

**OFFICE OF ACADEMIC SUPPORT FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES**

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**INTRODUCTION**

At The George Washington University, athletic and academic excellence are inseparable goals for student-athletes. The University is committed to the academic success and graduation of students participating in its athletic programs. The Department of Athletics and Recreation supports this commitment with academic support services in order to maximize the potential for success of every student-athlete.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY****Student Academic Integrity Policy**

The acquisition, sharing, communication, and evaluation of knowledge are at the core of the mission of The George Washington University. As responsible members of the academic community, students are obligated not to violate the basic standards of integrity. They also are expected to take an active role in encouraging other members to respect those standards. Cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, and misrepresentation of data, abuse of academic materials, multiple submissions, and complicity in academic dishonesty are serious violations of the Academic Integrity Policy and may result in penalties that may include an “F” for the assignment, an “F” for the course, suspension from the University for a designated period of time or even expulsion from the University. Please refer to [www.gwu.edu/~integrity](http://www.gwu.edu/~integrity) for detailed information regarding The George Washington University’s academic integrity policy

**ORIENTATION****Freshmen Events**

All incoming freshmen student-athletes are encouraged to attend the student-athlete open house during the second day of CI. There is also an open house, held at the same time in a different location, for parents of incoming student-athletes. Both open houses run approximately one hour and serve as an opportunity to hear about the support services available and to ask any questions.

When freshmen student-athletes arrive to campus, for either pre-season (prior to the beginning of the fall semester) or the start of the semester, they are required to attend an NCAA compliance meeting. This meeting provides them with information on NCAA rules and regulations. Members of the Office of Academic Support for Student-Athletes also attend this meeting to review NCAA academic requirements, support services available to student-athletes and student-athlete responsibilities.

On the first night of classes, a welcome dinner is held for all freshmen and transfer student-athletes. Student-athletes are assigned to tables based upon the school in which they are enrolled (i.e., Columbian

College of Arts and Sciences, School of Business, etc) along with two upper-classmen student-athletes who are also in that school. The Student Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC) representatives attend this dinner. The SAAC President and Vice president welcome the freshmen and give them a brief overview of SAAC and explain how they can get involved. SAAC also develops a “Freshmen Packet” which gives the incoming student-athletes valuable information about GW and the surrounding DC community. Members of the Athletic Department administration also attend the event and welcome the freshmen. Each year, a number of individuals outside of the Athletic Department are invited to attend the dinner and speak about their offices and services. In past years, a representative from the University Counseling Center, Career Center and Academic Integrity Office have all attended the dinner.

Six weeks into the semester, a pizza and bowling event is offered to freshmen and again, all SAAC reps are required to attend. This is an informal event which facilitates bringing the freshmen and upperclassmen leaders, together for a fun evening.

### Athlete Mentor Program (AMP)

Athlete Mentor Program (AMP) is a mentoring program for incoming freshmen student-athletes. Run during fall semester only, freshmen are paired with an upperclassman student-athlete on a sports team other than their own. Freshmen are assigned to mentors based on gender (mentors and freshmen are the same gender) as well as their majors, hometowns and interests. Current student-athletes apply and interview in order to be selected as mentors. Freshmen can apply, be nominated by their coach or Athletic Academic Advisor or sign up to be a part of the program during Colonial Inauguration (CI). Mentors sign contracts acknowledging the time commitment of the program and if for any reason they cannot fulfill their obligations, they must alert the AMP coordinators as soon as possible. Mentors also are required to attend mandatory training sessions during the spring semester and are given a booklet that outlines the program’s mission and guidelines.

AMP hosts two mandatory events during the fall semester: an opening social with all the mentors and freshmen as well as a registration/academic information session in the middle of October before priority registration. Other events also held include attending a BBQ and a GW sporting event on campus. Mentors and freshmen are also expected to be in contact via e-mail, phone or in person several times per month. Two mentor-only meetings are also held in the fall: one in mid-October and the other in early December. Both meetings are a chance to get feedback directly from the mentors.

### **ACADEMIC ADVISING**

All students enrolled at The George Washington University are assigned an academic advisor from the college in which they are enrolled. Student-athletes are also assigned an Athletic Academic Advisor from the Office of Academic Support for Student-Athletes. Student-athletes should note that their assigned advisor within their college will assist them with graduation requirements while the Athletic Academic Advisors will assist them with NCAA and Conference eligibility requirements in addition to graduation requirements.

### **REGISTRATION AND CLASS SELECTION**

Student-athletes are encouraged to take 15 credits per semester to keep them on track to graduate in four years (check with your program to determine the EXACT number of credits you need). No student-athlete may be registered for fewer than 12 credits unless s/he has received written confirmation from

the Assistant Athletics Director/Compliance. This can only occur if the student-athlete is in graduate school, is in his/her final semester prior to graduation, or received a waiver from the NCAA. Proper documentation must be on file in the GW Athletics Compliance Office.

### Registration Checklist

- Meet with school/major advisor for approval of classes
- Meet with Athletic Academic Advisor for approval of classes
- Look on-line at class offerings
- Classes work together (no conflicts)
- Classes are open
- Classes are not scheduled during practice times
- Classes fulfill GCR or major requirements
- Holds are checked and cleared
- Date of priority registration is? Do I have conflicts with that date?

*Any student-athlete who wishes to make a schedule change after being officially advised **MUST** inform the Athletic Academic Advisors at 613 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, NW. **PRIOR** to making the change.*

### **CLASS ATTENDANCE – UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENT POLICY**

Attending regularly scheduled and scheduled make up classes, discussions and recitations, laboratory sessions and other course meetings is a fundamental student responsibility. Faculty may use class attendance and participation as factors in determining course grades. The contributions of class attendance and participation toward course grades should be explicitly stated on course syllabi as should all factors used in determining these grades.

While it is expected that students will make every effort to attend classes, it is recognized that personal circumstances (e.g., religious observances, documented family and medical emergencies) and University-scheduled events (e.g., varsity athletic competitions, performances) will arise which preclude class attendance. In such circumstances, faculty and other instructors are expected to make appropriate accommodations (e.g., make up tests, adjusted due dates for papers and projects), such accommodations to be determined by the faculty member. The student is responsible for obtaining the materials presented in missed classes and for making up missed tests and other assignments. No academic penalty shall be imposed for class absences which are permissible in accordance with University policy.

It is expected that students will schedule classes in order to minimize the number of classes that may be missed. Further, it is expected that whenever possible, students will inform course instructors in advance of any absences related to scheduled events.

### **CLASS CONFLICTS AND TRAVEL LETTERS**

**NCAA rules do not allow any student-athlete to miss a class for practice activities.** It is the student-athlete's responsibility to communicate with professors when a class must be missed due to athletic competition.

- Introduce yourself to each professor at the **BEGINNING OF THE SEMESTER**.
- Complete Travel Letter, listing all absences due to competition **AND** note academic conflicts (obtain this from your Athletic Academic Advisor).
- Submit Travel Letters to professor **AT LEAST** one week prior to first absence.
- Arrange for any make-up work **PRIOR** to absence.
- Remind professor, regularly, of upcoming absences (due to travel or competition).
- **Missing class (for any reason other than sanctioned travel/competition dates) is not acceptable.**

### **MONITORING ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

There are several ways that the Office of Academic Support for Student-Athletes monitors the progress of GW's student-athletes. One of these methods is through one-on-one weekly meetings. Athletic academic advisors meet weekly with freshmen, transfers, international students and any sophomore through senior who is considered to be "at-risk." During these meetings, student-athletes give their athletic academic advisor a general overview of what is transpiring in their classes as well as self-reported grades. Athletic academic advisors keep in contact with the professors of these students via e-mail and phone. Athletic academic advisors are required to take notes on an interdepartmental form. These notes are then given to the Head Academic Coordinator every Friday for review.

For all student-athletes, progress reports are sent out approximately six weeks into each semester for each class in which a student-athlete is enrolled. Progress reports are forms that professors fill out that provide feedback regarding a student's attendance, participation, grades and overall performance in the course. The forms are mailed directly to each professor from the Office of Academic Support for Student-Athletes. Forms are returned to the Head Academic Coordinator who reviews all reports before distributing them to the respective athletic academic advisor for each team. The original is given to the coach of that team. Professor feedback from the reports is shared with the student-athlete by his or her coach. For any student-athlete that receives a grade or comments that generate concern, the student is contacted directly by his or her athletic academic advisor and must meet with the athletic academic advisor to discuss the situation and suggestions for improvement.

### **DECLARING A MAJOR**

Student-athletes must have declared a major and concentration (if required by the program) by the beginning of the student-athletes 5<sup>th</sup> full time semester of college enrollment.

#### ***Steps for Declaring a Major and/or Concentration:***

- Complete Declaration of Major Concentration Form
- Meet with the Chairperson of the major concentration Department and obtain signature
- Submit signed form to your school
- Submit copy to your athletic academic advisor

If assistance is needed with major selection, the student-athletes are instructed to consider their interests and career goals. They are also referred to the GW Career Center where they can receive *Choosing a Major Handouts* and other information on numerous majors. The student-athletes are encouraged to speak with faculty members or department chairs and if needed they would be referred

to the University Counseling Center for an individual counseling session or for a Choosing a Major workshop. The Office of Academic Support for Student-Athletes staff is available for informal advising and counseling on choices of courses and majors.

*Note: all student-athletes who change their major should discuss this decision prior to completing the paperwork with their athletic academic advisor as this decision may adversely affect athletic eligibility.*

## GRADING

### Incomplete Grades

Do not arrange to take an “incomplete” or to “withdraw” from a course without checking with your athletic academic advisor. Incompletes and withdrawals can have implications for both eligibility and graduation.

Incomplete grades must be made up by the end of the following semester; otherwise, the grade can revert to an “F”. Graduating seniors must resolve any outstanding incomplete grades and have their records adjusted before official graduation can occur.

### Repeating Courses

When a course is repeated, students will receive credit for the course **only once**. **Please note that a course taken the second time CANNOT count toward the credits necessary for eligibility (unless there was no credit assigned the first time, due to a grade of “F” in the course).**

### Pass/No Pass Option

In most programs, the pass/no pass grading option is limited to juniors and seniors and cannot be used in courses that fulfill general curriculum or major requirements. Additionally, there is a limit (usually 4) as to the total number of courses that can be taken pass/no pass. Please be sure to check with your school and athletic academic advisor before considering this option.

## TRANSFER OF CREDIT FOLLOWING ADMISSION TO GW

Students who wish to take course work at other institutions following enrollment at The George Washington University must comply with the following policies:

- Obtain approval, in writing, to take that course, from the appropriate department (math dept. for a math course). **Do this prior to enrollment in that course.**
- Earn a grade of C- or better (needed in order to transfer the credit).
- Send official transcript, from “visiting institution” to the GW Office of Admissions.

**Note: grades earned at any non-consortium school will not be counted toward the student’s grade point average at The George Washington University.**

**Additionally, new university policies allow ONLY 24 advanced placement (AP) credits and the transfer of ONLY 9 credit hours from outside institutions to be counted for graduation credit. Check with your school to be certain you do NOT EXCEED the maximum allowable credits.**

## ACADEMIC ENHANCEMENT

### Learning Specialist

The Office of Academic Support for Student-Athletes employs its own Learning Specialist who offers a variety of academic support services to student athletes both on an individual basis and in small groups. Students may receive assistance with particular courses as well as more generalized study skills and time management. We work with students on all aspects of writing from brainstorming to the final edit. We also offer four to six week workshops targeting such topics as test preparation and efficient reading skills.

Coaches can contact the Office of Academic Support for Student-Athletes to request particular workshops and the Learning Specialist will design a short term workshop based on the needs of the particular team. Recent workshops have included speed reading and preparation for midterm exams.

Freshmen are offered additional support in making the transition to college level work and can request a weekly appointment with the Learning Specialist to learn more about their own learning style and learning strengths. They are also introduced to a variety of study skills, time management and note-taking techniques.

### Tutors

The Office of Academic Support for Student-Athletes has a tutoring coordinator who along with the other athletic academic advisors, recruits tutors through a variety of methods. For consideration, applicants need to complete an application which includes two recommendations, a resume and a copy of their transcript. Additionally the applicant will interview with the tutoring coordinator or other athletic academic support staff.

A mandatory orientation session for tutors is required prior to hiring. This session reviews NCAA and tutoring policies and procedures. Following the session, tutors are required to sign a form stating that they have been hired by the Athletics Department and will adhere to all applicable NCAA policies and procedures. The Office of Academic Support for Student-Athletes has a library of textbooks and course materials available for tutors to utilize.

### Applying for a tutor

All student-athletes are eligible for free tutoring services. To request tutoring, a Request for Academic Assistance Form must be completed. This is available on-line at [http://www.gwsports.com/auto\\_pdf/p\\_hotos/s\\_chools/gewa/genrel/auto\\_pdf/tutor-request-form](http://www.gwsports.com/auto_pdf/p_hotos/s_chools/gewa/genrel/auto_pdf/tutor-request-form) or in the Office of Academic Support for Student-Athletes. The form must be filled out completely and the course instructor must answer the questions and sign the back of the form. Once the form is completed the student-athlete will return it to the tutoring coordinator or their athletic academic advisor. The tutoring coordinator will then assign a tutor, based on availability, via e-mail. It is then the student-athletes' responsibility to contact their tutor and make arrangements to meet. The tutoring sessions take place at a mutually convenient time and place. The Office of Academic Support for Student-Athletes is available for use, as well as Gelman Library, J Street café and Ivory Tower café.

### Monitored Study Time

Coaches and the Office of Academic Support for Student-Athletes determine which student-athletes

will attend study hall sessions. Freshmen and continuing student-athletes with a GPA that warrants attention may be required to attend study hall. Transfer students may also be required to complete study hall hours depending upon their academic profile from their previous institution and the recommendations of their athletic academic advisor and head coach. The athletic academic advisor and head coach evaluate academic performance after the first semester to determine who must continue to complete mandatory study hall hours.

Those teams assigned mandatory study hall time, complete their hours in the Office of Academic Support for Student-Athletes which is equipped with a computer lab, study carrels and small meeting rooms. Some student-athletes are assigned specific days and times for which they must complete study hall; this is monitored on a sign-in basis. Study hall can be completed Monday –Thursday between 9am-9pm and Friday between 9am-5pm. A sign-in binder with sheets that include name, date, time in, time out and hours completed that week is provided in the office. These hours are monitored, and a copy of the sign-in sheet is given to the head coach weekly. If student-athletes are not completing, or falsifying, the required hours, they are disciplined in a manner decided upon by the head coach and the athletic academic advisor.

## **LIFESKILLS**

### **Student-Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC)**

The George Washington University Student-Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC) works in conjunction with the Atlantic-10 Conference SAAC to improve the student-athlete experience by facilitating communication between student-athletes and the administration. This communication and interaction is key in shaping intercollegiate athletics policies throughout Division I which enhance student-athlete experiences.

SAAC also works to solicit student-athlete responses to NCAA proposed legislation as well as organizing community service opportunities, promoting competition, building a sense of community among student-athletes, and hosting activities. SAAC is comprised of at least one representatives from each of GW's 22 varsity teams who then elect an executive board. Members meet once a month with Athletics Department Administrators and with additional meetings as needed to discuss ongoing projects and to explore new opportunities.

## **CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

### **Athletic Career Track (ACT)**

The Office of Academic Support for Student-Athletes has the Athletic Career Track program (ACT) which was designed as a comprehensive career development program specifically for student-athletes. Through various interactive workshops and seminars, student-athletes are provided the skills necessary to prepare for life after GW. These workshops include:

- Writing resumes & cover letters
- Applying to graduate school
- Finding and applying for internships
- Preparing for interviews
- Senior Outgoing Seminar

Additionally, all student-athletes are required to submit a resume to the Office of Academic Support for Student-Athletes every fall semester. For assistance athletic academic advisors are available for one-on-one consultations to review resumes, cover letters, personal statements and applications for graduate school, scholarships or internships.

The George Washington University also has an extensive Career Center that posts scholarships and provides ample opportunities for career development. These events are e-mailed weekly to all student-athletes via the Athletics Department list-serv. The Career Center runs a “Career Campaign” during the fall and spring semesters which offers comprehensive workshops on a myriad of career-related topics. Each year the Career Center works with the Office of Academic Support for Student-Athletes to put on one workshop within the “Career Campaign” that is specifically designed for student-athletes. This workshop is included in the flyers and brochures produced by the Career Center.

**1. Responsibilities in class:**

- Attend all classes.
- Get the required textbooks and supplies as soon as possible.
- Inform instructors of expected absences prior to an athletic event that requires missing class.
- Complete assignments and take examinations when they are scheduled.
- Obtain notes/materials when missing class.
- Handle differences with instructors personally, turning to the Office of Academic Support for Student-Athletes staff only when an issue cannot be resolved.

**2. Responsibilities to the Office of Academic Support for Student-Athletes staff:**

- Provide a completed class schedule/personal information form. Update as necessary.
- Inform your athletic academic advisor of scheduled surgery, family deaths or illnesses, or admission to the hospital (health center) which may require absence from class.
- Ensure that all class hours and courses count quantitatively towards graduation (see your athletic academic advisor and your Major Advisor).
- Do not drop a course without checking with your athletic academic advisor (*Students must be enrolled in at least 12 hours every semester to retain eligibility*).
- Meet with your athletic academic advisor and your assigned major advisor to plan a class schedule prior to each semester.
- Fill out appropriate tutor request forms to receive tutorial assistance.
- Contact tutors personally to arrange or cancel tutoring sessions.
- Report to your athletic academic advisor any academic difficulties and request assistance.
- Follow suggestions or remedies from the Office of Academic Support for Student-Athletes staff regarding academic situations and assume personal responsibility for your academic eligibility.
- Make and keep appointments with athletics academic support staff.

**3. Responsibilities to the University:**

- Abide by all rules and regulations established by the University regarding the appropriate behavior of students.
- Resolve all financial obligations and/or complete appropriate paperwork if receiving financial aid.
- Handle all checklist offenses (e.g., traffic fines, library fines, housing fines, athletic fines, etc.) prior to entering Registration.
- Process all forms (e.g., pass-fail option, drop and add, FX request, etc.) as directed by the University, meeting the due dates indicated on the university's website.
- Review and follow all rules set forth by the Office of Academic Integrity. Information can be obtained by calling 202/994-1977 or visiting the website at [www.gwu.edu/~integrity](http://www.gwu.edu/~integrity).

## TEN TIPS FOR MANAGING STUDY TIME

**1. Identify your “best time” for studying.**

Everyone has high and low periods of attention and concentration. Are you a “morning” or a “night” person? Use your power times to study. Use the down times for routines such as laundry and errands.

**2. Study difficult subjects first.**

When you are fresh, you can process information more quickly and save time as a result.

**3. Plan time blocks of one and a half to two hours for studying.**

After one and a half to two hours of study, you may tire and lose the ability to concentrate. Few students can study effectively for more than two hours at a time.

**4. Set study time as soon after lecture classes as possible.**

An hour spent shortly after class is worth several spent a day or more later. Look over your lecture notes while they are fresh in your mind. Start assignments while your memory is tuned in to the topic.

**5. Use breaks between classes for studying.**

The odd gaps of one or two hours before, between and after classes are easy to waste but can be used effectively in preparation and review.

**6. Combine studying with quiet activities such as doing laundry.**

If you are completing a task that does not require your undivided attention, bring along class notes or a book to read. For example, if you are doing laundry, bring those psychology class notes to read while your clothes are drying.

**7. Don’t steal time—trade it.**

When something comes up that takes time you had planned to spend studying, decide immediately when you can make up the study time and adjust your schedule for the week.

**8. Make sure the surroundings are conducive to studying.**

This will allow you to reduce distractions that can “waste time.” If there are times in the residence halls or your apartment that are particularly noisy, use that time for mindless tasks.

**9. Make sure you have time to sleep and eat properly.**

Sacrificing sleep or a well balanced diet makes the time you spend studying less effective.

**10. Make room for entertainment and relaxation.**

College is more than studying. College is more than athletics. College is more than partying. You need to have a balance in your life.

