



Behind the Blue Disk

Initial Eligibility: The First Step in Becoming an NCAA Student-Athlete

What is initial eligibility and why is it so important?

Initial-eligibility rules are in place to ensure prospective student-athletes have met NCAA academic and amateurism guidelines. Prospective student-athletes cannot participate in any sport for a Division I or II institution without this certification.

Who does it apply to?

It most commonly applies to high school graduates but the NCAA has provisions for assessing two-year college student-athletes as well.

What does it take to be initially eligible?

NCAA prospective student-athletes must be high school graduates, achieve a minimum grade-point average in high school core courses and present a qualifying score on either the ACT or SAT test. Additionally, prospective student-athletes must meet the NCAA's amateurism regulations.

What are the test score requirements?

In Division I, the NCAA uses a sliding scale that combines the core-course GPA and SAT/ACT test scores to determine eligibility. Basically, the lower the core-course GPA the higher the test score must be and vice versa. Division II requires a minimum SAT score of 820 for the verbal and math sections only or a minimum ACT sum score of 68.

"Every Division I and II prospective student-athlete must be certified as initially eligible. That means planning ahead, taking high school academics seriously and protecting one's amateur status. It can be a difficult first step but the ultimate benefits of being an NCAA student-athlete are worth the effort!"
KEVIN LENNON,
NCAA VICE PRESIDENT

Division I Sliding Scale for Initial Academic Eligibility

Core GPA	SAT	Sum ACT
3.550	400	37
3.525	410	38
3.150	560	48
2.025	1000	85
2.000	1010	86

For more information, visit www.eligibilitycenter.org

Is there a required minimum high school GPA for core courses?

Yes. The minimum is 2.0 or better on a 4.0 point scale for both Divisions I and II.

What is a core course and how many do I have to complete?

Core courses are primarily English, math, foreign language, social studies and science classes with an emphasis on college preparation. To play in Division I, high school graduates must complete 16 core courses. Currently, Division II prospective student-athletes must complete 14 core courses but that will change to 16 core courses in 2013.

What are the amateurism requirements?

With global recruiting becoming more common, determining the amateur status of prospective student-athletes can be challenging. All prospective student-athletes, including international students, need to adhere to NCAA amateurism requirements in order to preserve their eligibility for NCAA intercollegiate athletics. The online registration process that must be completed by all future

Division I and II prospective student-athletes includes a questionnaire relating to the individual's amateur status. Individuals with questions pertaining to their amateur status should contact the NCAA Eligibility Center at 877/262-1492.

If a prospective student-athlete satisfies all NCAA requirements and is offered an athletic scholarship, does this guarantee he or she will be admitted to that college?

Meeting NCAA participation requirements does not mean prospects automatically will be accepted to the school that is offering the scholarship. Since every school has unique admissions requirements, the prospect must apply to and be accepted by the school.

Please access Behind the Blue Disk via www.ncaa.org for the most up-to-date information.

For more information, contact NCAA Public and Media Relations at 317/917-6117.

1/5/2010



Behind the Blue Disk

Division I Academic Reform

What is the goal of the NCAA's academic reform efforts?

The NCAA's ultimate academic goal is for student-athletes to graduate with meaningful degrees preparing them for life.

What are some of the Division I academic reform highlights?

The reforms start with increased high school academic requirements for prospective student-athletes. After student-athletes are enrolled, they must meet standards that ensure they will graduate in a timely fashion.

What is the Academic Progress Rate and how does the NCAA administer it?

The NCAA developed the Academic Progress Rate to measure how scholarship student-athletes are performing term by term. It is a composite team measurement based upon how individual team members do academically. Teams that don't make the 925 APR benchmark are subject to sanctions. The NCAA works closely with APR-challenged schools to achieve improvement and minimize punishment.

"We owe it to all NCAA student-athletes to ensure a system is in place that demands academic progress and has an ultimate goal of graduation"
MYLES BRAND,
FORMER NCAA PRESIDENT

Does the NCAA track graduation rates?

There are two primary measures of graduation. A federally mandated study does not measure transfer students. The NCAA's Graduation Success Rate does measure transfers, meaning it includes about 37 percent more students. As the chart to the left shows, few student-athletes ever go pro in sports. That's why the NCAA puts such emphasis on academics. Academic, not athletic, achievement is the most reliable path to success in life.

Percentage of NCAA student-athletes who become professional athletes:	
Men's basketball.....	1.2%
Women's basketball.....	0.9%
Football.....	1.8%
Baseball.....	8.9%
Men's ice hockey.....	3.7%
Men's soccer.....	1.6%

Has progress been made?

Yes. For the most recent GSR cohort, 79 percent of Division I student-athletes earned their degrees. For the rolling four-year aggregate, the rate is also 79 percent.

How are African-American student-athletes doing academically?

African-American male student-athlete graduation rates have risen 16 percent over the last 20 years, using the federal methodology. At 49 percent, that's 11 percentage points higher than African-American males in the general student body. The same data show African-American female student-athletes graduating at 63 percent, 14 points higher than their general student body counterparts. The academic improvement for African-American student-athletes is better than any other demographic.

Does that improvement include men's basketball and football?

Yes. African-American men's basketball student-athletes have increased their graduation rates 15 percent during this same period. For FBS football, the increase has been 12 percent.

Please access Behind the Blue Disk via www.ncaa.org for the most up-to-date information.

For more information, contact NCAA Public and Media Relations at 317/917-6117.

1/5/2010