

## **Department of Athletics Guideline: Impermissible Communication with Other University Units**

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 As outlined in the institution's Institutional Governance Standards, this guideline ensures that the Other University Units<sup>1</sup> maintain independence in their decision making abilities and freedom from potential Undue Influence from athletics.

### 2. Guideline

- 2.1 This guideline prohibits Ohio State Athletics Department staff members and boosters from engaging in Impermissible Communication with the staff members of Other University Units regarding student-athletes or prospective student-athletes.

### 3. Persons Affected

- 3.1 Ohio State Athletics Department staff members
- 3.2 Ohio State Athletics Department boosters
- 3.3 Ohio State University faculty members
- 3.4 The Office of Athletics Compliance
- 3.5 The Office of Undergraduate Admissions
- 3.6 The Office of Graduate and Professional Admissions
- 3.7 The Office of the University Registrar
- 3.8 The Office of Student Conduct
- 3.9 Ohio State Medical and Athletic Training Services
- 3.10 The Office of Student Financial Aid
- 3.11 The Office of University Compliance and Integrity
- 3.12 The Student-Athlete Support Services Office
- 3.13 Faculty Athletics Representative

### 4. Definitions

- 4.1 "Athletics Department staff members" means all full-time or part-time staff members employed by the Athletics Department, volunteer staff and graduate assistants.
- 4.2 "Booster" means an individual or organization that has ever (1) made financial contributions to the Athletics Department or athletics booster organization of the institution, including the purchase of athletics tickets; (2) provided benefits to student-athletes or their families; (3) assisted in the recruitment of prospective student-athletes, or (4) otherwise promoted the institution's athletics program.
- 4.3 "Faculty members" means all professors, course instructors, teaching assistants, tutors, and college advisors.
- 4.4 "Impermissible Communication" means (1) Undue Influence; or (2) direct communication to Other University Units in violation of the procedures below.

---

<sup>1</sup> Other units will be added to this guideline as deemed necessary.

- 4.5 “Medical and Athletic Training Services” means team physicians, athletic trainers, physical therapists and any other Ohio State personnel associated with providing medical or athletic training services to student-athletes.
- 4.6 “Other University Units” means faculty members, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, the Office of Graduate and Professional Admissions, the Office of the University Registrar, the Office of Student Conduct, Medical and Athletic Training Services, and the Office of Student Financial Aid.
- 4.7 “Prospective student-athlete” means an individual who has started classes for the ninth grade and beyond.
- 4.8 “Student-athlete” means an individual on the institution’s squad list for the applicable academic year.
- 4.9 “Student Financial Aid” means staff members in the Office of Student Financial Aid.
- 4.10 “Undue Influence” means undue pressure or insistence encouraging the Other University Unit to act in a manner contrary to its best practices or requirements.
  - 4.10.1 Conversations intended to understand the parameters of the Other University Unit’s practices or requirements do not constitute Undue Influence.

## 5 Procedures

- 5.1 Except as otherwise noted herein, Athletics Department staff members and boosters will not engage in Impermissible Communication with the staff members of the Other University Units<sup>2</sup>.
  - 5.1.1 Faculty members: All communication from Athletics Department staff members or boosters with faculty members regarding the academics or graduate admission of a student-athlete or prospective student-athlete must be made by the Director of SASSO, his or her designees, the Faculty Athletics Representative, or the Athletics Compliance Office as needed.
    - 5.1.1.1 Exception: communication between an Athletics Department staff member and a faculty member for the purpose of scheduling an academic meeting during a prospective student-athlete’s visit to campus is permitted.
    - 5.1.1.2 Exception: communication between an Athletics Department staff member or booster and a faculty member if such Athletic Department staff member or booster is the parent or legal guardian of the student-athlete or prospective student-athlete.

---

<sup>2</sup> Nothing in this guideline is intended to prohibit necessary communications during the course of an investigation of a legal issue, NCAA rules violation, or Student Code of Conduct violation, including an allegation of academic misconduct.

- 5.1.2 The Office of Athletics Compliance: Communications from Athletics Department staff members or boosters which places Undue Influence on the staff members in the Office of Athletics Compliance are Impermissible Communications.
- 5.1.2.1 It is not an Impermissible Communication for Athletics Department staff members or boosters to communicate directly with staff members in the Office of Athletics Compliance
- 5.1.3 The Office of Undergraduate Admissions: All communication from Athletics Department staff members or boosters with staff members in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions regarding scholarships, grants or admission of a prospective student-athlete or student-athlete must be made by a member of the Student-Athlete Support Services Office or Athletics Compliance Office as needed.
- 5.1.3.1 Exception: communication between an Athletics Department staff member or booster and staff members in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions if such Athletic Department staff member or booster is the parent or legal guardian of the student-athlete or prospective student-athlete.
- 5.1.4 The Office of Graduate and Professional Admissions: All communication from Athletics Department staff members or boosters with staff members in the Office of Graduate and Professional Admissions regarding the admission of a prospective student-athlete must be made by a member of the Student-Athlete Support Services Office or Athletics Compliance Office as needed.
- 5.1.4.1 Exception: communication between an Athletics Department staff member or booster and staff members in the Office of Graduate and Professional Admissions if such Athletic Department staff member or booster is the parent or legal guardian of the student-athlete or prospective student-athlete.
- 5.1.5 The Office of the University Registrar: All communication from Athletics Department staff members or boosters with staff members in the University Registrar regarding the academic eligibility of a student-athlete must be made by a member of the Student-Athlete Support Services Office or Athletics Compliance Office as needed.
- 5.1.5.1 Exception: communication between an Athletics Department staff member or booster and staff members in the University Registrar if such Athletic Department staff member or booster is the parent or legal guardian of the student-athlete or prospective student-athlete.

- 5.1.6 The Office of Student Conduct: All communication from Athletics Department staff members or boosters with staff members in the Office of Student Conduct regarding student conduct or academic misconduct issues involving a student-athlete must be made by the Athletics Director or his or her designees.
  - 5.1.6.1 Exception: communication between an Athletics Department staff member and a staff member in Student Conduct for the purpose of scheduling a meeting with a student-athlete is permitted provided Student Conduct initiates the contact.
  - 5.1.6.2 Exception: communication between an Athletic Department staff member or booster and staff members in Student Conduct if such Athletic Department staff member or booster is the parent or legal guardian of the student-athlete.
- 5.1.7 Medical and Athletic Training Services: Communications from Athletics Department staff members or boosters with staff members in Medical and Athletic Training Services which places Undue Influence on the staff members in Medical and Athletic Training Services regarding prospective student-athlete or student-athlete health or welfare are Impermissible Communications.
  - 5.1.7.1 It is not an Impermissible Communication for Athletics Department staff members to communicate directly with staff members in Medical and Athletic Training Services.
  - 5.1.7.2 It is an Impermissible Communication for boosters to communicate directly with staff members in Medical and Athletic Training Services.
    - 5.1.7.2.1 Exception: communication between a booster and staff members in Medical and Athletic Training Services if such booster is the parent or legal guardian of the student-athlete or prospective student-athlete.
- 5.1.8 Student Financial Aid: All communication from Athletics Department staff members or boosters with staff members in Student Financial Aid regarding the financial aid of a student-athlete or prospective student-athlete must be made by a member of the Athletics Compliance Office.
  - 5.1.8.1 Exception: communication between an Athletics Department staff member or booster and staff members in Student Financial Aid if such Athletic Department staff member or booster is the parent or legal guardian of the student-athlete or prospective student-athlete.

5.1.9 The Student Athlete Support Services Office: Communications from Athletics Department staff members or boosters which places Undue Influence on the staff members in the Student Athlete Support Services Office are Impermissible Communications.

5.1.9.1 It is not an Impermissible Communication for Athletics Department staff members or boosters to communicate directly with staff members in the Student Athlete Support Services Office.

5.2 Staff members of the Other University Units are encouraged to report violations of this guideline by Athletics Department staff members or boosters to the Faculty Athletics Representative or Vice President and Chief Compliance Officer.

## 6 Approvals and Revision History

- 6.1 Approved by Big Ten Working Group –02/23/2015
- 6.2 Approved by Big Ten Working Group Subcommittee – 02/25/2015
- 6.3 Revised to include the University Registrar– 05/27/2015
- 6.4 Revised to include Graduate and Professional Admissions and redefine impermissible communication – 08/20/2015
- 6.5 Revised to include the Student Athlete Support Services Office and redefine undue influence – 12/17/2015