

Department of Intercollegiate Athletics Policy Manual

XVIII. STUDENT-ATHLETE ACADEMIC SERVICES

This chapter is dedicated to the policies and procedures for the Office of Student-Athlete Academic Services in the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics at The University of Iowa.

Mission and Philosophy

Academic Services offers academic and personal support services for student-athletes to assist them with making timely and satisfactory progress toward their degrees. This can include, but is not limited to academic advisement, tutorial and instructional support as well as educational programming. The office works in consultation with coaches, staff and various athletic personnel regarding student-athlete academic matters and ensures compliance with all institutional, National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA), and Big Ten Conference rules and regulations. The staff is dedicated to the success and development of Iowa student-athletes and encourages students to be active contributors to the campus community. This development includes eliciting values of character, education, commitment, leadership, teamwork, and quality of life.

A. Objectives

- To provide a productive and positive academic experience for student-athletes.
- To enhance the quality of each student's experience, so that he/she has a sense of gratitude and accomplishment following graduation.
- To understand and respect each student's individuality.
- To promote student responsibility and accountability.
- To facilitate leadership opportunities for students.
- To help student-athletes integrate their lives with their non-athlete classmates.
- To communicate our purposes and goals to our students.

Gerdin Athletic Learning Center

The Gerdin Athletic Learning Center is a multifaceted study environment where student-athletes work together with academic coordinators and support staff to pursue their studies in a structured learning environment. The Learning Center provides student-athletes with a place to study and utilize academic resources such as tutors and computing facilities. The Academic Services staff includes 11 full-time staff members who provide educational support for student-athletes.

The hours of operation for the Learning Center are:

Sunday	6:00 PM – 10:00 PM
Monday-Thursday	8:00 AM – 10:00 PM
Friday	8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Academics

A. Advising

An Academic Coordinator is assigned to work with and monitor the academic progress of student-athletes in each sport program. Academic Coordinators are expected to communicate regularly with students and sport team coaches, as well as assist with recruitment efforts of prospective student-athletes. Academic Coordinators meet weekly with all new student-athletes and designated upperclassmen. Academic information is obtained during these meetings, compiled and submitted weekly to coaches in an academic report. Such reports can include student performance in individual classes, attendance, and overall academic updates. At minimum, Academic Coordinators are required to meet monthly with every student in their designated caseload for the purposes of monitoring academic progress and ensure compliance with institutional, Big Ten Conference and NCAA rules regarding degree progression. Academic Coordinators document their communications with students by logging the date and essence of each meeting in a secure student database management system. If a student is absent to a designated meeting with their Academic Coordinator, the students coaches are electronically notified of the absence. The Associate Athletics Director for Student-Athlete Academic Services distributes talking points to Academic Coordinators which are shared monthly with students and coaches.

In addition to Academic Coordinators student-athletes are assigned a university advisor in the student's designated degree program. Academic Coordinators consult with both students and university advisors to develop and maintain updated plans of

study, set goals, build schedules, provide information on majors and help facilitate a student's progression toward a degree program. Students are expected to meet with their university advisor once per semester. Coaches and athletics department staff are not permitted to initiate contact with institutional staff members, including but not limited to the Offices of the Registrar, Admissions, or Student Financial Aid regarding a current or prospective student-athlete's academic progress. Contact is restricted to official liaisons in the Offices of Student-Athlete Academic Services and Athletics Compliance.

B. Degree Progress and Eligibility

All current student-athletes meet with their university advisor once per semester, commencing with their initial registration during summer orientation. During the student-athletes first semester of residence, he/she will compile a 4-semester plan of study with his/her university advisor which outlines the student's academic progress toward a degree by comparing coursework completed with courses still needed/required. Student-athletes along with their university advisor determine appropriate coursework for registration. Plans of study are updated on a semester basis and should reflect the suggestions made by the university advisor. Plans of study are available for periodic audits by the Faculty Athletics Representative and/or faculty of the Academic Achievement Advisory Subcommittee. Information is also shared with coaches upon request.

C. Grade Reports

At the conclusion of each semester The Associate Athletics Director for Student-Athlete Academic Services compiles final grade information on each student-athlete, including spirit squad members, listed on an active roster as of the university census day. Grade report information is not released on practice players, managers or trainers. Reports are reviewed and verified by Academic Coordinators and distributed to coaches and athletic administrators. Grades listed as "In Progress" on the official university system are not considered official, and therefore not included on final grade reports. Only individuals who are trained on [FERPA](#) regulations are permitted to review grade information. The Associate Athletics Director for Student-Athlete Academic Services works with the University Registrar and Athletics Compliance offices to review potential student ineligibility or academic standing concerns. In the event a student-athlete is deemed academically ineligible, coaches and students receive a deficiency letter notification which outlines the academic progress deficiency and what, if any steps can be taken on the part of the student to regain eligibility.

D. Certification Meetings

Certification meetings are held each fall prior to the first day of classes as part of the eligibility certification process. The Academic Services and Compliance staffs conduct these meetings to provide information to students regarding athletic department, NCAA, Big Ten, and University of Iowa rules and policies. The meetings are mandatory for all student-athletes. In the event a student-athlete has a scheduling conflict he/she must make arrangements with the Academic Services and Compliance staffs to sign their eligibility forms. All student-athletes receive a copy of the *Student-Athlete Handbook* during Certification meetings, which outlines institutional and departmental policies.

E. Instructor Contacts

Instructors are contacted regarding student-athlete academic progress. Instructors receive an electronic notification through the **Grades First** student management system encouraging their feedback on student grades, attendance and overall performance. Instructors submit an electronic form through **Grades First** where the information is logged in the database. An email notification is sent to Athletic Academic Coordinators when a student is marked as at-risk. Academic Coordinators are responsible for communicating instructor feedback information to students and coaches. Coaches and Athletics staff not affiliated with Academic Services are prohibited from contacting institutional staff members, including faculty, regarding a student-athlete's academic progress and may only solicit such information from the Academic Services staff.

F. Travel Notifications

Official competition schedules list academic class days missed and must be compliant with PCA's [Academic Impact Policy](#) which limits the student to no more than 8 class days missed. Requests for exceptions must be submitted under that policy's guidelines. These absences will be considered excused, per *University Operations Manual* – [Part IV. Students; Chapter 8: Absences from Class](#). Non-collegiate outside competition/training is not considered an excused absence and the student must make his/her own arrangements with faculty/instructors, per approval from the Faculty Athletic Representatives, Sport Administrator, Athletics Compliance office, and Academic Services.

In regard to excused absences, as verified by the [Travel Party Form](#) process, the Academic Services staff also communicates with instructors about approved student-athlete travel due to competition. Instructors are notified at the beginning of each semester regarding the travel schedule for all student-athletes who will compete during the course of the semester. Instructors are sent a reminder notification the week of each competition alerting them that a student-athlete will be absent from class due

to a team competition. Students are encouraged to communicate with their instructors prior to traveling about potential missed classwork and to make the necessary arrangements to make up such work in a timely fashion.

G. Class Attendance and Monitoring Policy

The Athletic Department has a class attendance policy that encourages student athletes to prioritize their class attendance. Student-athletes are expected to attend every class session. When a student is unable to attend class due to team travel or health related concern, the academic Services staff will work with students to ensure their instructors are notified. If a student is unable to attend a designated class due to illness, injury or personal reasons, the athletic training staff, team physician or approved department staff member will provide the Associate Athletics Director for Student-Athlete Academic Services and the respective Academic Coordinator with documentation to excuse the student from class or tutorial appointments. The Academic Coordinator is responsible for notifying the student's instructors. Academic Coordinators must copy the Associate Athletics Director for Student-Athlete Academic Services on all email correspondences to instructors regarding missed class time.

The Academic Services Office may closely monitor a student's class attendance if a student has been identified as at-risk by an instructor or when an academic concern is reported by a staff member. Student class attendance may be monitored if one or more of the following circumstances occur:

1. Student is identified by their instructor as having excessive class absences unrelated to travel or illness.
2. Student does not regularly bring their class notes to tutorial sessions.
3. A student has failed to submit assignments on time.
4. Student is reported through the Office of the Registrar or Student Financial Aid as not attending class.

The Associate Athletics Director for Academic Services will compile a list of students whose class attendance will be monitored. Class attendance checks will be conducted at random and may occur at any point during a designated class period. Students are encouraged to sit in the first two rows of class to ensure they can be identified in class. Students should alert their Academic Services Coordinator immediately if they are unable to attend class and the absence is not due to sport competition or health related concern. Students and staff will not be notified prior to the attendance check. Coaches and Academic Coordinators will be alerted via email from the Associate Athletics Director for Student-Athlete Academic Services of any student reported as absent. Students with multiple class absences will be required to meet with the Associate

Athletics Director for Student-Athlete Academic Services. Student disciplinary action for non-attendance will be the responsibility of each sports program and in accordance with team policies.

H. Declaration of Major

The Academic Services staff meets with university advisors and faculty throughout the academic year to receive continued training about pertinent changes within colleges or majors. Student-athletes must have a declared major on file by the start of their 5th full-time semester in school. Students may only declare their major with the permission of an assigned university advisor. Academic Coordinators, coaches or athletic department staff members are not permitted to declare a major for a student-athlete. Student-athletes in their first or second year of school who have not declared a major are strongly encouraged to attend the Exploring Majors Fair opportunities on campus to receive information on major options. The Associate Athletics Director for Student-Athlete Academic Services reviews student-athlete course major selection on a semester basis. The report includes the number of student-athletes in a declared major or college, by sport, and is reviewed by the Faculty Athletics Representatives and the Academic Achievement Subcommittee of the Presidential Committee on Athletics.