletics Association and the University.

In committing to an appearance for the cheerleaders, the advisor and/or coach shall give first consideration to the student's academic career and, in particular, attendance at classes. Other considerations to be weighed include (a) number of activities in that week, (b) the function or contribution of the cheerleaders at the event/activity, (c) the nature of the event/activity, (d) cost and/or travel expenses and distance to the event/activity, and (e) other valid considerations.

V. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Cheerleaders are reminded that, as highly visible members of the University community. While in uniform, but also while not in uniform, Duquesne University cheerleaders are known, and can easily be the object of criticism for their behavior or actions, in particular, for indulging or for over-indulging in alcoholic beverages.

Members of the squad shall adhere to the following rules:

- Cheerleaders shall not misuse alcoholic beverages and are subject to the Athletics Division Alcohol Policy
- Cheerleaders shall not offer to procure for or attempt to force cheerleaders who are under 21 or who do not want to drink alcoholic beverages into doing the same.
- Cheerleaders who violate these rules shall be subject to serious disciplinary measures up to and including immediate dismissal from the squad.

In addition, University officials shall not purchase or furnish alcoholic beverages for cheerleaders at any University event/function.

VI. RULES AND REGULATIONS

A. General

1. Cheerleaders shall: a. maintain a 2.0 grade point average, and b. be enrolled as a full-time student at Duquesne.
2. For justifiable reason(s), the coach may make an exception to rule 1b. above.
3. Cheerleaders and the mascot shall not consume alcoholic beverages while in uniform.
4. If funds are available and the squad attends a collegiate cheerleading camp, every member of the squad shall attend.
5. Each cheerleader shall have a complete physical by a physician prior to participation.
6. Each squad member is responsible for all of the clothing, uniforms, and equipment assigned to him/her. Care must be taken to insure such clothing, uniforms, and equipment is in a clean and presentable condition. Each squad member shall safeguard his/her clothing, uniforms, and equipment and shall be, therefore, personally liable for its replacement for loss or damage, excluding normal wear and tear.
7. Violations of any cheerleading rule shall subject the squad member to discipline. The advisor with consultation and advice of the coach always levies final discipline.
8. A serious violation of these rules or repeated violations shall result in one's being suspended from the squad. Less serious violations shall result in one's loss of the opportunity to travel to away games or post season tournaments. A squad member may be suspended from cheering one or more games due to violations of these rules.
9. These rules and regulations are subject to addition and change when found necessary and beneficial. The advisor makes final acceptance of all rules. Other rules concerning cheerleaders may be disseminated verbally or in written form by the advisor. Violation of these additional rules may result in disciplinary action.

B. Practices.

1. Cheerleaders shall:
 - a. attend all practices
 - b. not be tardy or absent from practice,
 - c. notify advisor, coach, or captain(s) as soon as possible if he/she finds it impossible to attend practice or knows he/she is going to be tardy

C. Games

1. Cheerleaders shall:

- a. attend all required home football and basketball games, pep rallies, and/or special scheduled games or activities
- b. arrive at the game site ninety minutes prior to kick off or tip off, unless the advisor, coach, or captains designate an earlier or later time

D. Travel (Also, see Section II. Travel Expectations, this document.)

1. Travel to away games will be in accordance with budget restrictions and in accordance with the NCAA, the A-10, and University rules and regulations.

2. The squad or a portion thereof will travel with a chaperone as a group and return as a group.

3. Final authority of all decisions made while traveling shall rest with the advisor and coach; decisions may be made with the advice and consent of the captains and majority.

4. An itinerary will usually be prepared and given to each cheerleader traveling. The itinerary will include times of departure, arrival, etc., telephone number(s) of hotel(s), appropriate articles of clothing, etc. Squad members shall adhere to the itinerary.

5. When only a specific number of cheerleaders are attending an away game, final authority on who goes rests with the coach. Consideration as to the selection shall be as follows: (1) determination of who wants to go; (2) attendance records at practices, games, special events with due consideration to tardiness; (3) Seniority.

VII. INJURIES/ILLNESSES

Any illness or injury shall be reported to a member of the Sports Medicine staff.

As a member of the Duquesne University cheerleading squad, cheerleaders may receive treatment from a member of the Sports Medicine staff free of charge. Any injury requiring physician referral or testing (X-Rays, MRI), will be billed to the participant's primary insurance. If there is a balance, participant can contact the Sports Medicine Department for additional claim procedure.

If an injury or illness incapacitates a squad member, he/she shall not be permitted to practice and cheer for a period of time as determined by the Duquesne University athletic trainer or a doctor. Return to participation at games or practices may be determined by a Duquesne University athletic trainer or a doctor.

If a Duquesne University doctor recommends that a squad member no longer cheer, due to injury or a health problem, the squad member shall be removed from the squad. If chronic illness or injury causes a squad member to miss games or practices repeatedly, the squad member may be removed from the squad by the advisor.

VIII. HEALTH, LIFE-STYLE AND NUTRITION

Introduction

The Duquesne University cheerleading program is committed to promoting and fostering healthy lifestyles and eating habits for squad members. Conduct which opposes this philosophy and/or conduct which poses unacceptable risk and disregard for the health, safety and welfare of participants is forbidden and will result in appropriate counseling and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination from the squad.

Cheerleaders at Duquesne University must be excellent athletes. Cheerleading involves some aspects of several athletic activities, e.g., rotation and tumbling of gymnastics, stamina of basketball, strength of body building or football, balance and movement of dance, etc. The Duquesne University cheer program performs at the standards of a top program, not the average cheer program.

A primary activity of the Duquesne University cheerleaders is the partner stunt. Pyramids are partner stunts combined vertically (in levels, not to exceed two human heights) and horizontally (side-by-side partner stunts). The nature of these activities demands certain general physical requirements of the Duquesne University cheerleader. The male squad members and the all-girl bases must have sufficient strength to base pyramids and to lift, hold, throw and catch females safely. Female co-ed squad members and all-girl flyers must be of appropriate size and weight such that they can be lifted, held, thrown and caught safely.

Education

Education is the key to promotion of healthy lifestyles and preventing eating disorders. Nutritional information and/or counseling is available through the Sports Medicine staff. The educational unit of the Duquesne University Cheer Program on promoting healthy lifestyles and preventing eating disorders will include a lecture/meeting with a nutritionist, usually by a professor of nutrition, as arranged by the Duquesne University sports medicine staff.