

# Financial Aid in College Athletics

*A Periodical Prepared by the Office of Athletic Compliance*

University of Pittsburgh



## Financial Aid: **POP QUIZ!**

### QUESTION:

BillyBob, a senior in high school, signs an NLI and accompanying financial aid agreement during the early signing period (November 2011) to play basketball at Pitt when he initially enrolls at the University beginning in Fall 2012. BillyBob however, graduates from high school a semester early and opts to get a jump start on his studies by instead enrolling at Pitt in the Spring 2012 term—a semester earlier than what was stipulated in his aid agreement. Under these circumstances, may BillyBob receive athletics aid for the Spring 2012 term?

### ANSWER:

NO! Any athletics aid provided to BillyBob in Spring 2012 would result in an athletics grant-in-aid being awarded for a period in excess of one academic year, and would thus be impermissible.

If BillyBob wished to receive aid for the Spring 2012 term, he could initiate a release from his NLI and, if granted, receive an athletics aid contract for the semester. By doing so however, BillyBob's athletics aid for the 2011-12 academic year would be subject to the renewal/nonrenewal aid process in accordance with NCAA legislation.



## Bylaw 15.2.8.1.2.5 - Exception for First-Time Recipient in the Next Academic Year

NCAA bylaw 15.2.8.1.2.5, initially effective for the Summer 2011 term, permits student-athletes who attended an institution without having received any athletics aid during the previous academic year to receive athletics aid for the institution's summer term, provided that the student-athlete has been awarded athletics aid for the following year. This summer aid can be awarded only in proportion to the amount of athletics aid the student will receive during the following academic year.

This bylaw amends the NCAA's previous policy, which precluded student-athletes from receiving athletics aid for the summer term if they were enrolled full-time at the institution in the prior academic year but had not received any athletically related scholarship.

## Case Study: OVER-AWARDING

NCAA bylaw 15.1 renders a student-athlete athletically ineligible if the SA receives institutional financial aid based on athletics ability that exceeds the value of a full grant-in-aid.

During the 2010-11 academic year, two SAs at Institution X were found to have violated this policy as a result of clerical errors on behalf of the institution.

- SA #1 received institutional aid in excess of a full grant-in-aid after her account was credited for 15 course hours despite her only being enrolled in 14 hours, resulting in SA #1's account being over-awarded by \$795.12.
- SA #2 was deemed to be in violation of this bylaw when her account was credited twice for a textbook rental—once from her athletics scholarship and once from a university scholarship—resulting in an over-award of \$95.44.

**We appreciate everyone's assistance with our biannual financial aid audit, which allows us to catch any changes to a student-athlete's account that might result in an over-award!**