

NCAA Compliance 101 for USC Student-Athletes



Updated August 2011

University of Southern California Contact Information

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Dear Student-Athletes:

The University of Southern California is proud of its great tradition in intercollegiate athletics. We are committed to achievement in the classroom, adherence to all National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and Pacific-12 Conference rules, and a rich and rewarding college experience for you.

This guide has been developed to provide you with the basic information you need to know about rules that affect your eligibility to participate in intercollegiate athletics. The scope and complexity of NCAA rules preclude us from addressing every possible situation in a short guide like this. However, additional information about NCAA rules may be found on the USC, Pac-12 or NCAA Web sites.

Please be aware that there may be a time in which you are involved in a NCAA or Pac-12 investigation, and your complete and forthright cooperation is expected.

Please read the information in this brochure and feel free to contact the Compliance Office with additional questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Dave Roberts
Vice President for Athletic Compliance

August 2011

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NCAA Bylaw 10 – Ethical Conduct

Gambling

The NCAA opposes all forms of legal and illegal sports wagering, which carries the potential to undermine the integrity of sports contests and jeopardizes the welfare of student-athletes and the intercollegiate athletics community. Sports wagering demeans the competition and competitors alike by a message that is contrary to the purposes and meaning of “sport.” Because of this, the NCAA has adopted specific rules prohibiting athletic department staff, conference office staff members and student-athletes from engaging in gambling activities as they relate to intercollegiate or professional sporting events. You are prohibited from engaging in the following activities:

- ✘ Any Gambling Activities Involving Sports Sponsored by the NCAA. You may not participate in any gambling activities involving any sport (regardless of the level of competition) sponsored by the NCAA. For example, you may not gamble on a professional baseball game or a game of golf with friends or family.
- ✘ Providing Information to Non-Authorized Individuals. You may not provide any information on the status of any USC team or student-athlete (e.g., injuries, eligibility) to non-authorized individuals.
- ✘ Wagering Money or Other Items of Value in a Tournament Bracket or Fantasy League. Any time you wager something of value (e.g., cash, dinner, tangible item) in return for the possibility of winning a prize (e.g., cash, dinner, tangible item), it is considered gambling. As such, it would not be permissible to participate in a fantasy league, tournament bracket (or pool) contest if you pay to enter the contest or league and a prize is given to the winner.

Academic Honesty

Student-athletes must complete their own work. No one else may complete a student-athlete’s work for him or her. In addition, it is not permissible for someone to arrange for another individual to complete a student-athlete’s academic work (e.g., tutor, classmate). The same prohibitions are true for prospective student-athletes.

USC also has a Student Code of Conduct that addresses academic honesty expectations. Failure to abide by the Code of Conduct could lead to discipline by Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards, including receipt of failing grade in a course or dismissal from the University.

Investigations

If you are involved with an investigation by the institution, the conference or NCAA, you must provide truthful answers as well as all information relevant to the matter. Failure to do so may result in the loss of eligibility and financial aid as well as severe sanctions from the conference or NCAA. From time to time, the Compliance staff may have to ask you, your parents or other family members for sensitive information that is relevant to an investigation. Please understand that these requests are necessary to determine your eligibility status. If there is ever a situation where we must request additional information to assist in our investigation, we ask that you recognize your responsibilities under NCAA rules and cooperate with the request for information.

NCAA Bylaw 12 – Amateurism

Amateur Status

In order to maintain their amateur status, prospective and current student-athletes may not receive any compensation for the use of their athletics skill in their sport. To maintain their amateur status, athletes may not do any of the following:

- Accept pay or the promise of pay for their athletic participation;
- Sign a contract or other commitment to play professional athletics;
- Receive a salary, expenses or other form of financial assistance from a professional sports organization (except as expressly permitted in the rules);
- Compete on any professional athletics team, even if no pay is received;
- Enter into a professional draft (except as permitted by the rules); and
- Enter into an agreement (verbal or written) with an agent.

Agents

During your collegiate enrollment, you may be contacted by a sports agent, financial advisor or “runner.” A sports agent is someone who may want to represent you in contract negotiations or for commercial endorsements if you show the potential to be a professional athlete in a particular sport.

Agents or their representatives may have contacted you. This is an attempt to gain an advantage over other individuals who may want to represent you once your collegiate eligibility has expired. Many times, these individuals will not represent themselves as agents, but as individuals interested in your overall welfare and athletics career. These individuals also may attempt to provide gifts or benefits to you, your family, and your friends.

You will be ineligible for intercollegiate competition if you or your parents agree (orally or in writing) to be represented by an agent while you are in high school or college, regardless of whether the agreement becomes effective immediately or after your last season of collegiate eligibility. The receipt of any benefits or gifts by you, your parents, your family or friends from an agent or runner will also jeopardize your eligibility for intercollegiate athletics.

If an individual attempts to contact you or your parents regarding the marketing of your athletics ability in any manner, be careful. If you have concerns regarding a sports agent, please contact the coach, the Compliance Office, the Director of Athletics or the NCAA national office for assistance. Student-athletes also may obtain advice regarding agents through USC’s professional sports counseling panel. Contact the compliance office for more information.

NCAA Bylaw 12 – Amateurism (cont.)

THE DO'S

- ✓ You may request information from a professional team or organization concerning your professional market value.
- ✓ You may use the head coach of your sport to contact agents, professional sports teams or organizations on your behalf.
- ✓ You may consult an attorney concerning a professional contract but the attorney may not be present during negotiations with the professional team. You also must pay the attorney the going rate for such services.
- ✓ You may borrow from a lending institution to secure disability insurance as long as a third party does not secure the loan.

THE DON'TS

- ✗ You, your parents, other relatives or your friends may not accept benefits from an agent or anyone associated with the agent. (Benefits include, but are not limited to, transportation, money and gifts, regardless of its value or if it is used.)
- ✗ You and your parents may not agree to be represented by an agent for the purpose of marketing their athletic ability. If an agreement is made you will no longer be eligible to participate in NCAA athletics.
- ✗ Retain professional services (legal or financial advice) at less than the normal charge.

Promotional Activities

Student-athletes may only participate in promotional activities involving USC, charitable, educational or nonprofit entities. It is not permissible for student-athletes to promote or endorse any commercial entity, service or product, including family or self-owned businesses. All promotional activities requests must have **prior** written approval by the Director of Athletics and the Compliance Office.

NCAA Bylaw 13 – Recruiting

Inducements & Pre-College Expenses – Bylaws 13.2 and 13.15

Institutional staff members, student-athletes and boosters are strictly prohibited from offering any benefits or inducements to or arranging financial assistance for a prospect or their relatives or friends. It is not permissible for USC to assist with fundraising activities that will benefit a high school. For example, USC may not donate any items (e.g., equipment, apparel, tickets) that will be used to raise funds for high schools. In addition, it is not permissible for an institutional staff member to autograph an item to be used to raise funds for a high school, even if the high school pays for the item.

Publicity – Bylaw 13.10

It is not permissible for USC athletic department staff members or student-athletes to make public comments about a prospect prior to that individual signing an NLI with USC. The only permissible public comment is a confirmation of the institution's recruitment of the prospect.

Media may not be present during any recruiting contact, and if a member of the media approaches a prospect during a campus visit, athletics department staff members and/or student-athletes are required to take steps to prevent or stop it.

Permissible Recruiters

Only designated countable coaches who have passed the coaches' certification exam are permitted to participate in off-campus recruiting activities (e.g., contacts, evaluations). All recruiting coordination functions (except clerical tasks) must be performed by the head coach, or one or more of the assistant coaches who count toward the numerical limitations in Bylaw 11.7.4. This includes activities involving athletics evaluations, selection of prospects and making phone calls to or receiving phone calls from prospects or their parents, legal guardians or coaches.

Boosters and parents of student-athletes may not be involved in any recruiting activities (on or off campus). This includes contact with prospects at tailgate parties, USC contests or any other location on or off USC's campus.

NCAA Bylaw 13 – Recruiting (cont.)

Recruiting Activities & Enrolled Student-Athletes

The following apply to recruiting activities involving enrolled student-athletes:

- (a) Off-Campus Contacts. Off-campus, in-person recruiting contacts between enrolled student-athletes and a prospect are permissible if such contacts do not occur at the direction of a coaching staff member and no USC staff member had prior knowledge of the contact.
- (b) Written Correspondence. It is permissible for an enrolled student-athlete to write a prospect, provided it is not done at the direction or expense of USC.
- (c) Student Host Guidelines. The following guidelines apply when serving as a student host for a prospect.
 1. Only one USC student-athlete at a time may serve as an official host. Other student-athletes may accompany you and the prospect, but those other student-athletes must pay for their own entertainment and meals.
 2. A maximum of \$30 per day may be provided to cover all actual costs of entertaining yourself and the prospect (and the prospect's parents, legal guardians or spouse). You may be provided with an additional \$15 per day for each additional prospect you entertain.
 3. No cash may be given to the visiting prospects. You may not provide a prospect with ANY item of value (e.g., no souvenirs, clothing, hats). The \$30 entertainment funds may ONLY be used to purchase food or entertainment. You may not loan clothing or other items to a prospect.
 4. You may not use vehicles provided or arranged for by any USC staff member or booster. You may not transport the prospect or their guests more than 30 miles from campus.
 5. You should not allow recruiting conversations to occur, on or off campus, between the prospect and a USC athletics booster. If an unplanned meeting occurs, only an exchange of greeting is permissible.
 6. A prospect may engage in recreational or workout activities during the visit as long as the activity is not organized or observed by a coach and is not designed to test the prospect's athletic abilities.
 7. You may receive a complimentary admission when accompanying a prospect to a campus athletics event. You must ensure that you and the prospect(s) you are hosting are not in a special seating area (e.g., on the Coliseum field, press box, suite in Galen) during the conduct of the event (e.g., from the start of the game through the end, including half-time).
 8. Prohibited Activities: Sex and sexually-related activities (e.g., trips to strip clubs) as well as all gambling activities are prohibited during the recruitment process. The use of alcohol and other drugs by anyone in the presence of a prospect is prohibited at all times during an official visit.

NCAA Bylaw 14 – Eligibility

Seasons of Competition - Five-Year Clock

Student-athletes may not engage in more than four seasons of competition in any one sport within five calendar years. A student-athlete's five-year clock starts when he or she initially registers in a regular term of an academic year for a minimum full-time program of studies (12 credit hours) and attends the first day of classes for that term.

A student-athlete uses a season of competition if he/she participates in any competition, regardless of the length of time, during a season. For example, if an athlete plays in one minute of one game, he/she has used a season of competition in that sport. There is one exception to this rule. During a student-athlete's initial year of enrollment at a four-year institution, he/she may compete in preseason exhibition contests and preseason practice scrimmages without counting such competition as a season of competition (Bylaw 14.2.3.1.3)

A student-athlete who never competes during one of his/her seasons will not use a season of competition. This is commonly referred to as a "redshirt" year.

Eligibility for Practice and Competition

Once you begin taking classes at USC, you will be expected to maintain certain academic standards to be eligible for practice and competition. NCAA legislation requires student-athletes to maintain progress toward a degree in order to remain eligible. In addition to NCAA requirements, you must meet USC and Pac-12 academic standards as well.

In general, to be eligible to participate in practice and competition, you must be enrolled in a minimum full-time program of studies (i.e., 12 credit hours). Starting this fall (2011), the NCAA legislation requires that football student-athletes complete nine (9) semester units in order to be eligible to compete in the following football season of fall of 2012. As student-athletes progress through each term, they are required to meet additional academic requirements.

Student-athletes who fail to meet NCAA and/or USC academic requirements will be rendered ineligible for competition until their academic deficiency has been corrected.

NCAA Bylaw 14 – Eligibility (cont.)

Continuing Eligibility

The NCAA implemented progress-toward-degree (PTD) requirements that all student-athletes must meet in order to be eligible for competition. The Registrar's Office in conjunction with SAAS must certify that each student-athlete has met the appropriate academic requirements prior to the student-athlete participating in any countable athletically related activities.

NCAA REQUIREMENTS			
Entering 2nd Year of Enrollment	Entering 3rd Year of Enrollment	Entering 4th Year of Enrollment	Entering 5th Year of Enrollment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 semester credits • 18 credits earned during academic year • 90% of GPA for graduation (certify term by term) • 6 credits/term 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40% of degree requirements • 18 credits earned during academic year • 95% of GPA for graduation (certify term by term) • 6 credits/term • Declaration of degree program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% of degree requirements • 18 credit earned during academic year • 100% of GPA for graduation (certify term by term) • 6 credits/term 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% of degree requirements • 18 credit earned during academic year • 100% of GPA for graduation (certify term by term) • 6 credits/term

Transfer Eligibility

If you want to transfer from USC to another NCAA institution, you must first receive written permission from the USC Director of Athletics before the second institution may speak with you or your parents. If permission to contact the second institution is not granted, the other institution's coach may not have any written or verbal contact with the student-athlete, directly or indirectly (e.g., via parents, high school coach, friends).

The general rule regarding transferring from one Division I institution to another Division I institution is that the student-athlete must serve one academic year in residence at the second institution before being eligible for competition. There are some limited exceptions to this rule, and the Compliance staff can answer your questions or you can review the Transfer Guide on the NCAA Web site.

NCAA Bylaw 15 – Financial Aid

Student-athletes may receive athletics aid (institutional or outside aid where athletics is a major criterion) or educational expenses awarded the US Olympic Committee or national governing body up to the value of a full grant-in-aid, plus any other financial aid unrelated to athletics ability up to the cost of attendance.

A full grant-in-aid is defined as tuition, fees, room, board and required course-related books. Cost of attendance is calculated by the USC Office of Financial Aid, using federal regulations, and includes the total cost of tuition, fees, room, board, books, supplies, transportation and other expenses related to attendance.

Period of the Award

There is no guaranteed four-year scholarship in Division I athletics. The NCAA rules do not permit an institution to award an athletics scholarship for a period longer than one academic year. This scholarship may be renewed (or reduced or cancelled) at the end of the year for the next academic year.

Renewal, Reduction or Cancellation of Athletics Aid

If you are receiving an athletic scholarship, the NCAA rules require that you be notified by July 1 of each year whether the athletic scholarship will be renewed for the following year. The official notification will come from the financial aid office and not from the athletics department. If the athletic department decides not to renew your athletics scholarship for the upcoming year, you will be provided a hearing opportunity (on request) from a group outside of the athletic department. Athletic aid can be reduced or cancelled for ANY reason at the end of the term of that scholarship.

During the period of the award, a student-athlete's athletics aid may only be cancelled or reduced if the student-athlete:

- Renders himself or herself ineligible for intercollegiate competition;
- Fraudulently misrepresents any information on an application, letter of intent or financial aid agreement;
- Is found to have engaged in serious misconduct by USC's student disciplinary authority; or
- Voluntarily withdraws from a sport at any time for personal reasons.

The student-athlete must be notified in writing of his/her opportunity for a hearing when his/her athletic aid is cancelled or reduced either during the period of the award or for the next academic year.

Limitations on Athletic Aid Awarded for Each Sport

Bylaw 15.5 sets forth the limit on the amount of athletic aid that each sport may award to its student-athletes. A student-athlete will count toward the team limit if he or she receives athletic aid from the institution, outside aid in which athletics participation is a major criterion or educational expenses from the US Olympic Committee or national governing body.

Coaches are responsible for being aware of the financial aid received by the student-athletes in that sport. In equivalency sports, coaches should determine if the student-athlete is receiving other institutional aid that may become countable toward the team limit if athletics aid is awarded.

NCAA Bylaw 15 – Financial Aid (cont.)

NCAA Special Assistant and Opportunity Funds

Funds are available to assist student-athletes with a variety of costs (e.g., dental bills, course supplies, emergencies). Student-athletes should contact the Director of Student Services in Student-Athlete Academic Services to learn more about the funds available and any requirements to qualify for its use.

Student-Athlete Employment

It is permissible for student-athletes to work during the academic year and vacation periods (including summer). There is no limit on the amount of money a student-athlete may earn.

Employment earnings are not counted in determining a student-athlete's cost of attendance calculation or in the financial aid limitations, provided:

- Compensation does not include any remuneration for value that he or she may have to the employer because of the publicity, reputation or fame he or she has obtained due to athletics;
- Compensation is only for work actually performed; and
- Compensation is at a rate commensurate with the going rate in that locality for similar services.

Student-athletes may not receive any special discounts or services from his/her employer unless they are provided to all employees. Student-athletes may not receive transportation to and from work, health benefits, vacation/sick time, bonuses, etc. unless the same benefits are available to all employees.

Student-athletes planning to work during the academic year and/or vacation periods should notify the Compliance Office in advance, as you and your employer must complete paperwork before employment may begin.

NCAA Bylaw 16 – Awards & Benefits

Awards

USC may provide awards (e.g., trophy, pictures, plaques, jackets, rings, watches) to student-athletes for their participation on the team or for winning conference or national championships or special awards (e.g., Heisman). Student-athletes are not permitted to contribute to the cost of the award in order to get an award that is above the limitation set by the NCAA.

Student-athletes may **not** sell awards received for participation, conference or national championships or special achievements. Selling or exchanging the award for another item or service is considered an extra benefit.

Extra Benefits

Acceptance of an extra benefit by student-athletes (or their relatives or friends) is a violation of NCAA regulations. Any inappropriate, even inadvertent activity on the part of the student-athlete (or his or her family) could result in:

- Declaring a currently enrolled student-athlete ineligible for competition.
- Sanctions placed on the University and its athletics programs.
- Restrictions placed upon your involvement with USC's athletics program.

An extra benefit is defined as any special arrangement by an institutional employee or booster to provide a student-athlete (or his or her relatives or friends) a benefit not generally available to the general public or USC student body, or, is not expressly authorized by NCAA legislation. This may include:

- Anything from a USC employee or booster (e.g., use of a car, clothing, gifts, money, tickets for any kind of entertainment).
- Free or reduced cost room and/or board from any USC employee, booster or parent of another USC student. This includes in California, in the student-athlete's home city or any other location.
- Free or reduced cost storage room for personal belongings for the summer months from any USC employee or booster.

There are some exceptions for pre-existing relationships, but institutional staff members should contact the Compliance Office with the details of the situation to determine if an exception applies.

Student-athletes who have a logical connection or relationship with another student (i.e. teammate, roommate or fraternity brother) may receive benefits which are generally consistent with what other students might provide to each other (e.g., a reasonably priced meal, a movie or local transportation.)

Parents of student-athletes are permitted to provide an occasional meal at any location to their child's teammates. However, the parents may not take the teammate out for a meal without their son or daughter present.

NCAA Bylaw 16 – Awards & Benefits (cont.)

Complimentary Admissions

USC, at its discretion, may provide four complimentary admissions per home or away athletics events to a student-athlete in the sport in which the individual practices or competes. A maximum of six complimentary admissions may be provided for postseason events (e.g., conference championship, NCAA championship, bowl game).

Complimentary admissions shall be provided only through a pass list. The individuals using the complimentary admission must present their identification in order to receive a ticket stub identifying the specified seating area.

Neither the student-athlete nor the individual designated to receive the complimentary admission may receive payment from any source for the complimentary admissions and may not exchange or assign them for any item of value. Receipt of payment for complimentary admissions by such designated individuals is prohibited and considered an extra benefit.

NCAA Bylaw 17 – Playing & Practice Seasons

Countable athletically related activities (CARA) are defined as any required activity with an athletics purpose involving student-athletes at the direction of or supervised by one or more of USC's coaching staff (including strength and conditioning coaches). Administrative activities (e.g., academic or compliance meetings) are not counted toward the daily and weekly limitations. Student-athletes may not miss class time for any CARA, except in conjunction with an away-from-home contest or if USC is hosting a Pac-12 or NCAA championship.

Hour limitations DURING the declared playing and practice season:

- Maximum of 20 hours per week.
- Maximum of four hours per day.
 - Exception – golf practice rounds may exceed four hours per day, but must stay within 20 hours per week.
- Required one day off per week.
- Multisport Participants are limited to 20 hours per week in all sports.

Hour limitations in the OUT OF SEASON period:

- Maximum of eight hours per week with not more than two hours of individual skill instruction (film review in football).
- Required two days off per week.
- Only required weight training, conditioning and individual skill instruction permitted.
- No CARA permitted during vacation periods.

The following principles apply when computing and recording time limitations:

- Competition day equals three hours.
- Does not apply to preseason or vacation periods. Football has exceptions during the acclimatization period.
- Travel day may be considered day off, provided no CARA take place.
- No CARA (including meetings or film review) after competition.

Use of Outside Consultants / Personal Coaches

A student-athlete may receive assistance from an individual outside of USC (e.g., consultant, professional instructor) without the individual being counted in the institution's coaching limitations, provided all of the following occur:

- USC is not involved in any way in arranging for such activity;
- USC coaches do not observe such activity; and
- Such activity does not occur at the institution's facility (either during voluntary workouts or during regular institutional practice sessions).

In addition, the student-athlete must pay all the fees (at the going rate) associated with the activity and may not receive any preferential arrangements (e.g., discount rate, deferred payments) not available to the general public.

Compliance Procedures & Resources

Reporting Violations

Athletics department staff members are required to report ALL violations of NCAA, Pac-12 and institutional rules to the Compliance Office or to the Director of Athletics. Failure to report truthful and complete information may subject the individual to possible NCAA unethical conduct violations.

Resources

NCAA Web site: <http://www.ncaa.org>

- Recruiting Calendars
- Guide to the College Bound Student-Athlete
- Transfer Guide

NCAA Eligibility Center: <http://www.eligibilitycenter.org>

National Letter of Intent: <http://www.nationalletter.org>

Pac-12 Web site: <http://compliance.pac-12.org>

USC Compliance: <http://usctrojans.cstv.com>