

BOOSTER GUIDELINES



**A Helpful Guide to
NCAA Rules & Regulations**

2010

Message from the Commissioner



*The Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC) appreciates your support of our outstanding academic institutions and their athletic programs. As you support your respective institution, we want to remind you of inadvertent actions that may jeopardize the eligibility of a prospective student-athlete, enrolled student-athlete and/or your university. The MEAC wants you to continue to be a loyal supporter of your institution and with your cooperation we can obtain our goal of **“Educating Students for the Game of Life”** while staying in compliance with NCAA and MEAC governing legislation. The development of these booster guidelines will assist and educate you in this endeavor.*

Sincerely,

***Dennis E. Thomas, Ed. D.**
Commissioner*

Institutional Control & Compliance

Institutional Control of athletics is a fundamental requirement of NCAA legislation. Specifically, the NCAA bylaws provides that each institutional shall be responsible for :

- Monitoring its programs to ensure compliance, identifying and reporting to the Association instances in which compliance has not been achieved, and taking appropriate corrective action;
- Ensuring that members of the institution’s staff, student-athletes and other individuals or groups representing the institution’s athletics interest comply with all appropriate Association rules; and
- Maintaining its intercollegiate athletics program in Compliance with the rules and regulations of the Association.

WHO IS A BOOSTER?

An individual is considered to be a representative of athletic interests if they are a former-student-athlete, student, friend, or fan of the program (NCAA Bylaw 13.02.13). Representatives of athletics interest are subject to NCAA regulations; therefore, both the university and the representative are subject to penalties for any violation of NCAA rules by athletics representatives or their support organization. The NCAA defines a representative of athletics interests as an “individual who is known (or should have been known) by a member of the institution's athletics administration to:

- ◆ **Currently be a member or have participated as a member in any organization promoting the institution’s intercollegiate athletics’ program(example: booster club);**
- ◆ **Have made financial contributions to the athletic department or to an athletics booster organization of that institution;**
- ◆ **Have been involved, in any way, in promoting the institution’s athletics program;**
- ◆ **Be assisting or have been requested by the athletic department staff to assist in the recruitment of prospective student-athletes, or;**
- ◆ **Be assisting or to have assisted in providing benefits to enrolled student-athletes or their families.**

Important Note: Once an individual is identified as a representative of athletics interests, the person retains that identity indefinitely (NCAA Bylaw 13.02.13.1).

“Five Rules to Remember” All Boosters Should Know

1. Do not do anything for prospective or enrolled student-athletes without specific authorization from the institution’s department of athletics.
2. If a student-athlete accepts any benefit based on special consideration as an athlete or because of athletic skill, the student-athlete may lose all eligibility for intercollegiate athletics participation.
3. Only coaches and the athletic department can be involved in the recruiting process. Alumni, Friends, and other Representative of Athletics Interest who are employed by the institution are not permitted to contact a prospective student-athlete (or members of the prospect’s family) by letter, telephone, or in person (on or off campus) for the purpose of soliciting their participation in the athletics program.
4. A prospective student-athlete remains a prospect even after he or she signs a National Letter of Intent financial agreement with the university. The prospect does not lose his/her prospective student-athlete status until he/she enrolls at the institution or the beginning of the official team practice immediately prior to the start of classes.
5. The prohibition of contact with a prospective student-athlete is not intended to cover unavoidable incidental contact between prospects and representatives of athletics interest, it being understood that such a contact is not prearranged by the representative of athletics interests, or an Athletics Department staff member, and does not result in the recruitment of the prospective student-athlete.

Athletics Representatives Contact With Prospective Student-Athletes

Q: WHO IS CONSIDERED A PROSPECTIVE STUDENT-ATHLETE ("PROSPECT" OR "RECRUIT")

A prospect is a student in the ninth grade (9th) or above, including student in prep schools and junior colleges or individuals who have officially withdrawn from four-year institutions. Any student not yet in the ninth grade becomes a prospect if the institution provides him/her with any financial aid or other benefits that are not generally provided to prospective students.

Q: HOW LONG IS A PROSPECTIVE STUDENT-ATHLETE CONSIDERED TO BE A PROSPECT?

A prospective student-athlete remains a prospect even after signing a National Letter of Intent or written offer of financial aid with any institution, and both the institution and prospect continue to be governed by NCAA recruiting legislation until the prospect reports for regular squad practice or the prospect attends his/hers first day of classes in any regular term.

Athletics Representatives Contact With Prospective Student-Athletes Cont'd

Q: IS IT PERMISSIBLE TO CONTACT A PROSPECTIVE STUDENT-ATHLETE OR HIS/HER PARENTS OR LEGAL GUARDIANS?

NO. An athletics representative may not contact a prospect or his/her parents in person, by telephone, writing, or e-mail.

Q: IS THIS CONTACT APPLICABLE TO PROSPECTS THAT ARE "ESTABLISHED FAMILY FRIENDS" OR NEIGHBORS?

NO. However, it must be UNDERSTOOD that such contacts cannot be initiated or arranged by an institution's coaching staff members. In addition, the established relationship must have occurred prior to the friend or neighbor becoming a prospect.

Q: WHAT IF A PROSPECT CALLS AN ATHLETICS REPRESENTATIVE?

An athletics representative may have a telephone conversation with a prospect **ONLY** if the prospect initiates the call. Such a call may not be prearranged by an institutional staff member and the athletics representative may NOT have a recruiting conversation, but may exhibit normal civility. The athletics representative must refer any questions, about the University's athletic program to the Department of Athletics.

Q: WHAT IF A PROSPECT KNOWS THAT AN ATHLETICS REPRESENTATIVE IS A GRADUATE OF THE UNIVERSITY AND CONTACTS HIM/HER ABOUT QUESTIONS ABOUT THE INSTITUTION?

If a prospect contacts an athletics representative, he/she may answer questions regarding various aspects of the institution as long as NO discussion takes place regarding the institution's athletics program. If a prospect asks about the institution's athletics program, refer him/her to the department of athletics

Q: MAY AN ATHLETICS REPRESENTATIVE SPEAK TO AN INSTITUTION'S COACH IF A PROSPECT IS WITH THE COACH?

If the institution's coach is with a prospect, do not approach the coach until the prospect and family have gone elsewhere. Otherwise, the coach will be placed in an awkward situation because he/she will not be able to introduce the prospect to the athletics representative. If a prospect approaches an athletics representative on or off campus regarding the athletics department, explain that NCAA rules do not permit discussion of the athletics program. Refer the prospect to the appropriate institution's coach.

Athletics Representatives Involvement with Current Student-Athletes

Q: WHO IS CONSIDERED A STUDENT-ATHLETE?

A student-athlete is a student who is attending classes at an institution and whose enrollment is solicited by a member of the athletics staff with a view toward the student's ultimate participation in the intercollegiate athletics program. Any other student becomes a student-athlete only when the student reports for an intercollegiate squad that is under the jurisdiction of the athletics department. A student is not deemed a student-athlete solely on the basis of prior high school participation. A student-athlete attending another four-year institution is considered a student-athlete.

Q. IS IT PERMISSIBLE FOR ANYONE TO USE THE NAME OR PICTURE OF A STUDENT-ATHLETE TO DIRECTLY ADVERTISE, RECOMMEND OR PROMOTE SALE OR USE OF A COMMERCIAL PRODUCT OR SERVICE OF ANY KIND?

NO. Use of a student-athlete's name or picture for this purpose would cause him/her to become ineligible.

Q: CAN I INVITE A TEAM TO DINNER IF I WANT TO ENTERTAIN THEM?

YES. But, the meal must be served in your home. Always make arrangements for such activities through the Athletics Director and Athletics Compliance Office for approval.

Q: CAN STUDENT-ATHLETES BE PROVIDED A BENEFIT NOT AVAILABLE TO THE GENERAL STUDENT BODY?

NO. Under NCAA rules, an extra benefit is any special arrangement by an institutional employee or a representative of the institutions' athletics interests to provide a student-athlete's relative or friend a benefit not expressly authorized by NCAA legislation.

Q: CAN I REWARD A STUDENT-ATHLETE FOR THEIR PERFORMANCE IN A CONTEST WITH A GIFT OR AWARD?

No. A Booster may NEVER provide a student-athlete with gift and/or awards based on his/her performance.

Q: IS IT PERMISSIBLE FOR A STUDENT-ATHLETE TO RECEIVE ANY EXPENSES FOR SPEAKING TO A BOOSTER CLUB OR CIVIC ORGANIZATION?

A student-athlete may only accept transportation and meal expenses in conjunction with participation in a luncheon meeting of a booster club or civic organization, provided the meeting occurs within a 30 mile radius of the institution's main campus and no tangible award is provided to the student-athlete. If the luncheon is outside of the 30-mile radius, the student-athlete is not permitted to accept any transportation or meal expenses.

Employment of Prospective or Current Student-Athletes

Q: CAN I EMPLOY RETURNING STUDENT-ATHLETE DURING THE SUMMER?

YES, but the compensation must be only for work that is performed and at a rate that is commensurate with the going rate for similar services.

Q: IS IT PERMISSIBLE FOR AN ATHLETICS REPRESENTATIVE TO EMPLOY A STUDENT-ATHLETE DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR WHILE HE/SHE IS ENROLLED AS A FULL-TIME STUDENT?

Yes, but student-athletes must register their part-time job with the Compliance Office to ensure all income is correctly tracked in accordance with NCAA legislation. If you do employ a student-athlete, you will be contacted by the Compliance Office to ensure the student-athlete's eligibility is not in jeopardy.

Q: CAN I PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION TO A STUDENT-ATHLETE TO GET TO HIS/HER JOB

NO. You can not provide transportation for student-athletes under your employment unless such transportation is provided to all employees.



Compliance with NCAA regulations is the highest priority for our member institution's athletics programs. They need your assistance in complying with NCAA rules and regulations. If you are faced with a situation and are unsure how to respond, or if you have any questions regarding NCAA rules, we urge you to contact your respective institution's Compliance Office.

As a member of the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC) and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), it is the responsibility of each member institution to ensure that its coaches, student-athletes, faculty and staff, alumni, donors, boosters, and friends adhere to the governing legislation of the MEAC and NCAA. This brochure is designed as a reference tool to the NCAA rules governing situations and scenarios most likely encountered by "Representatives of Athletics Interests." Since all possible situations and scenarios can not be covered, please do not hesitate to contact the Athletics Compliance Office of your respective institution.