

NCAA Fact Sheet

Background Information:

Overview: Certain members of the University of Richmond men's and women's basketball coaching staffs violated NCAA regulations regarding communications with prospective student-athletes via text messages and telephone calls. The University has worked closely with NCAA representatives to review this matter and expects to receive the NCAA's Notice of Allegations (the formal document charging the violations) within the next thirty days.

Facts: In November, 2007, the University discovered and self-reported violations of a new NCAA rule prohibiting the sending of text messages to prospective student-athletes. This rule went into effect August 1, 2007. The University self-reported these violations and imposed sanctions on the coaches who committed the violations and their respective programs. During the University's investigation of these text message violations, it was discovered that telephone calls that violated NCAA regulations governing such contacts were made by men's basketball coaches.

The University is cooperating fully with the NCAA review that is customary in matters of this nature and believes the NCAA will accept the University's self-imposed sanctions as sufficient and that the University will not face additional sanctions such as scholarship loss or a ban from post-season play. In addition, a two-year probationary period is a presumptive penalty in a major violation case. There is no impact on the eligibility of the prospective student-athletes who received these improper text messages or telephone calls.

The individual staff members who are responsible for the majority of the improper text messages and telephone calls are no longer University employees.

Frequently Asked Questions:

What violation of NCAA rules occurred?

Text Messages: Although NCAA rules permit coaches to contact prospective student-athletes in person, by telephone, by email and through correspondence, a new NCAA rule prohibits contact with prospective student-athletes by text messaging. This new rule went into effect August 1, 2007. However, certain members of the University's men's and women's basketball coaching staffs continued to text message with prospective student-athletes after August 1.

The investigation revealed that men's basketball assistant coaches had approximately 38 text message conversations with prospective student-athletes that contained more than 100 text messages. The majority of these text messages [over 90%] were from one assistant basketball coach. Investigators also found that women's basketball coaches had more than 90 text message conversations with prospective student-athletes that contained more than 300 text messages. The majority of these text messages [80%] were sent by one assistant basketball coach. All of the text messages sent by the women's basketball coaches were made after the prospective student-athletes had committed to attend the University of Richmond.

Telephone Calls: NCAA rules govern the number of telephone calls coaches are permitted to make to prospective student-athletes. During the investigation of the text messages, it was discovered that telephone calls were made to prospective student-athletes that exceeded the permitted number of calls.

During the time period in question, NCAA regulations permit coaches to make only two telephone calls per week to any individual prospective student-athlete. During a four-month period, University men's basketball coaches made between 50 and 90 improper telephone calls to prospective student-athletes. There is an ongoing discussion with the NCAA staff regarding which calls actually violate NCAA rules because approximately 70% of these improper telephone calls were two minutes or less. The majority [approximately 75%] of these improper telephone calls were made by one assistant basketball coach.

How did the University discover these infractions?

The Assistant Director of Athletics for Compliance discovered the text message violations in November, 2007 during a review of recruiting telephone logs and telephone records. When it became apparent that rules violations had occurred, the athletic department immediately notified the University President, the University Faculty Athletics Representative, and the NCAA. The athletic department then worked with NCAA representatives to conduct a department-wide audit of cellular phone records for additional evidence of text messaging.

During the subsequent review of telephone records, the Assistant Director of Athletics for Compliance determined that the number of telephone calls by members of the men's basketball coaching staff to prospective student-athletes exceeded the number of telephone calls permitted during certain weeks by NCAA recruiting regulations.

What action did the University take?

When the text message violations were discovered, the University notified the NCAA and worked with its representatives to thoroughly investigate the matter and then filed self-reports to the NCAA in a timely manner. The University has responded aggressively by self-imposing recruiting restrictions on the men's and women's basketball programs and by placing sanctions on those coaches who were involved. The University has reduced the allowable recruiting days the coaching staff can recruit off-campus, reduced the number of official visits, and limited the telephone contact to prospective student-athletes during the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 seasons. The sanctions imposed on the individuals responsible for the text messaging and telephone call violations are confidential.

Note: To protect our employees' rights to privacy, the University of Richmond cannot disclose the names of the individuals who have been sanctioned or their specific sanctions.

Will the University be placed on probation? If so, what does that mean?

Although the NCAA Committee on Infractions may grant an exception, a two-year probationary period is a presumptive penalty in a major violation case. If the University is placed on probation, the Committee on Infractions will identify conditions that we must satisfy during the probationary period. These conditions are likely to include written reports to the NCAA, implementation of educational programs, and additional audits.

What happens next?

The University expects to receive the NCAA's Notice of Allegations within the next 30 days. The Notice of Allegations will identify the date the University's response is due.

Timeline

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| November 2007 | Text message violations in the sport of men's basketball discovered by the Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance. The University President and Faculty Athletics Representative are informed and the University immediately self-reports these violations to the Atlantic 10 Conference and NCAA. The University begins ongoing communication with the NCAA's membership services staff to process these violations. |
| December 2007 | Self-report of the text message violations is finalized and hand-delivered to the NCAA by University's Director of Athletics and Faculty Athletics Representative. The NCAA reviews the report and informs the University that the text message violations will be processed as a major violation. |
| January 2008 | University receives the Official Notice of Inquiry from NCAA Enforcement. The NCAA membership votes to affirm the new legislation regarding text messaging at its national convention. |
| February 2008 | The NCAA reviews the University's revised self-report of the text message violations and informs the University that the case will be processed as major. NCAA Enforcement conducts a conference call with the Director of Athletics and Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance to discuss the nature of the NCAA's inquiry into the text message violations. The NCAA requests to review text messages from all sports and coaches. All information from all sports regarding their text messages are to be submitted to the NCAA by March. |
| March 2008 | Additional text message violations are discovered by the Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance in the sport of women's basketball. |
| April 2008 | University submits a self-report detailing women's basketball text message violations. The NCAA conducts interviews with various staff and prospects regarding text message violations. |
| July 2008 | NCAA requests phone bill records of men's basketball staff. The University and NCAA determine there are probable violations of NCAA recruiting regulations regarding telephone calls. |
| September 2008 | NCAA signals that its investigation is complete. University expects to receive the Notice of Allegations from the NCAA. |